



East Cambridgeshire District Council

Meeting: Finance & Assets Committee

Time: 4:30pm

Date: Thursday 27 June 2024

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

Enquiries regarding this agenda: Leah Mickleborough

Telephone: (01353) 665555

Email: leahmickleborough@eastcamb.gov.uk

Committee membership

Quorum: 5 members

Conservative members

Cllr Ian Bovingdon (Vice-Chair)

Cllr Mark Goldsack

Cllr Bill Hunt

Cllr James Lay

Cllr David Miller

Cllr Alan Sharp (Chair)

Conservative substitutes

Cllr Anna Bailey

Cllr Martin Goodearl

Cllr Julia Huffer

Liberal Democrat members

Cllr Charlotte Cane

Cllr Lorna Dupré

Cllr John Trapp

Cllr Mary Wade

Cllr Alison Whelan (Lead Member)

Liberal Democrat substitutes

Cllr Christine Colbert

Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann

Cllr Christine Shepherd

Lead Officer: Sally Bonnett, Director Community

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 Finance & Assets Committee held on 28 March 2024
- 5. Chairman’s announcements**
- 6. Financial Outturn Report 2023/24**
- 7. 2023/24 Treasury Operations Annual Performance Review**
- 8. Assets Update**
- 9. Ely High Street Renewal – Capital Grant Fund**
- 10. Climate and Nature Strategy 2024-28 and Climate and Nature Monitoring Report and Action Plan 2024**
- 11. Annual report of representatives on Outside Bodies**
- 12. Whistleblowing Policy Update** **[oral]**
- 13. Minutes of the Bus, Cycle and Walk Working Party held on 14 May 2024**
- 14. 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, 2, 3 and 4 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)

- 15. East Cambridgeshire Trading Company Limited Management Accounts for the 12 months ending 31 March 2024**
- 16. Appointments, Transfers & Resignations**
- 17. Exempt minutes of the Finance & Assets Committee held on 28 March 2024**

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 or 01353 665555) of their intention to attend a meeting.

The livestream of this meeting will be available on [the committee meeting's webpage \(https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/finance-assets-committee-280324\)](https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/finance-assets-committee-280324) 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).

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
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)."



East Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance & Assets Committee Held at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, CB7 4EE at 4:30pm on Thursday 28th March 2024

Present:

Cllr Anna Bailey (substitute for Cllr Ian Bovingdon)
Cllr Christine Colbert (substitute for Cllr Caroline Shepherd)
Councillor Charlotte Cane (substitute for Cllr Alison Whelan)
Cllr Lorna Dupré
Cllr Mark Goldsack
Cllr Bill Hunt
Cllr James Lay
Cllr David Miller
Cllr Alan Sharp (Chair)
Cllr John Trapp

Officers:

Sally Bonnett – Director Community
Angela Briggs – Community Infrastructure Manager
Maggie Camp – Director Legal Services & Monitoring Officer
Ian Smith – Director Finance
Spencer Clark – Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
Tracy Couper – Democratic Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Richard Kay – Strategic Planning Manager
Marta Lotysz-Veiga – Reprographics Manager
Jane Webb – Senior Democratic Services Officer

In attendance:

Paul Remington – ECTC Chair
John Hill – ECTC Managing Director
Emma Grima – Director Commercial ECTC
Nigel Ankers – ECTC Finance Manager

86. Public Question Time

No public questions were submitted.

87. Apologies and substitutions

The Democratic Services Manager reported that Councillor Charlotte Cane had replaced Councillor Kathrin Holtzmann as a Substitute for the Committee.

Apologies for absence and substitutions were reported as follows:

Councillor Ian Bovingdon - Cllr Anna Bailey substituting.
Councillor Caroline Shepherd – Cllr Christine Colbert substituting.
Councillor Alison Whelan - Cllr Charlotte Cane substituting.

88. Declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were made.

89. Minutes

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Minutes of the Finance & Assets Committee meeting held on 25 January 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

90. Chair's announcements

The Chair made the following announcements:

- Attention was drawn to the letter from Staploe Medical Centre circulated to Members of the Committee clarifying their position in support of the Stretham Wilburton CLT Link Project Growth and Infrastructure Fund application referred to in Minute 73 of the meeting of the Committee held on 25 January 2024.
- Members were reminded of two upcoming Member seminars, the first on 25 April at 6pm on Domestic Abuse Awareness and the second, ECSS/ECTC shareholder seminar on 9 May at 6pm, both via Teams.
- Paul Remington (Chair), John Hill (Managing Director), Emma Grima (Property & Commercial Director) and Nigel Ankers (Finance Manager) from East Cambs Trading Company had been invited to the meeting to contribute to relevant items.

91. ECTC Annual Business Plan 2024/25

The Committee considered a report (Y174, previously circulated) containing the East Cambs Trading Company (ECTC) Business Plan 2024/25, as approved by the Company Board on 7th March 2024.

Councillor John Trapp arrived at the meeting at 4.35pm

Emma Grima presented the Business Plan in her capacity as ECTC Property & Commercial Director. She highlighted that the lease on the Fordham Office for Palace Green Homes expired in December 2024 and would not be renewed, with the Property Development Team relocating to either The Grange or Depot.

The ECTC Finance Manager gave an overview of the company's financial position, as detailed on page 13 of the Business Plan.

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

The Chair invited Members to ask questions of clarification to Officer's responses on the Member questions submitted before the meeting.

Members raised the following questions/comments:

A Member commented that the Company was making a profit from Parish Councils and other community organisations on grounds maintenance to generate income for this Council.

The ECTC Finance Manager responded to questions from a Member clarifying the position on house sales, the monitoring of gross profit and loss and allocation of salaries.

A Member queried the response to their final question on page 2 relating to senior management cost recovery and it was agreed that a written response would be provided to Members of the Committee.

The recommendation in the report was proposed by Cllr Bailey and seconded by Cllr Goldsack.

Councillor Bailey speaking on the Motion, stated that ECTC had been established in 2016 not for commercial speculation, but to provide quality services to the local community. However, the Council had benefited from a £5.3M contribution to the MTFS and £1.5M and £1.8M interest repayments to this Council and the Combined Authority respectively. Whilst there were periods of profit and loss whenever selling homes, we should celebrate the provision of those quality homes and the profits to the Council. Councillor Bailey also commended the tremendous success of the Markets, bucking the national trend in the reduction of Markets generally, whilst the parks and open spaces services were a valued and competitive service provided to Parish Councils and community organisations, with tree works a particular specialism. 170 quality homes had been built, 44 of which were affordable or £100K homes. All of these benefits provided by the Trading Company made us the envy of other Councils and all of those involved with ECTC should be thanked for their achievements.

Another Member stated that they could not support the Business Plan and questioned the accounting terminology used which they believed was not standard and made the accounts difficult to understand. The delivery of 30% affordable housing and S106/CIL levels were no more than that provided by the private sector and they did not believe that the income/interest levels generated for the Council would stand up to detailed scrutiny. The Member did not believe that the Council should profit from other public sector bodies.

Several other Members spoke favourably of the benefits from ECTC to the Council, the quality of the new developments and the vibrancy of the Markets

attracting visitors to Ely. They also highlighted the excellent quality of the parks and open spaces services and emphasised that these would not be used by Parish Councils and community organisations if they did not provide value for money and good service.

A recorded vote on the motion having been requested, the motion was declared to be carried with voting as follows:

FOR (6): Cllrs Bailey, Goldsack, Hunt, Lay, Miller, Sharp.

AGAINST (4): Cllrs Cane, Colbert, Dupré, Trapp.

ABSTAIN (0):

It was resolved:

That the ECTC Business Plan 2024/25, as set out in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report, be approved.

92. End of Year Reports 2023/24 and Service Delivery Plans 2024/25

The Committee received a report (Y175, previously circulated) containing the End of Year Reports 2023/24 and the Service Delivery Plans 2024/25 for services within the responsibility of this Committee.

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

The Chair invited Members to ask questions of clarification to Officer's responses on the Member questions submitted before the meeting.

Members raised the following questions/comments:

A Member queried the lack of financial and quality performance measures in respect of the Mepal crematorium project. The Director Finance reported that whilst it was not a specific line within the Finance Service Delivery Plan, project costs would be monitored by the Finance Team, as were all Capital projects.

Infrastructure and Strategic Housing – a member raised questions on outstanding CIL payments and recovery, which were responded to by officers.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Cllr Sharp and seconded by Cllr Bailey.

Some Members expressed concern at the level of outstanding CIL payments and stated that these should be vigorously pursued.

It was resolved unanimously:

That the outcomes in the End of Year Reports 2023/24 (as set out in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report) be noted, and the Service Delivery Plans 2024/25 (as set out in Appendix 2 of the Officer's report) be approved for each of the following services:

- i) Democratic Services
- ii) Economic Development
- iii) Finance
- iv) Human Resources
- v) Infrastructure & Strategic Housing
- vi) Information & Communication Technology
- vii) Legal Services
- viii) Open Spaces & Facilities
- ix) Reprographics
- x) Strategic Planning

93. Local Plan Climate Change and Nature Recovery Chapter: Update on Progress

The Committee received a report (Y176, previously circulated) detailing the latest Government announcements on plan making and climate change and requesting Members to consequently determine how to progress preparation of a Climate Change and Nature Recovery Chapter of a future Local Plan.

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

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Cllr Sharp and seconded by Cllr Lay.

The following amendment then was proposed by Councillor Cane and seconded by Councillor Dupré:

remove 'and' after clause i

add to recommendation:

- iii Ask Officers to keep members updated on progress made by other Councils in formulating policies around embedded carbon.
- iv Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to express this Council's deep frustration about the complex and contradictory policy from national government on planning for net zero homes in England. To explain that the WMS of 13 December 2023 will stifle the attempts of ECDC to take innovative action on climate change through the use of local plan policy to secure energy efficient, net zero new development. And calls on the Minister to rescind

the WMS of 13 December and reaffirm the right of local planning authorities to set higher standards for energy efficiency.

Speaking on the amendment, Councillor Cane stated that the Council had little choice but to delay the process, but this was very frustrating when it was trying to mitigate the risks to climate change. The Council was a growth area and wanted to build high quality homes, which was why representations should be made to the Minister.

Another Member confirmed that the Strategic Planning Manager would keep Members updated on the national position, but it was right to pause matters at the present time. Other Members concurred with this view.

Other Members commented that whilst this Council had not taken a decision on net zero homes, it should have the opportunity to do so.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was declared to be lost.

Speaking on the Motion, Members thanked the Strategic Planning Manager for their update and commended the addition of water as a substantive additional theme.

It was resolved unanimously:

- i) To agree to delay consultation on a draft Climate Change and Nature Recovery Chapter of a future Local Plan until greater clarity emerges on Government expectations for climate policies intended to be included in such a chapter.
- ii) To reaffirm the intention to progress drafting of such a chapter in line with that agreed at the November 2023 Committee meeting, subject to:
 - (a) the outcome of any clarity arising from Recommendation i); and
 - (b) the addition of water as a substantive additional theme for inclusion in the chapter.

94. Hedgehog Recovery Design Guidance – draft for consultation

The Committee received a report (Y177, previously circulated) containing a draft planning policy document relating to hedgehogs for public consultation, with the aim to assist the recovery of hedgehog numbers as part of new development. The Strategic Planning Manager highlighted the high level of local, regional and national publicity for the document.

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

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Cllr Hunt and seconded by Cllr Miller.

Members highly commended the Policy and asked for it to be extensively publicised following the current pre-election restrictions.

It was resolved unanimously:

That the draft Hedgehog Recovery Supplementary Planning Document, attached at Appendix 1 to the officer's report, be approved for public consultation, with such consultation taking place for a minimum of four weeks post May 2024 Police and Crime Commissioner election.

95. Asset Update & Asset Management Plan 2024/25

The Committee considered a report (Y178, previously circulated) containing the updated asset spend tracker 2023/24 and detailing the asset planned spend for 2024/25. The Open Spaces & Facilities Manager highlighted the opening of the Changing Places facility at Soham.

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

A Member requested that an update be provided to Members of the Committee on how asset management records would be affected by the GIS update.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Cllr Hunt and seconded by Cllr Bailey.

Members commended the work of the Team in maintaining the Council's extensive assets portfolio.

It was resolved unanimously:

- i) That the Corporate Asset Management Plan attached at Appendix 1 of the Officer's report, be noted.
- ii) That the Asset Management spend for 2024/25, as detailed in Appendix 2 of the Officer's report, be approved.
- iii) That the Asset Management spend to date 2023/24, as detailed in Appendix 3 of the Officer's report, be noted.

96. Whistleblowing Policy

The Committee received a report (Y179, previously circulated) reviewing the Council's Whistleblowing Policy. The Director Legal explained that the Policy had not been reviewed since December 2014.

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

Members commended the principles within the Policy but commented that some aspects were not easy to understand or follow at present and that it would benefit from independent review by a recognised organisation, Protect, which was an independent specialist charity in this field. Other Members acknowledged the benefits of such an independent review but stated that the revised Policy should be approved, subject to minor amendments, in the first instance, to ensure that an updated version had been adopted by the Council and was available to staff.

It was resolved unanimously:

1. That the Whistleblowing Policy, as set out in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report, be approved subject to the Director Legal & Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, being authorised to make minor textual amendments in the interests of clarity.
2. That the Director Legal & Monitoring Officer and Internal Audit be requested to undertake an investigation into the possible facilitation of an assessment of the Policy by the independent charity Protect and a report on the outcome be submitted to the June meeting of the Committee.

97. Annual Review of Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ("RIPA") & Guidance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources ("CHIS") Policies

The Committee received a report (Y180, previously circulated) containing an annual report regarding a review of the Council's RIPA Policies.

A question relating to this Agenda item had been submitted by a Member prior to the meeting and this, along with answer provided by officers, was set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

It was resolved unanimously:

- i) That the amendments to the RIPA and CHIS Policies, as set out in Appendix 1 and 2 of the Officer's report, be approved.

- ii) That the update on the use of RIPA powers, detailed in paragraph 3.5 of the Officer's report, and the progress regarding training requirements and ongoing compliance be noted.

98. Community Land Trust Pre-Development Grant Application

The Committee received a report (Y181, previously circulated) concerning an application for a grant through the Community Land Trust (CLT) Pre-Development Grant Scheme. The Director Community explained that Kennett CLT had applied for a grant of £35,154.85 to cover the costs related to agreements that they were entering into with the developer of the Kennett Garden Village site, and to becoming a Registered Provider of Social Housing. The application had been assessed and met the grant scheme criteria approved by the Committee in February 2022.

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

The recommendation in the report was proposed by Cllr Bailey and seconded by Cllr Sharp.

A Member queried whether Kennett CLT was eligible for the grant as the application appeared to refer to retrospective items to be funded and questioned whether the properties would be truly 'affordable' for people on average local salaries.

It was resolved:

That a grant to Kennett Community Land Trust of £35,154.85, as set out in paragraphs 4.1 and 4.4 of the Officer's report, be approved.

99. Bus, Cycle, Walk Working Party Notes

The Committee received the Notes of the Bus, Cycle, Walk Working Party meeting held on 26 February 2024.

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

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Notes of the Bus, Cycle, Walk Working Party meeting held on 26 February 2024 be noted.

100. Forward Agenda Plan

The Committee received the updated Forward Agenda Plan for the Committee.

It was resolved:

That the Forward Agenda Plan be noted and the following items added for the dates detailed:

Environment Plan – June meeting

Whistleblowing Policy: Protect Assessment - June meeting

Hedgehog Recovery SPD: Final Version of the SPD for adoption – September 2024

101. Exclusion of the Public including representatives of the Press

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 item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Categories 1, 2, 3 & 4 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

102. ECTC Business Plan 2024/25 – Exempt Appendix

The Committee received the Exempt appendix to the ECTC Business Plan 2024/25 (Agenda Item 6 / Minute 91).

It was resolved:

That the contents of the Exempt Appendix be noted.

103. ECTC Management Accounts

The ECTC Finance Manager presented the ECTC Management Accounts for the nine months to December 2023.

It was resolved:

That the contents of the report be noted.

104. Outstanding CIL Payment

The Committee considered a report regarding action to be taken in relation to an outstanding CIL Payment.

It was resolved:

That the approval be given to the proposed actions in the submitted report.

105. Write-off of Irrecoverable Debts

The Committee considered a report regarding the write-off of irrecoverable debts.

It was resolved:

- i) That the recommendation in paragraph 2.1 of the Officer's report relating to 1 Council Tax write-off and 3 Housing Benefit overpayment write-offs be approved.
- ii) That the 4 Council Tax write-offs and 3 Housing Benefit overpayment write-offs under delegated powers detailed in paragraph 2.2 of the Officer's report be noted.

106. ECTC Board Minutes

The Committee received the Minutes of the ECTC Board meetings held on 5th December 2023 and 8th February 2024.

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Minutes of the meetings held on 5th December 2023 and 8th February 2024 be noted

107. Exempt Minutes

The Committee received the Exempt Minutes from the meeting of the Finance & Assets Committee held on 25 January 2024.

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting concluded at 7:40pm.

Chairman.....

Date

FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE
28 March 2024
QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 6 – ECTC Business Plan

Questioner	Question	Response
Cllr Cane	Were the land sales offered on the open market?	Eden Square, Ely (Former Paradise Pool) was offered for sale on the open market.
Cllr Cane	Does ECTC pay S106/CIL at the same rate as other developers?	Yes.
Cllr Cane	How much interest would ECDC earn through market rates on the amount they expect to loan ECTC in 2024/25 and how much interest will they earn from ECTC?	The forecast average loan to ECTC in 2024/25 is £5.4 million, which at a fixed interest rate of 4.5% will earn interest of £243,000. The average interest earned on investments in February 2025 was 5.08%, assuming this rate remained throughout 2024/25, this would earn an additional £31,320 of interest, although clearly interest rates are forecast to reduce during the coming twelve months.
Cllr Cane	What is the surplus for ECDC on charges for Support Services and Member Services provided to ECTC?	As the Council did not have to employ additional resources to provide the support and member services to ECTC the whole amount of £838,003 is surplus.
Cllr Cane	What is the surplus for ECDC on the accommodation costs charged to ECTC?	The whole amount of £445,174 is surplus.
Cllr Cane	What proportion of income from other organisations comes from Parish Councils, Schools and Charities?	As set out in the Business Plan 29% of ECTC income from the Grounds Maintenance Service is from other organisations. The apportionment for 'other' is as follows: Parish Councils 9.5%

		Schools 73.5% Charity 0.5% Other individual contracts 16.5%
Cllr Cane	Why is PGH forecast to make a Gross Loss in 2023/24?	As the number of houses sold in 2023/24 will only number 10, the profit from these is insufficient to cover all the costs. In future years where there is a larger pipeline of property sales, profit is recorded.
Cllr Cane	Why does the housing sales contribution vary between years from 6% in 2023/24 to 26% in 2026/27?	Where staff are working directly on specific projects, their costs capitalised against the project cost and the costs released into the P&L at the appropriate time (usually on the sale of each property) and is then included within the housing construction costs. The value of this capitalised figure reduced in 23/24 as the level of staff directly involved in projects reduced.
Cllr Cane	Why have salaries increased by 27% in 2023/24?	Where staff are working directly on specific projects, their costs capitalised against the project cost and the costs released into the P&L at the appropriate time (usually on the sale of each property) and is then included within the housing construction costs. The value of this capitalised figure reduced in 23/24 as the level of staff directly involved in projects reduced.
Cllr Cane	Why are salaries expected to decrease by 2% in 2025/26?	The opposite of the above, increased direct work on projects leads to a slight increase in the value of capitalised costs.
Cllr Holtzmann	Why have the roads and open spaces in Haddenham CLT not been transferred to the Parish Council?	The Open Spaces have been transferred to the Parish Council. The roads are being retained by ECTC as they are not being adopted by the Local Highway Authority.
Cllr Holtzmann	What is the overall percentage of affordable homes in all three Arbor Square Phases together?	Phase 1- no affordable housing was required, however, 15 units were provided as Shared Ownership. This represents 16% of Phase 1. Negotiations are in the final stages for Phase 2. Once these negotiations are complete ECTC will be able to confirm the level of affordable housing being delivered on Phase 2. ECTC can

		confirm that at least 33% of Phase 2 will be delivered as affordable housing. Phase 3 remains subject to planning permission.
Cllr Holtzmann	Has ECTC delivered any houses with rooftop solar panels similar to new developments in Cambridge?	None of the houses delivered by ECTC to date have rooftop solar panels. This is being explored for Arbour Square Phase 2.
Cllr Trapp	The table on page 8 of the ECTC business plan gives a false impression: e.g. the Senior Management Cost Recovery is to pay for the use of ECDC staff of which there would be fewer, and cost less, if they did not have to work for ECTC as well, the CIL/S106 payments would be paid by commercial developers had they built this housing – nothing special.	As the Council did not have to employ additional resources to provide the support and member services to ECTC the whole amount identified is a benefit to the Council. It is a matter for the Council to determine whether it would have sold land for development to other developers.
Cllr Trapp	Page 29: Who will be administering the £100k houses, and under what terms?	The Council will allocate the homes in accordance with the Council's £100k Homes Allocations Policy. ECTC will then process the sales for the successful applicants.

Agenda Item 7 - End of Year Reports 2023/24 and Service Delivery Plans 2024/25

Questioner	Question	Response
Cllr Holtzmann	Why is there no professional development for Finance and HR?	Professional development forms part of an individual's training and development plan which is separate to the service plan process.

Cllr Holtzmann	Why is professional development just “as needed” in Legal?	The Director Legal is a solicitor by profession and the SRA CPD year ends on 31 st October. The Senior Legal Assistant is a FCILEX and the CILEX CPD year ends on 30 th September. All other training is as needed for other staff in the legal team, as training sessions/courses will come up during the year.
Cllr Holtzmann	Why is there no professional development planned for the Open Spaces team, given the increased importance of biodiversity?	Professional development forms part of an individual’s training and development plan which is separate to the service plan process. The Open Space Team works with other departments and external partners on the biodiversity requirements. Where identified and necessary training is provided.
Democratic Services		
Cllr Cane	What lessons were learnt from the end of year Performance report for this service?	Two key learning points were: That the Team can reduce its significant level of paper usage via electronic solutions. That there was less ‘churn’ (movers within the District) than we believed – see response below.
Cllr Cane	Why were there less than 10,000 new registrations against a target of 12,000?	Route 2 and Managed Webs, are people who register as moving within the District, either during the Canvass period or on an ‘ad hoc’ basis. We now know from 2 years of data gathering under the new arrangements that there are less of these than we anticipated each year, hence the change to the target for the forthcoming year.
Cllr Cane	Has the Democratic Services Manager post been advertised?	Yes, the post has been advertised with a closing date of 28 March 2024.
Cllr Cane	Why is the target for member seminars simply a number of seminars delivered?	We do compile qualitative information as well (numbers of Councillors attending and feedback received from councillors and trainers on the sessions) but have

	Where is the quality target?	not been asked for this in the past. We can do this on a more formalised basis, if Members wish.
Cllr Cane	What are the plans for improving working between Parish Councils, County Council and CPCA?	Democratic Services have made presentations at the Parish Councils Forum organised by the Communities & Partnerships Team when there are issues relevant for Parishes. Improved working with CCC, the CPCA and GCP would be more of a corporate issue rather than merely a Democratic Services issue.
Cllr Cane	What are the plans for improving working with the GCP?	See above.
Cllr Cane	What are the 3 top risks for delivery of this service plan?	Recruitment to the Democratic Services Manager post and to the soon to be vacant DSO/trainee post as a result of the transfer of the current trainee DSO to the vacant ESO/Trainee post from 1 April 2024.
Cllr Cane	What improvements will residents see as a result of this service plan?	Effective implementation of changes to voter arrangements at forthcoming Elections. Continuation of responsive service for public speaking/participation schemes at committees.
Cllr Trapp	Democratic Services: not clear what is meant by 'Publish and maintain. . . Route 2 Forms' having a target of 85%. Would this disenfranchise some voters?	See above response.
Economic Development		
Cllr Cane	What lessons were learnt from the end of year Performance report for this service?	Shortening response timescales for funding/support programmes became very challenging and resulted in a need to adapt and closely manage economic developments focus.

		<p>Linked to above, a recognition that the council needs to build a wider portfolio of ongoing project ideas/business cases that are suitable for funding and could be expedited to oven ready status.</p>
Cllr Cane	<p>Why is there not a target for revitalising our town centres?</p>	<p>Although not specifically specified in the service delivery plan, support for our local town centre businesses is part of our service offer through advice on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking • Funding opportunities • Skills • Access to planning services <p>Example Phase 3 'Ely Shop Front' grant scheme to be launched in 2024.</p>
Cllr Cane	<p>What are the 3 top risks for delivery of this service plan?</p>	<p>Capacity and effectiveness of the service impacted by staff retention/recruitment.</p> <p>Inability to complete funded projects within agreed timeframes. This could impact the drawn down of funding from Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority in a timely manner.</p> <p>Delays in the decisions and outputs of the Further Education Coldspots study, led by Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority, impacting the further development of post 16 and adult learning and skills opportunities in the district.</p>
Cllr Cane	<p>What improvements will residents see as a result of this service plan?</p>	<p>Delivery of Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund portfolio of projects will deliver a number of improvements for the districts economy. These will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of Wifi network • Digital inclusion project

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of E-Space North offering local employment opportunities in Littleport • Business growth fund supporting local businesses to grow and increase opportunities for better jobs across the district • Outcome of Further Education feasibility study developing a future strategy for post 16 and adult skills development in the district.
Financial Services		
Cllr Cane	What lessons were learnt from the end of year Performance report for this service?	Very little, as performance had been being reviewed throughout the year and steps taken to correct any issues as they became known.
Cllr Cane	Why has the average time taken to collect income in relation to external invoices increased from 18.82 days to 20.07 days?	The Council has limited control over this indicator, other than ensuring that invoices are clear and the remainder schedules is adhered to.
Cllr Cane	Why were the draft Statement of Accounts for 2022/23 not published until the end of September 2023, rather than by the end of July 2023?	Work on the 2022/23 Accounts was delayed while the Audit of the 2021/22 was taking place. It was considered prudent, to get sign-off of these, therefore confirming the brought forward values into 2022/23 before finalising the latter year's Accounts.
Cllr Cane	Why no quality measure on Internal Audit, eg 100% of recommendations implemented to the agreed deadline?	The Director, Finance believes that the Service Plan picks up the key performance indicators for the service. Clearly, an endless list of indicators could be included in the Plan if desired, but the view is that the current indicators provide the correct level of focus.
Cllr Cane	Why no performance measure for monitoring the Trading Companies?	This is a Finance Team Service Plan

Cllr Cane	Why no performance measure for managing the finances, ensuring correct VAT treatment etc for the Mepal Crematorium project	See answer above
Cllr Cane	Why no quality measures on the accounts, eg no significant audit adjustments?	See answer above
Cllr Cane	Why no quality measures on the quarterly management reports, eg Q3 report to be within x% of actual outturn	See answer above
Cllr Cane	What proportion of staff time is spent supporting the Trading companies?	Time recording is not undertaken, but as the Trading Companies have their own finance team, the amount of support provided is relatively small.
Cllr Cane	Why no staff development and CPD?	See answer to Councillor Holtzmann's question above
Cllr Cane	What are the 3 top risks for delivery of this service plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The budget assumes that the Fair Funding Review will take place in April 2026, if this was to be brought forward that would significantly impact on the Council's budget. • The timing of the 2022/23 and 2023/24 Audits of the Statement of Accounts. • Staff changes
Cllr Cane	What improvements will residents see as a result of this service plan?	As an internal support service, there will be little direct impact on residents, but the support provided should allow other services to provide a high quality of service to their customers.

HR Services		
Cllr Cane	What lessons were learnt from the end of year Performance report for this service?	<p>The rollout of the new Business Travel and Expenses Policy has addressed the majority of the actions that were recommended in the Staff Claims Audit. The improvements to the mileage claim form had to be restricted to what could and could not be built which is why we have had to add some instructions for users.</p> <p>Since the new mileage form has gone live, we are aware that some claimants had some problems, e.g. those who had already started a claim, but these have now been rectified.</p>
Cllr Cane	Why no staff development and CPD?	Staff development forms part of an individual's training and development plan which is separate to the service plan.
Cllr Cane	What is HR doing to assist the other departments in recruitment, retention, staff training and analysis of staffing needs	<p>Recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing advice on the procedures • checking and publishing adverts • collating applications • inviting candidates for interview • interviewing (where required) • obtaining references • advising on starting salaries • ensuring Right to work checks and DBS checks have been carried out (if required) • preparing contracts for new starters • supporting managers with the induction and probationary process <p>Retention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recruiting the right people • offering flexible work arrangements • providing opportunities for training and development • offering exit interviews to understand why staff leave <p>Training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • launching a new eLearning system with SkillGate which gives us access to a library of 1300 e-learning courses to support staff's

		<p>professional development, covering topics such as leadership, presentation skills, IT skills and wellbeing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory training, such as Health and Safety, Fraud Awareness, Equality and Inclusion etc. will now be delivered through SkillGate's Traffic Light system and staff will be given 8-weeks to complete them, after that they will receive a red light. Managers will have access to a red/green 'traffic light' report enabling them to see the compliance status of their teams. • For managers who are responsible for approving time and expense claims, HR have created a bespoke e-learning course on the requirements of our new Business Travel and Expenses policy and their responsibilities when approving time and expense claims.
Cllr Cane	What are the 3 top risks for delivery of this service plan	<p>Significant changes to employment legislation scheduled for this year is likely to impact service delivery and meeting the changes required to policies and guidance.</p> <p>Staffing – with only a small team, unforeseen staff absence will significantly impact delivery of the service.</p> <p>Non-compliance with employment legislation</p>
Cllr Cane	What improvements will residents see as a result of this service plan?	The updated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will be updated for 2025-2028 and will be subject to public consultation with residents.
Infrastructure and Strategic Housing		
Cllr Cane	What lessons were learnt from the end of year Performance report for this service?	The positive impact that CIL and other grant funding has on local communities

Cllr Cane	Why has the CIL payments outstanding increased from 4% to 13%?	Potentially due to the current economic climate, as some developers are citing increasing costs as the reason for being unable to pay their CIL contribution. Since the report was produced one payment has been received reducing the figure to 12%
Cllr Cane	Why no reference to provision of retirement accommodation when a Planning Inspector recently described the need within East Cambs as 'acute'?	The service provides for all types of housing. The list is not exhaustive.
Cllr Cane	Why not a clear target for delivering at least 200 affordable homes a year?	ECDC do not directly deliver affordable homes. However, this Service facilitate the delivery through its support to CLTs and the Strategic Housing Enabler's work with the Planning Team.
Cllr Cane	Why no performance measure for improving the CIL financial management, to address the weaknesses identified by internal audit?	All of the actions identified by internal audit have already been completed.
Cllr Cane	Is adequate staff time being allocated to CIL financial management and how is a 'single point of failure' being avoided?	The Council has a CIL Officer who is employed for 30 hours per week, which is considered sufficient. Regular 1:1s are held with the Infrastructure and Strategic Housing Manager to monitor CIL. The Infrastructure and Strategic Housing Manager and Director Community have access to the CIL mailbox and the CIL database and procedure notes are also available to ensure continuity should the CIL Officer be out of the office.
Cllr Cane	What incentive is there for Parishes to provide Parish Walks leaflets if they then have to pay for extra dog bins (as	Dog bins is an issue for the Waste Services Working Party.

	being considered by the Waste Services Working Party)	
Cllr Cane	What are the 3 top risks for delivery of this service plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to National Guidance Legislation impacting on internal processes • The current economy meaning that housebuilding slows down and a reduction in CIL and S106 contributions • Changes to staffing/staff sickness/unable to recruit in post
Cllr Cane	What improvements will residents see as a result of this service plan?	The publication of 5 new route feasibility studies and improved awareness of local walks via the Parish Walks Leaflet project. The benefits provided by CIL and s106 contributions.
ICT		
Cllr Cane	What lessons were learnt from the end of year Performance report for this service?	The ICT Manager is on annual leave – response to follow
Cllr Cane	Have the improvements to the Virtual Environment Software and Storage Infrastructure been delivered?	Currently being delivered within 2024/25. Projects are underway and scheduled for completion by Q3.
Cllr Cane	What resource has been allocated to the GIS data cleansing project?	The ICT Manager is on annual leave – response to follow
Cllr Cane	What are the 3 top risks for delivery of this service plan?	The ICT Manager is on annual leave – response to follow
Cllr Cane	What improvements will residents see as a result of this service plan?	The ICT Manager is on annual leave – response to follow

Legal Services		
Cllr Cane	What lessons were learnt from the end of year Performance report for this service?	Most of our cases are completed within 10 working days; however, s106 agreements and more complex conveyancing matters can be 20 days or more.
Cllr Cane	How does giving a figure for fees recovered provide evidence that recovery has been maximised – shouldn't this be a percentage?	The level of fees recovered is very much determined by the level of instructions/fee paid work that is received and completed
Cllr Cane	How do you ensure that all staff are aware of how to recognise an FOI request especially if it doesn't go through the standard procedure? Where do these measures record FOI requests which were not initially recognised as such?	FOI is covered in the Corporate induction session for new staff where they are advised that if they receive a request for information (that is not already in the public domain) then to forward it to foi@eastcambs.gov.uk where it can be officially logged. Staff will also email the Information Officer if they are not sure to check whether it is an FOI request. The Information Officer does not keep a note of which requests were initially sent to Officers rather than directly to the Information Officer.
Cllr Cane	Why no reference to services provided to the Trading Companies?	No legal services have been provided to the Trading companies through the year.
Cllr Cane	Why no reference to services provided to Parish Councils?	The legal services team is the in-house legal team for the Council and does not provide external advice to Parish Councils. The MO provides Standards advice to Parish Councils only.
Cllr Cane	Why no reference to supporting the Crematorium project?	Apart from input by the Director Legal at CMT, no legal services have been provided to support the Crematorium project this year.

Cllr Cane	What are the 3 top risks for delivery of this service plan?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff retention 2. Recruitment 3. Major legal challenges to the Council/exceptionally large caseload.
Cllr Cane	What improvements will residents see as a result of this service plan?	The continued digitisation of the local land charges service will deliver a simpler and easier customer journey and reduce paper
Open Spaces & Facilities		
Cllr Cane	What lessons were learnt from the end of year Performance report for this service?	<p>It has been important to continue to grow and develop relationships with other agencies to incorporate biodiversity ambitions into our open spaces.</p> <p>Having a central system for managing Council owned assets has enabled the service to monitoring key requirements throughout our asset base.</p>
Cllr Cane	Does ECDC offer Grounds maintenance services or does ECTC?	<p>Historically ECDC does have contracts for Grounds Maintenance Services that are then delivered by ECTC.</p> <p>ECTC also promotes its service to organisations that are not the Council.</p>
Cllr Cane	Why is our priority with partners/agencies, Parish Councils and Schools to maximise income, rather than to deliver a cost effective service?	<p>The service is cost effective in so far as it has the level of human and physical resources necessary to deliver a quality service.</p> <p>The measure of whether the service is cost effective is a matter for those organisations employing the service.</p>
Cllr Cane	How many of our buildings have an EPC rating of each of C, D and E?	<p>C- 6</p> <p>D- 3</p> <p>E- 1</p>
Cllr Cane	Why do we condition the performance measure to protect our environment keeping	Not all areas of land are suitable for biodiversity, for example play areas, and areas for recreational use, e.g. football.

	Biodiversity at the forefront of our operations with “wherever possible”	
Cllr Cane	What are the 3 top risks for delivery of this service plan?	<p>Recruitment of Health & Safety Advisor (there are interim plans in place whilst this is being carried out)</p> <p>Assessing the implications of the Environment Act and the impact this may have on the Council’s Open Spaces. For example, where developers seek to use Council owned land to off-set their biodiversity. We will continue to work closely with the Strategic Planning Team on this.</p> <p>Succession planning needs to be considered and to ensure that recruitment happens so there is limited disruption to service continuity.</p>
Cllr Cane	What improvements will residents see as a result of this service plan?	There are a wide range of services that residents will continue to enjoy, these range from public conveniences to open spaces for play and recreation, and we will continue to work to ensure our assets are maintained responsibly.
Reprographics		
Cllr Cane	What lessons were learnt from the end of year Performance report for this service?	The consistent increase in a demand for Reprographics service across graphic design, specialist printing, mail merge, accessibility and digital integration of council’s print and web publications has been met successfully by the team. The investment into our professional skills, equipment and digital procedures has also improved the efficiencies, maximised the corporate and commercial opportunities and contributed to the council’s budget.

Cllr Cane	What are the 3 top risks for delivery of this service plan?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People – staff shortages, sickness, being unable to recruit to post, lengthy training of any new member of the team and increased difficulty in communication across the ‘part time’ team. 2. Equipment – the provision of the mail service, specialist printing and finishing service, suspect parcel screening, graphic design, photography and mail merge is depended on the availability and safety of the specialist equipment. 3. Software and licensing – the provision of graphic design, specialist printing, photography, mail merge, Document Management System of Planning and Building Control application documents and procurement of consumables is depended on the licensed software and access to the internet.
Cllr Cane	What improvements will residents see as a result of this service plan?	<p>Reprographics is a specialist internal service supporting the delivery of all other services (elections, planning, building control, communications and so on) across graphic design, printing, finishing, mail service and document management. We will continue to support the visibility and recognition of council’s publications by ensuring an accessibility compliance and a consistent corporate branding. We will continue to support the digital and print communications to our residents and businesses via an effective mail service and via the input of planning application documents to Public Access.</p>
Cllr Trapp	Reprographics: First two targets (and even more on following pages) are as a	<p>All requests have been completed to agreed deadlines and the percentages should have been included for the relevant targets. The</p>

	percentage, but the output is no. of items; were there any requests not completed by the agreed deadlines?	numbers are quoted to show the scale of operation.
Cllr Trapp	'One to one' meetings, are they for staff appraisal or some other function?	'One to one' meetings are regular, at least monthly, meetings with individual team members to discuss the progress of additional tasks, review performance and support the development of skills
Strategic Planning		
Cllr Cane	What lessons were learnt from the end of year Performance report for this service?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That preparing neighbourhood plans remains a high priority for many parish councils, and consequently ECDC resource requirements remains high to support such parishes. 2. That the most effective way the Council can further it's climate mitigation and nature recovery ambitions is via engaging with the public on matters which feel real and tangible to the public. For example, our public vote, leading to hedgehog recovery ambitions (rather than ECDC attempting to support change which has less resonance or interest by the general public). 3. That the Environment Act is bringing about fundamental change to this service area, especially in terms of Biodiversity Net Gain, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the new statutory duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
Cllr Cane	What are the resourcing issues which are delaying the Updated Five Year Land Supply?	The Service area is effectively two separate service areas, one half for planning policy/neighbourhood planning and the other half for climate/nature. The planning policy

	<p>What are the implications of the delay?</p>	<p>resource is 1FTE officer, and 0.5FTE manager. However, the 1FTE was only 0.5FTE for the vast majority of the year due to a reduction in hours for the post holder. A recent recruitment exercise failed to secure additional support. The combination of limited staff resource and a higher than expected level of neighbourhood planning meant the updated Five Year Land Supply Report has been delayed. The implications of this delay are not significant, and are outweighed by the successful adoption of the update of the Local Plan in October 2023 which reconfirmed a manageable housing requirement (which then feeds into the five year calculations). The updated Five Year Housing Land Supply Report is imminent, and we are confident it will demonstrate a healthy forward supply of homes well in excess of five years' worth. Of fundamental importance, we are not presently being challenged for a lack of five years supply by any applicant, and have not had to defend such a position at any recent appeals.</p>
<p>Cllr Cane</p>	<p>When is the updated 5 year land supply expected to be published?</p>	<p>Imminently, and certainly before the end of April 2024.</p>
<p>Cllr Cane</p>	<p>Are the BNG arrangements on the website?</p>	<p>Basic BNG arrangements are on the website. However, a large volume of national guidance and regulations were published in February and March 2024, and once fully understood we intend to publish local guidance as soon as possible on our own website. However, BNG is a statutory process, with complex and comprehensive legislation and national guidance, and it is going to be a significant learning exercise for the council, developers and landowners.</p>

Cllr Cane	What are the 3 top risks for delivery of this service plan?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staffing resource. The service area presently comprises just 3.5FTE staff with a 0.5FTE vacancy, covering all aspects of planning policy, neighbourhood planning, climate change, nature recovery and climate adaptation. Staff sickness or resignations can therefore have a major effect on service delivery, compounded by the fact that recruitment of planning officers and ecologists is extremely challenging (this is a local and national issue, not just an East Cambridgeshire issue). Loss of any one of the 3.5FTE would be a major risk. At the point we commence a new Local Plan, we will need to recruit additional experienced planning officers, and there is a considerable risk that this might not be easy or successful. The scale of demand on the service area from parish councils preparing neighbourhood plans needs also to be taken into account. 2. Implementing the provisions of the Environment Act. This is especially so for BNG, because of the complexity, the statutory requirements and the expertise needed. But also the Cambridgeshire wide Local Nature Recovery Strategy (being prepared over 2024/25). 3. The ongoing uncertainty over national plan making legislation. This is in terms of when will the new plan making system come into effect, and what is expected by that new system.
Cllr Cane	What improvements will residents see as a result of this service plan?	<p>Over the coming 12 months, the most prominent improvements residents will see as a result of the service area are anticipated to be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A five year housing land supply maintained, therefore

		<p>significantly reducing the risk of speculative development on the edges of our villages.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. 'On the ground' nature related activity, building on recent activity such as orchard and oak tree planting, pride of place nature related projects and running events such as the Ely Green Fair. 3. More generally, it is hoped that residents will 'see' the Council's on-going commitments to reduce its own carbon emissions and help others reduce theirs.
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Agenda Item 8 - Local Plan Climate Change and Nature Recovery Chapter: Update

Questioner	Question	Response
Cllr Cane	What consultation did the Government carry out before issuing the WMS on 13 December 2023?	None. WMSs do not undergo any form of consultation.
Cllr Cane	Has the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) advised that Local Authorities should continue to pursue net zero policies, in spite of the WMS?	Not exactly in so many words, but it has strongly raised concerns with Government about the content of the 13 December 2023 WMS, as set out in this letter: https://www.tcpa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Joint-Letter-to-SoS-13-Dec-WMS-FINAL_web-vrsn-1.pdf

Agenda Item 9 – Draft Hedgehog Recovery Design Guidance

Questioner	Question	Response
Cllr Cane	Does the Council have an estimate for hedgehog numbers in East Cambs?	No. The only data we have is sightings recorded, which was 76 across East Cambridgeshire in 2023, broken down to specific locations. However, this data is mostly of use to identify where hedgehogs live, rather than their quantity, as many hedgehogs will go unsighted and

		<p>unrecorded, whilst some hedgehogs might get recorded more than once. Part of our long term hedgehog recovery ambitions is to improve our understanding of broad hedgehog numbers and locations in East Cambridgeshire. However, it is reasonable to assume that there has been a very steep decline in hedgehog numbers in East Cambridgeshire on the basis of national evidence together with anecdotal remarks of residents we engaged with over summer 2023, where many older residents commented how few they now see compared with their childhood, whilst many children said they'd never seen a real hedgehog in the wild.</p>
Cllr Cane	<p>Do we have any plans to measure hedgehog numbers?</p>	<p>We actively encourage residents to record sightings on an interactive map, including via this recent press release: https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/press/please-hedgehog-sightings-be-recorded-interactive-map</p> <p>We are focussing on sightings first, to establish more clearly where hedgehogs are present in East Cambridgeshire. This will then help determine the most effective places to create habitats and encourage resident activity. We then hope sightings increase over time, and over wider areas. It is probably impractical to measure actual hedgehog numbers with any accuracy unless a very significant resource was made available.</p>
Cllr Cane	<p>Has the Council considered participating in the National Hedgehog Monitoring Programme - The National Hedgehog Monitoring Programme - People's Trust for Endangered Species (ptes.org)?</p>	<p>We are not presently actively part of that programme, though are aware of the trials on-going. The resource implications would be significant to be actively involved. For now, we are focussing on sightings.</p>
Cllr Holtzmann	<p>If all of EastCambs is in principle suitable for Hedgehogs, why</p>	<p>That quote should not be taken out of context of the policy as a whole. The opening paragraphs of the policy make it clear that the policy as a whole applies to</p>

	<p>does HR1 state that “where hedgehogs are known to be present on site” instead of presuming this in general to create new opportunities for hedgehogs?</p>	<p>all development schemes, irrespective of whether hedgehogs are known to be present.</p> <p>The third paragraph says:</p> <p><i>For all residential development, excluding householder applications, the planning application must provide a scheme of hedgehog recovery proposals, irrespective of whether hedgehogs are known to be on site or not.</i></p> <p>However, where hedgehogs are known to be present, criterion (a) also comes into effect (within which is the text quoted in the question), which requires an additional requirement on developers to set out how those hedgehogs, and their habitats, will be conserved and enhanced.</p>
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Agenda Item 10 – Asset Management Plan 2024/25 and Asset Update

Questioner	Question	Response
Cllr Cane	How will the asset management records be affected by the GIS update?	Detailed discussions are still to be had on this matter.
Cllr Cane	Have all the Council buildings been assessed for RAAC?	An assessment been carried out and no RAAC has been identified. The age of the Council buildings either pre-date the use of RAAC and were built after RAAC was used.
Cllr Cane	What does “where possible” mean in “The Council will ensure that it identifies, assesses and where possible prevents or adequately controls the risks to health from hazardous substances used in or created by workplace activities so as to prevent ill health.”	The document will be amended to replace ‘where possible’ with ‘as necessary’

Cllr Cane	Why did the public carpark works cost so much more than budget despite not carrying out all the works?	Once the work commenced we identified other works that need to be completed and it was more cost effective to complete the works at the same time.
Cllr Cane	Why do the Littleport Depot works show in 2023/24 and 2024/25?	This is to show the full context of the budget approved when the Depot Improvement Budget was originally agreed.
Cllr Cane	Why was spend on gutter cleaning at the Grange twice as much as budgeted?	This because the original quote was for a mechanical clean and when it came to carrying out the works it was necessary for this to be a manual clearance and 2 operatives were needed.
Cllr Holtzmann	Is it correct that Oliver Cromwell House is a freehold and not leased out?	Oliver Cromwell House is owned by the District Council on a freehold basis but is leased to the City of Ely Council.
Cllr Holtzmann	Why is there no management budget and planned expenditure for any of the play areas in the District in Appendix 2?	This is usually spend through Section 106 contributions when the need is identified.
Cllr Holtzmann	The only expenditure in all the play parks in the district was a flag pole. How is broken equipment accounted for?	From time to time there is a need to carry out repairs, maintenance or even replacement of play areas across the district. This is generally met through Section 106 contributions which is separate from the asset budget.

Agenda Item 11 – Whistle Blowing Policy

Questioner	Question	Response
Cllr Cane	Why is there no address for a written letter? It's difficult to be anonymous by email or on the phone	At 7.3 in the Policy, it sets out that concerns can be raised in writing addressed to "Confidential Whistleblowing" at the Council Offices. If Members would prefer that this is amended to "Council Offices at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, Cambridgeshire CB7 4EE"

		<p>then this amendment can be made.</p> <p>The whistleblowing provision on the Council's intranet allows the submission of a whistleblowing concern without an email, telephone number, name, or address.</p>
Cllr Holtzmann	5.3 Who is going to make this decision?	The Council's Monitoring Officer as set out in the Constitution.
Cllr Holtzmann	6.4 How can the council establish whether there is a reasonable belief? Could this be circumvented by having an independent institution to follow up with any concerns?	The test is whether the employee has a reasonable belief that the disclosure is in the public interest as set out in the legislation. This is an objective test and is made on a case by case basis.
Cllr Holtzmann	7.3. Who monitors whistleblowing.eastcambs.gov.uk?	The Monitoring Officer.
Cllr Holtzmann	8.5. Why are acknowledgement and response not separate?	8.5 states that the acknowledgement will be sent with an indication of how long it will take to provide a final response. The response will therefore be sent separately after investigation
Cllr Holtzmann	8.7. How is that decided?	The Monitoring Officer will make this decision depending on the severity of the concern.
Cllr Trapp	Page 10, para. 8.5: why is the acknowledgement of receipt not done asap, and, as here, entwined with the outcome of the initial findings?	8.5 states that the acknowledgement will be sent with an indication of how long it will take to provide a final response. The response will therefore be sent separately after investigation

Agenda Item 12 – Annual Review of RIPA Policies

Questioner	Question	Response
Cllr Cane	Why is an Equality Impact Assessment not required?	The changes made to the RIPA and CHIS policies refer to staff training and this has no external effect. Therefore, an EIA is not required.

Agenda Item 13 - Community Land Trust Pre-Development Grant Application

Questioner	Question	Response
Cllr Cane	Will the affordable houses be for rent only?	There will be a mix of affordable rent and shared ownership homes.
Cllr Cane	Why weren't these costs covered as part of the agreement to sell the land to Bellway Homes?	It is not unusual for such fees to be covered by the CLT. Some fees were secured through the Community Housing Fund. Unfortunately, the fees awarded for lender arrangements were returned to Homes England as they could not be spent within the time frames prescribed by Homes England.
Cllr Cane	Has Lucy Frazer MP shared her concerns about Bellway Homes with the District Council?	It is understood that Lucy Frazer MP raised concerns directly with Bellway.
Cllr Cane	Why did the CLT have negative grant income in the year to 31 March 2023?	As a consequence of the protracted negotiations Kennett CLT could not spend part of their grant award (related to lender fees) and therefore the money had to be returned to Homes England.
Cllr Cane	The CLT's accounts for the year to 31 March 2023 state "Contract negotiations on the individual sale agreements with Bellway for our 30 homes, 4 x SB Plots, the CLT Office, the Allotments, the Healthcare facility land in the Village Centre, and the Public Open Space. Because the negotiations have been protracted, Solicitor's	The CLT has seen an increase of fees that result from the protracted negotiations. The request arises from the increase that cannot be covered from grants already secured and paid out. If this grant is approved, then Kennett CLT can continue with completing the necessary agreements.

	and our Legal adviser's fees have risen so we needed to apply for a grant from the ECDC CLT fund to cover these." How does that comply with ""The grant cannot be used to fund activity that has happened in the past, or prior to the grant being awarded. Groups must not start spending any money until the grant has been approved by way of issuing a formal grant agreement."?	
Cllr Cane	Did Kennett CLT become a Registered Provider of Social Housing?	Kennett CLT is in the process of becoming a Registered Provider. The initial application was submitted; however, the application was cancelled by the Regulator as Kennett CLT (due to the delays referenced) could not provide evidence of ownership within the prescribed timescales. The Regulator has requested that the CLT reapplies at the point on which a known date of ownership (and evidence of contracts) can be provided. No fees have been paid to the Regulator to date.
Cllr Cane	Does Kennett CLT have the power to pay dividends, as suggested by their accounts to the year ended 31 March 2023?	Kennett CLT is a Community Benefit Society and therefore is not capable of paying dividends. Surplus/profit will be reinvested into community activities defined in the objects. Officers have confirmed with Kennett CLT that there has not been a change to this registration. It has been brought to the CLTs attention that the accounts reference Co-operative and Community Benefits Society.
Cllr Cane	What is the average wage for people in Kennett and for people in East Cambridgeshire?	The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Insight Website provides data on various themes including Employment.

		<p>Local-Economic-Assessment-Technical-Document-East-Cambridgeshire.pdf (wpengine.com)</p> <p>Some information is available at Ward level (Fordham & Isleham)</p> <p>Overview - Ward Fordham & Isleham Report Builder for ArcGIS (cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk)</p> <p>No information is held specific to Kennett.</p>
Cllr Cane	What are the planned affordable housing costs?	<p>It is unclear what the question is asking.</p> <p>If the question relates to how much Kennett CLT are paying for the houses from Bellway, this information is not in the public domain.</p> <p>If the question relates to how much an individual will pay the CLT for the benefit of occupying a rented or shared ownership property, then affordable rent will be charged at 80% of market value and shared ownership charged in accordance with the rules of shared ownership properties. There is currently a limit on the charge set at 2.75% of the value of the shared owned by Kennett CLT.</p>
Cllr Cane	Have Kennett CLT received a grant from the Community Housing Fund, or other funder, to become a Registered Provider of Social Housing, complete the obtain valuations and a mortgage lenders commitment and to complete the development and sale agreements?	<p>Kennett CLT has previously received a grant from the Community Housing Fund for:</p> <p>Legal fees for Development and Sale Agreements. The funding sought from the Council is additional to what was secured from this grant.</p> <p>Legal Adviser Fees. The funding sought from the Council is additional to what was secured from this grant.</p> <p>Registered Provider Application fees. No funds were spent from the Community Housing Fund and these were reprofiled with Homes England and spent on more Community Engagement work.</p> <p>VAT Advice.</p>

		<p>RICS survey.</p> <p>Community engagement. As referenced above this was increased following reprofiling.</p> <p>Admin and finance costs.</p> <p>Commitment Fee from Lender. As referenced above this was returned to Homes England as it could not be spent within the prescribed timeframe.</p> <p>Director Community is satisfied that there is no doubling between the grants previously awarded and the grant being sought.</p>
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Agenda Item 14 – Bus, Cycle, Walk Working Party

Questioner	Question	Response
Cllr Cane	Why wasn't a meeting called to discuss the route options under the Combined Authority Mayoral precept?	This area of work is not within the Terms of Reference of the Bus, Cycle, Walk Working Party.
Cllr Trapp	Do we have a complete list of cycle paths that have been approved for going forward?	<p>Sustrans have produced route feasibility studies for the following routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fordham to Burwell • Haddenham to the A142 • Little Downham to Ely • Littleport to Ely • Swaffham Prior to Burwell • Ely – Stuntey – Soham • Mepal – Sutton – Witcham – Witchford • Isleham to Fordham • Sutton to Earith • Wilburton to Cottenham <p>They also updated the cost section in the Wicken to Soham Route feasibility study.</p>

TITLE: Financial Outturn Report 2023/24

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 27th June 2024

Author: Director, Finance

Report number: Z19

Contact Officer: Ian Smith

Director, Finance

Tel: (01353) 616470

E-mail: ian.smith@eastcambs.gov.uk

Room 104. The Grange, Ely

1.0 Issue

1.1 This report provides Members with yearend budget monitoring information for services under the Finance & Assets Committee and then, as part of its corporate remit, for the Council as a whole.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are requested to note:

- this Committee has a yearend underspend of £1,965,000 when compared to its approved revenue budget of £6,028,412.
- that overall the Council has a yearend underspend of £2,596,480 when compared to its approved revenue budget of £16,856,960.
- that the overall position for the Council on Capital is outturn of £3,200,385, which is an underspend of £4,600,402 when compared to the revised budget.

2.2 Members are asked to approve the carry forward of slippage on the 2023/24 capital programme into 2024/25, as detailed in appendix 3.

3.0 Budget Monitoring

3.1 Under Financial Regulations, each policy committee is required to consider projections of financial performance against both its revenue and capital budget on a quarterly basis, with this Committee further considering the overall Council position.

3.2 This is the final report for the 2023/24 financial year and details actual expenditure incurred, income received and accruals as at 31st March 2024.

Revenue

- 3.3 Appendix 1 details the overall revenue position for both this Committee and the Council overall. In appendix 1 the budgets under the stewardship of this Committee are shown in detail, with then, the position for the Operational Services Committee and the funding lines shown in summary.
- 3.4 The detailed revenue position for the Operational Services Committee is shown in appendix 2. There are nine yearend variances of over £10,000 being reported, with the net position being that the Committee has overspent by £135,580 at yearend when compared to its net budget. The main factor leading to this is a £564,000 overspend on Planning where income levels were significantly lower than the level anticipated when the budget was built, an overspend within ECSS on Refuse Recycling & Collection and Street Cleansing of £154,000, Building Control £40,000 due to a decrease in income and a lower amount of income received within the travellers budget this year, £30,000. This was partially counteracted by unringfenced funds in relation to Ukrainian visitors being left as an underspend £505,000, GLL paying an increased surplus to the Council, £69,000 in relation to the Hive, an increase in income from Licencing £46,000 and an underspend in Community Projects & Grants as only two grants were awarded this year, £19,000. Further details are included in the Budget Monitoring Report to be presented to Operational Services Committee on the 24th June 2024.
- 3.5 Explanations for the year-end variances reported for this committee are detailed in the table below :

Service	Variance £	Explanation
Asset Management	£46,268	The cost of work in 2023/24 increased due to unforeseen problems not known about when work commenced – this led to additional work being carried out.
Corporate Management	(£153,857)	The 2022/23 external Audit is now expected to be less substantive than in previous years, therefore we expect the cost charged to be reduced.
Council Tax Accounting	£20,740	ARP overspent its budget and therefore required a further payment from each of its partner authorities
Crematorium	£16,210	Expenditure was incurred moving the project forward to final business case
Data Management Reprographics	£10,017 (£15,345)	Increased machine and staff costs over the past 12 months caused a overspend in the DMS/Reprographics team. This has been counteracted by increased funds generated by the Reprographics team.

Economic Development	(£89,152)	Income was in advance of expectation during the year, helped by a multi-room tenant remaining at E-space South for longer than anticipated.
General Gang	(£54,063)	This resulted from a staff vacancy in the team throughout this financial year.
Housing Benefits	(£11,275)	Because of timing issues, the 2023/24 budget for housing benefits reflects 2022/23 expenditure, whereas the actual reflects transaction in year.
Housing Strategic	(£194,384)	There were savings in staff costs due to vacancies in the team with some posts being filled via SLAs . There was also an underspend on the consultancy budget.
HR	(£26,049)	The majority of in-house training costs were covered by other sources of funding, therefore there is an underspend on the budget in year.
Interest & Financial Transactions	(£1,294,221)	The Council is benefiting from improved interest rates on its treasury investments leading to higher receipts than budgeted.
Land Charges Admin	£39,753	The loss of income for LLC1 searches proved to be a significant reduction in Local Land Search fees over the year. This has been counteracted to some degree by a saving in staff but the net position still shows an overspend.
Legal	(£37,480)	Vacancies in the Legal Team have resulted in a saving on salaries. The increase in Council legal service fees have virtually doubled this year.
Local Plans	(£48,855)	Grant was received from DEFRA for Ecology work. This produced saving in both the consultant & staffing budgets.
Management Team	(£10,350)	More of the Director, Commercial's time was charged to the trading companies, leading to this underspend.
Member & Committee Support	(£68,862)	This reflects vacancies within the department during the 2023/24. The Members ICT budget allowed for all

		new councillors to have laptops, however only a few of them requested them in 2023/24.
Miscellaneous Finance	(£84,031)	Unrequired reserves were written off during the year.
Miscellaneous Properties	(£18,047)	Increased income received in 2023/24 for council properties.
Parking of Vehicles	(£46,558)	Car parking income slowly got back towards pre-Covid levels. We received a rates reduction on Car Parks and did not need to spend the ground contract budget at the Hive.
Public Conveniences	£52,628	A requirement for increased standards of cleanliness since Covid have meant we have cleaned the toilets more frequently. Furthermore, we have had to use temporary staff to cover sickness and holiday as it is a seven day service.
Register of Electors	(£14,475)	Printing costs reduced in 2023/24 and sales of Electoral Registers increased threefold over the year.
Trees Preservation	£36,956	Equipment hire costs were charged for 2023/24, plus staffing costs from a previous financial year.
Internal Drainage Board	(£61,275)	One-off Government support grant was provided in 2023/24.
Other Government Grants	(£95,063)	Government provided grant funding to allow local authorities to support the most vulnerable households, this value reflects the amount that we received.
Movement in Reserves / Funding	£47,693	This reflects the spending of the above grant, less a reduced payment to the Combined Authority for Business Rates for Lancaster Way.
Business Rates	(£658,766)	Much of this additional income relates to solar farms where the District Council retains 100% of Business Rates.

Capital

- 3.7 The Council's revised capital budget stands at £7,800,787; including £1,237,281 of slippage brought forward from 2022/23 and a reduction of £5,793 on Disability Facilities grant spend, where the capital element of the grant received from the County Council is lower than predicted in the budget.
- 3.8 The outturn position is £3,200,385, an underspend of £4,600,402. The underspend primarily relates four projects:
- The purchase of Waste vehicles where the price agreed for the ten refuse collection vehicles is lower than that originally expected. See report to Operational Services Committee on the 27th March 2023.
 - The contingency budget set up for the purchase of new Waste bins, was not spent in 2023/24.
 - Disability Facility Grants, where a significant underspend occurred in the COVID years, which has since been carried forward. It is now considered unlikely that the Council will be able to totally catch up with this work and as budget provision is built into the MTFS for future years, only a proportion will be carried forward.
 - ECTC didn't require any further borrowing from the Council in 2023/24, indeed during the year, £1,000,000 of the amount previously loaned was paid back to the Council. The total value now loaned is £5,000,000.

4.0 Arguments/Conclusions

- 4.1. The net revenue underspend for the Council is £2,596,480 when compared to the budget approved by Council in February 2023. This will be moved to the Surplus Savings Reserve.

5.0 Additional Implications Assessment

- 5.1 In the table below, please put Yes or No in each box:

Financial Implications Yes	Legal Implications No	Human Resources (HR) Implications No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) No	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) No	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) No

5.2 Financial Implications

The underspend reported in this report has been added to the Council's Surplus Savings Reserve and will become available to balance the budget in future years.

6.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Summary Budget Monitoring Report – 31st March 2024

Appendix 2 – Operational Services Budget Monitoring Report – 31st March 2024.

Appendix 3 – Capital Budget Monitoring Report – 31st March 2024.

Appendix 4 – Reserve Balances – 31st March 2024

7.0 Background documents

Council Budget approved by Full Council on the 21st February 2023

FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE YEAREND REPORT - 31st March 2024

Revenue	Total Budget 2023-24	Actual to 31 March 2024	Variance	Variance between Total Budget & Projected Outturn December 2023
	£	£	£	£
Asset Management	(85,879)	(39,611)	46,268	
Award Ditches	12,326	13,225	899	
Civic Relations	23,692	16,886	(6,806)	
Closed Churchyards	36,259	36,515	256	
Community Safety	--	--	--	
Community Transport	15,000	15,000	--	
Corporate Management	383,053	229,196	(153,857)	(50,000)
Cost of Other Elections	--	--	--	
Council Tax Accounting	538,783	559,523	20,740	
Crematorium	--	16,210	16,210	7,500
Data Management	110,822	120,839	10,017	
Depot Services	(65,977)	(63,151)	2,826	
Economic Development	107,877	18,725	(89,152)	(88,000)
Financial Services	295,597	288,209	(7,388)	
General Gang	99,271	45,208	(54,063)	(30,000)
Health & Safety (Work)	26,696	24,330	(2,366)	
Housing Benefits	410,147	398,872	(11,275)	(5,000)
Housing Strategic	192,954	(1,430)	(194,384)	(150,000)
Human Resources	242,675	216,626	(26,049)	(10,000)
Interest & Financial Transactions	(660,452)	(1,954,673)	(1,294,221)	(800,000)
Internal Audit	80,038	78,014	(2,024)	
Land Charges Admin	(52,356)	(12,603)	39,753	25,000
Legal	165,269	127,789	(37,480)	(46,000)
Local Elections	22,500	22,500	--	
Local Plans	145,111	96,256	(48,855)	
Management Team	771,860	761,510	(10,350)	
Member & Committee Support	629,577	560,715	(68,862)	(60,000)
Miscellaneous Properties	(4,393)	(22,440)	(18,047)	28,000
Miscellaneous Finance	722,713	638,682	(84,031)	
Museums - Old Gaol House	3,571	1,254	(2,317)	
NNDR Collection Costs	47,266	40,322	(6,944)	
Office Accommodation	611,195	608,793	(2,402)	(29,000)
Oliver Cromwell House	--	--	--	
Out Of Hours call out Service	14,000	10,682	(3,318)	
Parking Of Vehicles	171,956	125,398	(46,558)	20,000
Parks And Gardens Team	378,187	380,474	2,287	
Payroll	92,770	99,067	6,297	
Public Conveniences	193,235	245,863	52,628	15,000
Refuse Collection	--	--	--	
Registration of Electors	45,091	30,616	(14,475)	
Reprographics	156,130	140,785	(15,345)	(15,000)
Sport & Recreation	88,377	88,809	432	
Trees Preservation	63,471	100,427	36,956	
Finance & Assets Committee Total	6,028,412	4,063,412	(1,965,000)	(1,187,500)
Operational Services Committee	6,907,262	7,042,842	135,580	547,000
Other Spend				
Parish Precepts	3,000,653	3,000,653	--	--
Internal Drainage Boards	632,991	571,716	(61,275)	(61,500)
Movement in Corporate Reserves	287,642	335,335	47,693	
Revenue Budget Total	16,856,960	15,013,958	(1,843,002)	(702,000)
Funding				
Council Tax	(7,580,954)	(7,580,954)	--	--
Revenue Support Grant	(102,089)	(102,089)	--	--
Business Rates	(5,717,544)	(6,375,959)	(658,415)	(150,000)
Other Government Grants (NHB / RSG etc.)	(1,480,794)	(1,575,857)	(95,063)	--
Budgeted draw from Surplus Savings Reserve	(1,975,579)	(1,975,579)	--	--
	(16,856,960)	(17,610,438)	(753,478)	(150,000)
Revenue Total	--	(2,596,480)	(2,596,480)	(852,000)

OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - 2023/24

Revenue	Total Budget 2023/24	Actual to 31 March 2024	Variance	Variance between Total Budget & Projected Outturn December 2023
	£	£	£	£
Building Regulations	36,736	76,891	40,155	30,000
CIL	--	--	--	
Civic Amenities Act	--	--	--	
Climate Change	100,000	100,000	--	
Community Projects & Grants	195,322	176,054	(19,268)	
Community Safety	62,133	61,937	(196)	
Cons.Area & Listed Buildings	69,861	71,989	2,128	
Customer Services	543,885	551,148	7,263	
Dog Warden Scheme	43,226	45,774	2,548	
Ely Markets	--	--	--	
Emergency Planning	30,024	29,155	(869)	
Environmental Issues	147,961	173,117	25,156	32,000
Health - Admin. & Misc.	529,805	503,488	(26,317)	
Homelessness	247,158	(257,452)	(504,610)	(50,000)
IT	1,011,782	1,016,032	4,250	
Leisure Centre	(301,550)	(370,746)	(69,196)	
Licencing	19,067	(26,504)	(45,571)	
Marketing & Grants	42,192	35,444	(6,748)	
Neighbourhood Panels	1,500	1,018	(482)	
Nuisance Investigation	103,673	105,100	1,427	
Pest Control	11,033	9,119	(1,914)	
Planning	253,594	817,389	563,795	500,000
Public Relations	109,883	108,923	(960)	
Refuse Recycling	1,276,987	1,267,064	(9,923)	
Refuse Collection	1,497,443	1,651,882	154,439	
Street Cleansing	876,471	876,471	--	
Street Naming & Numbering	16,704	6,995	(9,709)	
Travellers Sites	(17,628)	12,554	30,182	35,000
Revenue Total	6,907,262	7,042,842	135,580	547,000

CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2023/24

Capital	Published Budget 2023-24 £	Slippage from 2022-23 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2023-24 £	Outturn £	Variance between Revised Budget & Outturn £	Carry forward into 2024/25 £
OPERATIONAL SERVICES							
Conservation Area Schemes - 2nd round		27,506		27,506	0	(27,506)	27,506
Refuse & Cleansing Vehicles	2,775,000			2,775,000	1,947,470	(827,530)	(35,136)
Waste - Wheelied Bins	1,040,000			1,040,000	50,760	(989,240)	
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants	697,299	928,801	(5,793)	1,620,307	617,925	(1,002,382)	388,864
Empty Properties, Discretionary DFGs, Minor Works, Home Repair Asst.	75,000			75,000	77,532	2,532	
Vehicle Etc. Replacements	100,000			100,000	168,066	68,066	
Leisure Centre				0	0	0	
Operational Services Total	4,687,299	956,307	(5,793)	5,637,813	2,861,753	(2,776,060)	381,234
FINANCE & ASSETS							
Solar Panels on Council Buildings	100,000	50,000		150,000	49,900	(100,100)	100,100
Depot	0	636,624		636,624	288,732	(347,892)	347,892
A14 Contribution	82,000	(82,000)		0	0	0	
Loan to EC CLT	0	76,350		76,350	0	(76,350)	76,350
New Loan Agreement with ECTC	1,700,000	(400,000)		1,300,000	0	(1,300,000)	200,000
Finance & Assets Total	1,882,000	280,974	0	2,162,974	338,632	(1,824,342)	724,342
Total	6,569,299	1,237,281	(5,793)	7,800,787	3,200,385	(4,600,402)	1,105,576

SOURCES OF FINANCING	Published Budget 2023-24 £	Slippage from 2022-23 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2023-24 £	Variations £	Outturn £	Carry forward into 2024/25 £
Operational Services							
Revenue Contributions	0	0		0	5,661	5,661	
Grants / Contributions (DFG)	608,471	404,111	(5,793)	1,006,789	(388,864)	617,925	388,864
Capital Receipts	203,828	552,196		756,024	(647,732)	108,292	27,506
Borrowing	3,775,000	0		3,775,000	(2,218,848)	1,556,152	(35,136)
Section 106 / CIL	100,000	0		100,000	473,723	573,723	
Operational Services Total	4,687,299	956,307	(5,793)	5,637,813	(2,776,060)	2,861,753	381,234
Finance & Assets							
Revenue Contributions	42,000	(42,000)		0	0	0	
Capital Receipts	100,000	50,000		150,000	(100,100)	49,900	100,100
Section 106 / CIL	40,000	(40,000)		0	0	0	
Borrowing	1,700,000	312,974		2,012,974	(1,724,242)	288,732	624,242
Finance & Assets Total	1,882,000	280,974	0	2,162,974	(1,824,342)	338,632	724,342
Capital Funding Total	6,569,299	1,237,281	(5,793)	7,800,787	(4,600,402)	3,200,385	1,105,576

Capital Resources Forecast	Published Budget 2023-24 £	Slippage from 2022-23 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2023-24 £	Variations £	Outturn £
Balance Brought Forward	1,396,717	84,085		1,480,802		1,480,802
Add receipts from Sales of Assets	50,000			50,000	413,092	463,092
Less Capital Receipts Applied	(303,828)	(602,196)		(906,024)	747,832	(158,192)
Capital Reserves Carried Forward	1,142,889	(518,111)	0	624,778	1,160,924	1,785,702

Borrowing	Published Budget 2023-24 £	Slippage from 2022-23 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2023-24 £	Variations £	Outturn £
Balance Brought Forward	10,012,611	114,065		10,126,676		10,126,676
Less MRP Applied	(327,765)			(327,765)	8,384	(319,381)
Repayment from ECTC				0	(1,000,000)	(1,000,000)
Add additional Borrowing Applied	5,475,000	312,974	0	5,787,974	(3,943,090)	1,844,884
Borrowing Carried Forward	15,159,846	427,039	0	15,586,885	(4,934,706)	10,652,179

Reserve Accounts

Description	2023/24			
	Opening Balance 1 April	Transfers to Reserve	Contributions from Reserve	Forecast Balance 31 March
	£	£	£	£
District Elections	161,932		(136,536)	25,397
Historic Buildings Grants	6,190		(6,190)	0
Housing Conditions Survey	25,000	5,000		30,000
Change Management	231,558		(174,257)	57,301
Major Project Development	100,000			100,000
Surplus Savings Reserve	8,554,452	2,596,480	(1,975,579)	9,175,353
Vehicle Replacements	74,240			74,240
Sports Facilities Funding Reserve	288,000		(230,000)	58,000
IT	160,000			160,000
CIL Admin	217,069		(10,449)	206,620
Asset Management	12,679		(12,679)	0
Care and Repair	45,000		(45,000)	0
Community Fund Reserves	30,884		(4,500)	26,384
Housing	79,547		(9,621)	69,926
Affordable Housing	221,800		(90,635)	131,165
General Fund Balance	1,063,294	174,257		1,237,551
Commercial Invest to Save	20,000			20,000
CLT Grant Applications	20,000			20,000
Travellers' Sites	0			0
Enterprise Zone NNDR	738,418	240,273	(22,762)	955,929
Cambridgeshire Horizons - General	431,119			431,119
Growth and Infrastructure Fund	2,307,216		(201,361)	2,105,855
Exceptional Hardship Fund	2,637	95,062	(88,896)	8,803
Climate Change	70,999	7,489		78,488
Other				
CIL	10,435,509	2,017,195		12,452,704
Section 106 Agreements	3,467,395	742,875	(494,089)	3,716,182
Internal Borrowing	(10,126,676)	(1,844,884)	1,319,381	(10,652,179)
Total Reserves	18,638,263	4,033,747	(2,183,172)	20,488,838

Total Reserves	14,862,035	3,118,561	(3,008,465)	14,972,131
General Fund	1,063,294	174,257	0	1,237,551
Earmarked Reserves	13,798,741	2,944,304	(3,008,465)	13,734,580

Increase / (decrease) in Earmarked Reserves (64,160)

TITLE: 2023/24 TREASURY OPERATIONS ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Committee: Finance and Assets Committee

Date: 27th June 2024

Author: Director, Finance

Report No: Z20

Contact Officer:

Ian Smith, Director, Finance

ian.smith@eastcambs.gov.uk; 01353 616470; Room 104, The Grange, Ely

1.0 Issue

1.1 To report on the Council's treasury operations during the 2023/24 financial year.

1.2 This report reviews the Treasury Management activity during the financial year 2023/24 and reports on the prudential indicators as required by CIPFA's Treasury Management Code of Practice.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1. Members are asked to recommend to Full Council that they approve this report detailing the Council's treasury operations during 2023/24, including the prudential and treasury indicators, as set out in the Annual Treasury Management Review (Appendix 1).

3.0 Background / Options

3.1 This Council is required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators each year, this is the report for 2023/24. This report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management (the Code) and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the Prudential Code).

3.2 During 2023/24 the minimum reporting requirements were that

(1) Full Council should receive the following reports:

- an annual treasury strategy in advance of the year (approved by Full Council on the 21st February 2023);
- a mid-year treasury update report, (this was reviewed by Finance and Assets Committee on 23rd November 2023 and approved by Full Council on the 20th February 2024);

- an annual review following the end of the year, describing the activity compared to the strategy (this report).

(2) A further Member Committee should receive

- reports at the end of the other quarters (these were incorporated into the Finance Reports presented to Finance and Assets Committee on the 23rd November 2023 and 25th January 2024).

4.0 Results

- 4.1 Cash investments totalled £31.579 million as at 31st March 2024, an increase of £1.638 million on the previous year. The Council’s cash investments were all for periods of less than one year.
- 4.2 The increase in cash is mainly as a consequence of the Council’s overall underspend in 2023/24 and increased levels in the Council Tax and Business Rates Collection Funds as these were not impacted by the cost of living crisis to the degree forecast when the original budget was set.
- 4.3 The Council’s loan to ECTC decreased from £6.0 million at 31st March 2023 to £5.0 million at 31st March 2024.
- 4.4 Interest received during the financial year was £2,115,332, which was £1,313,742 above the budget of £801,590. This figure was made up of £1,859,879 from investment in money markets and other short, fixed term investments and £255,453 from the loan to ECTC.
- 4.5 The average rate of return on cash investments held during the year (this excludes the loan to ECTC) was 5.492%.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 The size of the Council’s investment portfolio has historically been relatively small, meaning that investment decisions have had to be made primarily to accommodate cashflow requirements as opposed to optimising investment returns. While the value of the portfolio is now higher than in previous years, these disciplines have been retained, although opportunities for some pro-active investment decisions were taken during the year, with funds being moved to longer-term investments (three and six month) and away from overnight accounts.
- 5.2 During the financial year the Council operated within its approved treasury limits and prudential indicators.

6.0 Additional Implications Assessment

6.1 In the table below, please put Yes or No in each box:

Financial Implications Yes	Legal Implications No	Human Resources (HR) Implications No
--------------------------------------	---------------------------------	--

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) No	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) No	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) No
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6.2 **Financial Implications**

The additional income gained from interest receipts has contributed to the Council's net underspend in 2023/24, as detailed in the Yearend Finance Report also on this meeting's agenda.

7.0 **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Annual Treasury Management Review 2023/24

8.0 **Background Documents:**

Treasury Management Strategy as approved by Full Council on the 21st February 2023.

Annual Treasury Management Review 2023/24

East Cambridgeshire District Council
April 2024

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS REPORT

CE: Capital Economics - is the economics consultancy that provides Link Group, Treasury solutions, with independent economic forecasts, briefings and research.

CFR: capital financing requirement - the Council's annual underlying borrowing need to finance capital expenditure and a measure of the Council's total outstanding indebtedness.

CIPFA: Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy – the professional accounting body that oversees and sets standards in local authority finance and treasury management.

CPI: consumer price index – the official measure of inflation adopted as a common standard by the UK and countries in the EU. It is a measure that examines the weighted average of prices of a basket of consumer goods and services, such as transportation, food and medical care. It is calculated by taking price changes for each item in the predetermined basket of goods and averaging them.

DLUHC: the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - the Government department that directs local authorities in England.

ECB: European Central Bank - the central bank for the Eurozone

EU: European Union

EZ: Eurozone -those countries in the EU which use the euro as their currency

Fed: the Federal Reserve System, often referred to simply as "the Fed," is the central bank of the United States. It was created by the Congress to provide the nation with a stable monetary and financial system.

FOMC: the Federal Open Market Committee – this is the branch of the Federal Reserve Board which determines monetary policy in the USA by setting interest rates and determining quantitative easing/tightening policy. It is composed of twelve members - the seven members of the Board of Governors and five of the 12 Reserve Bank presidents.

GDP: gross domestic product – a measure of the growth and total size of the economy.

G7: the group of seven countries that form an informal bloc of industrialised democracies - the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom - that meets annually to discuss issues such as global economic governance, international security, and energy policy.

Gilts: gilts are bonds issued by the UK Government to borrow money on the financial markets. Interest paid by the Government on gilts is called a coupon and is at a rate that is fixed for the duration until maturity of the gilt, (unless a gilt is index linked to inflation); while the coupon rate is fixed, the yields will change inversely to the price of gilts i.e., a rise in the price of a gilt will mean that its yield will fall.

IMF: International Monetary Fund - the lender of last resort for national governments which get into financial difficulties.

MPC: the Monetary Policy Committee is a committee of the Bank of England, which meets for one and a half days, eight times a year, to determine monetary policy by setting the official interest rate

in the United Kingdom, (the Bank of England Base Rate, commonly called Bank Rate), and by making decisions on quantitative easing/tightening.

MRP: minimum revenue provision - a statutory annual minimum revenue charge to reduce the total outstanding CFR, (the total indebtedness of a local authority).

PFI: Private Finance Initiative – capital expenditure financed by the private sector i.e., not by direct borrowing by a local authority.

PWLB: Public Works Loan Board – this is the part of H.M. Treasury which provides loans to local authorities to finance capital expenditure.

QE/QT: quantitative easing – is an unconventional form of monetary policy where a central bank creates new money electronically to buy financial assets, such as government bonds, (but may also include corporate bonds). This process aims to stimulate economic growth through increased private sector spending in the economy and also aims to return inflation to target. These purchases increase the supply of liquidity to the economy; this policy is employed when lowering interest rates has failed to stimulate economic growth to an acceptable level and to lift inflation to target. Once QE has achieved its objectives of stimulating growth and inflation, QE will be reversed by selling the bonds the central bank had previously purchased, or by not replacing debt that it held which matures. This is called quantitative tightening. The aim of this reversal is to ensure that inflation does not exceed its target once the economy recovers from a sustained period of depressed growth and inflation. Economic growth, and increases in inflation, may threaten to gather too much momentum if action is not taken to ‘cool’ the economy.

RPI: the Retail Price Index is a measure of inflation that measures the change in the cost of a representative sample of retail goods and services. It was the UK standard for measurement of inflation until the UK changed to using the EU standard measure of inflation – Consumer Price Index. The main differences between RPI and CPI is in the way that housing costs are treated and that the former is an arithmetical mean whereas the latter is a geometric mean. RPI is often higher than CPI for these reasons.

SONIA: the Sterling Overnight Index Average. Generally, a set of indices for those benchmarking their investments. The benchmarking options include using a forward-looking (term) set of reference rates and/or a backward-looking set of reference rates that reflect the investment yield curve at the time an investment decision was taken.

TMSS: the annual treasury management strategy statement reports that all local authorities are required to submit for approval by the Full Council before the start of each financial year.

VRP: a voluntary revenue provision to repay debt, in the annual budget, which is additional to the annual MRP charge, (see above definition).

Annual Treasury Management Review 2023/24

Purpose

This Council is required by regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce an annual treasury management review of activities and the actual prudential and treasury indicators for 2023/24. This report meets the requirements of both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management, (the Code), and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities, (the Prudential Code).

During 2023/24 the minimum reporting requirements were that the Full Council should receive the following reports:

- an annual treasury strategy in advance of the year (Council 21st February 2023)
- a mid-year, treasury management update report (Council 20th February 2024)
- an annual review following the end of the year describing the activity compared to the strategy, (this report)
- quarterly treasury management update reports on the following dates 23rd November 2023 and 25th January 2024, which were received by the Finance and Assets Committee

The regulatory environment places responsibility on members for the review and scrutiny of treasury management policy and activities. This report is, therefore, important in that respect, as it provides details of the outturn position for treasury activities and highlights compliance with the Council's policies previously approved by members.

This Council confirms that it has complied with the requirement under the Code to give prior scrutiny to all of the above treasury management reports by the Finance and Assets Committee before they were reported to the Full Council.

Member training on treasury management was undertaken on 7th September 2023 in order to support members' scrutiny role.

Executive Summary

During 2023/24, the Council complied with its legislative and regulatory requirements. The key actual prudential and treasury indicators detailing the impact of capital expenditure activities during the year, with comparators, are as follows:

Prudential and treasury indicators	31.3.23 Actual £000	2023/24 Original £000	31.3.24 Actual £000
Capital expenditure 2023/24	8,851	7,801	3,200
Capital Financing Requirement 2023/24	5,871	5,788	1,845
Gross CFR	10,127	15,587	10,652
External debt	0	0	0
Treasury Investments (all under 1 year)	29,941	-	31,579
Net borrowing	29,941	-	31,579

Other prudential and treasury indicators are to be found in the main body of this report. The Director, Finance further confirms that no external borrowing was undertaken and the statutory borrowing limit, (the authorised limit), was therefore not breached.

Introduction and Background

This report summarises the following:-

- Capital activity during the year;
- Impact of this activity on the Council's underlying indebtedness, (the Capital Financing Requirement);
- The actual prudential and treasury indicators;
- Overall treasury position identifying how the Council has borrowed in relation to this indebtedness, and the impact on investment balances;
- Summary of interest rate movements in the year;
- Detailed debt activity; and
- Detailed investment activity.

1. The Council's Capital Expenditure and Financing

The Council undertakes capital expenditure on long-term assets. These activities may either be:

- Financed immediately through the application of capital or revenue resources (capital receipts, capital grants, revenue contributions etc.), which has no resultant impact on the Council's borrowing need; or
- If insufficient financing is available, or a decision is taken not to apply resources, the capital expenditure will give rise to a borrowing need.

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

£000 General Fund	31.3.23 Actual	2023/24 Budget	31.3.24 Actual
Capital expenditure	8,851	7,801	3,200
Financed in year	2,980	2,013	1,355
Unfinanced capital expenditure	5,871	5,788	1,845

2. The Council's Overall Borrowing Need

The Council's underlying need to borrow for capital expenditure is termed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). This figure is a gauge of the Council's indebtedness. The CFR results from the capital activity of the Council and resources used to pay for the capital spend. It represents the 2023/24 unfinanced capital expenditure (see above table), and prior years' net or unfinanced capital expenditure which has not yet been paid for by revenue or other resources.

Part of the Council's treasury activities is to address the funding requirements for this borrowing need. Depending on the capital expenditure programme, the treasury service organises the Council's cash position to ensure that sufficient cash is available to meet the capital plans and cash flow requirements. This may be sourced through borrowing from external bodies, (such as the Government, through the Public Works Loan Board [PWLB], or the money markets), or utilising temporary cash resources within the Council.

Reducing the CFR – the Council's underlying borrowing need (CFR) is not allowed to rise indefinitely. Statutory controls are in place to ensure that capital assets are broadly charged to revenue over the life of the asset. The Council is required to make an annual revenue charge, called the Minimum Revenue Provision – MRP, to reduce the CFR. This is effectively a repayment of the borrowing need. This differs from the treasury management arrangements which ensure that cash is available to meet capital commitments. External debt can also be borrowed or repaid at any time, but this does not change the CFR.

The total CFR can also be reduced by:

- the application of additional capital financing resources, (such as unapplied capital receipts); or
- charging more than the statutory revenue charge (MRP) each year through a Voluntary Revenue Provision (VRP).

The Council's 2023/24 MRP Policy, (as required by DLUHC Guidance), was approved as part of the Treasury Management Strategy Report for 2023/24 on 21st February 2023.

The Council's CFR for the year is shown below, and represents a key prudential indicator.

CFR (£000): General Fund	31.3.23 Actual	2023/24 Budget	31.3.24 Actual
Opening balance	9,489	10,127	10,127
Add unfinanced capital expenditure (as above)	5,871	5,788	1,845
Less MRP	(334)	(327)	(319)
Less ECTC Loan Repayment	(4,900)	0	(1,000)
Closing balance	10,127	15,587	10,652

Borrowing activity is constrained by prudential indicators for gross borrowing and the CFR, and by the authorised limit.

Gross borrowing and the CFR - in order to ensure that borrowing levels are prudent over the medium term and only for a capital purpose, the Council ensures that its gross external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the capital financing requirement in the preceding year (2023/24) plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current (2024/25) and next two financial years. This essentially means that the Council is not borrowing to support revenue expenditure. The table below highlights the Council's gross borrowing position against the CFR. The Council has complied with this prudential indicator.

£000	31.3.23 Actual	2023/24 Budget	31.3.24 Actual
Gross external borrowing position	£0	£0	£0
CFR	£10,127	£15,587	£10,652
Under / over funding of CFR	£10,127	£15,587	£10,652

The authorised limit - the authorised limit is the “affordable borrowing limit” required by Section 3 of the Local Government Act 2003. Once this has been set, the Council does not have the power to borrow above this level. The table below demonstrates that during 2023/24 the Council has maintained gross borrowing within its authorised limit.

The operational boundary – the operational boundary is the expected borrowing position of the Council during the year. Periods where the actual position is either below or over the boundary are acceptable subject to the authorised limit not being breached.

Actual financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream - this indicator identifies the trend in the cost of capital, (borrowing and other long term obligation costs net of investment income), against the net revenue stream.

£000	2023/24
Authorised limit	£10,000
Maximum gross external borrowing position during the year	£0
Operational boundary	£0
Average gross borrowing position	£0
Financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream	N/A

3. Treasury Position as of 31st March 2024

The Council's treasury management debt and investment position is organised by the treasury management service in order to ensure adequate liquidity for revenue and capital activities, security for investments and to manage risks within all treasury management activities. Procedures and controls to achieve these objectives are well established both through member reporting detailed in the summary, and through officer activity detailed in the Council's Treasury Management Practices.

At the end of 2023/24 the Council's treasury position, was as follows:-

The Council had no external debt.

The Council's Investment portfolio was as per the table below

INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO	31.3.23 Actual £000	31.3.23 Actual %	31.3.24 Actual £000	31.3.24 Actual %
Treasury investments				
Banks – main bank account	441	1.5%	579	1.8%
Banks – call accounts	22,000	73.5%	22,000	69.7%
Money Market Funds	7,500	25.0%	9,000	28.5%
TOTAL TREASURY INVESTMENTS	29,941	100.0%	31,579	100.0%

Non-Treasury investments				
Third party loans - ECTC	6,000	96.2%	5,000	95.5%
Third party loans – EC CLT	235	3.8%	235	4.5%
TOTAL NON-TREASURY INVESTMENTS	6,235	100.0%	5,235	100.0%

Treasury investments	29,941	82.8%	31,579	85.8%
Non-Treasury investments	6,235	17.2%	5,235	14.2%
TOTAL OF ALL INVESTMENTS	36,176	100.0%	36,814	100.0%

All Money Market investments and the amount held in the Council's main bank account with the NatWest are in cash and as such, can be recalled immediately.

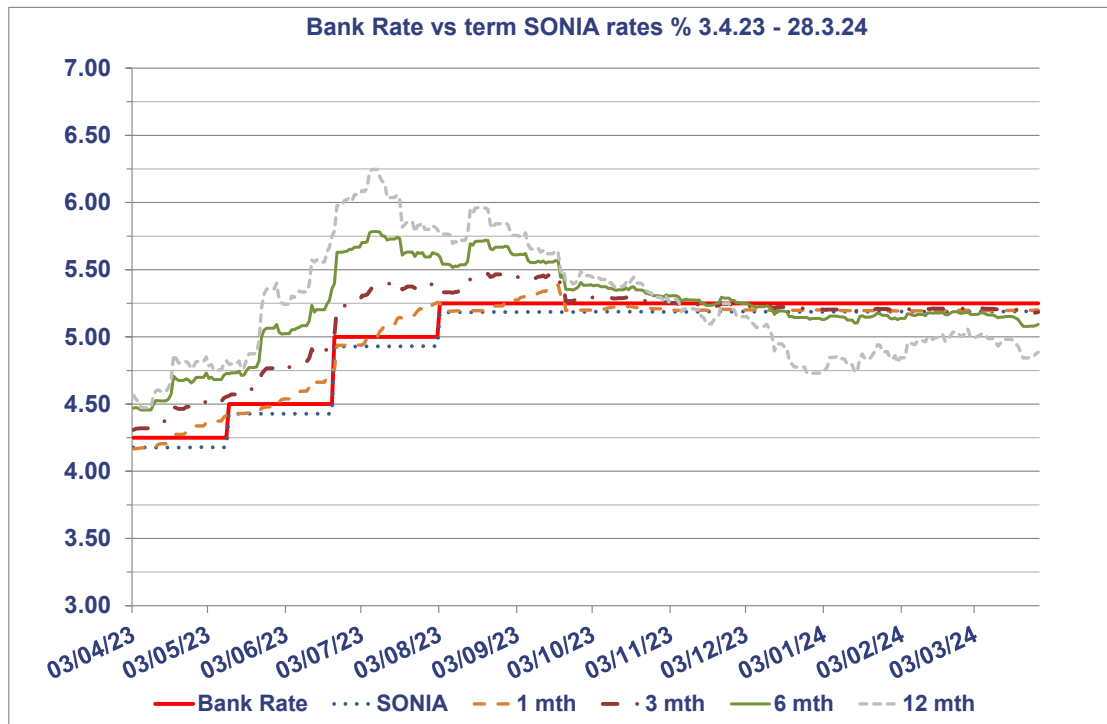
The amounts held in call accounts have different call back dates, with the last date being 16th August 2024.

The loan facility to East Cambridgeshire trading Company runs until March 2027. However, the nature of the loan facility allows the Company to borrow and repay funding as their cashflow allows within the maximum facility of £7,500,000.

4. The Strategy for 2023/24

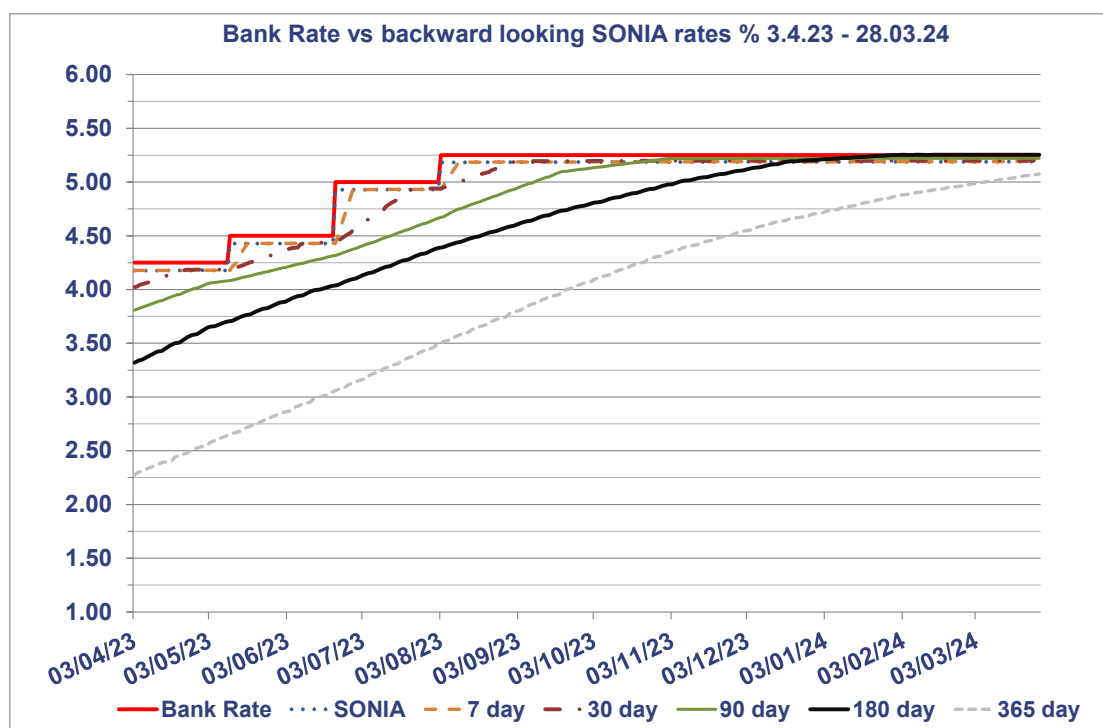
4.1 Investment strategy and control of interest rate risk

Investment Benchmarking Data – Sterling Overnight Index Averages (Term) 2023/24



FINANCIAL YEAR TO QUARTER ENDED 28/03/2024						
	Bank Rate	SONIA	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
High	5.25	5.19	5.39	5.48	5.78	6.25
High Date	03/08/2023	28/03/2024	19/09/2023	30/08/2023	07/07/2023	07/07/2023
Low	4.25	4.18	4.17	4.31	4.46	4.47
Low Date	03/04/2023	04/04/2023	03/04/2023	03/04/2023	06/04/2023	06/04/2023
Average	5.03	4.96	5.02	5.13	5.23	5.25
Spread	1.00	1.01	1.22	1.17	1.33	1.77

Investment Benchmarking Data – Sterling Overnight Index Averages (Backward-looking) 2023/24



FINANCIAL YEAR TO QUARTER ENDED 28/03/2024							
	Bank Rate	SONIA	7 day	30 day	90 day	180 day	365 day
High	5.25	5.19	5.19	5.20	5.22	5.25	5.08
High Date	03/08/2023	28/03/2024	28/03/2024	26/03/2024	25/03/2024	22/03/2024	28/03/2024
Low	4.25	4.18	4.18	4.02	3.81	3.32	2.27
Low Date	03/04/2023	04/04/2023	11/04/2023	03/04/2023	03/04/2023	03/04/2023	03/04/2023
Average	5.03	4.96	4.96	4.93	4.84	4.64	3.93
Spread	1.00	1.01	1.01	1.18	1.41	1.94	2.80

Investment returns picked up throughout the course of 2023/24 as central banks, including the Bank of England, continued to respond to inflationary pressures that were not transitory, and realised that tighter monetary policy was called for.

Starting April at 4.25%, Bank Rate moved up in stepped increases of either 0.25% or 0.5%, reaching 5.25% by August. By the end of the financial year, no further increases were anticipated. Indeed, the market is pricing in a first cut in Bank Rate in either June or August 2024.

The upward sloping yield curve that prevailed throughout 2023/24 meant that local authorities continued to be faced with the challenge of proactive investment of surplus cash, and this emphasised the need for a detailed working knowledge of cashflow projections so that the appropriate balance between maintaining cash for liquidity purposes, and “laddering” deposits on a rolling basis to lock in the increase in investment rates as duration was extended, became an on-going feature of the investment landscape.

With bond markets selling off, UK equity market valuations struggled to make progress, as did property funds, although there have been some spirited, if temporary, market rallies from time to time – including in November and December 2023. However, the more traditional investment options, such as specified investments (simple to understand, and less than a year in duration), have continued to be at the forefront of most local authority investment strategies, particularly given Money Market Funds have also provided decent returns in close proximity to Bank Rate for liquidity purposes. In the latter part of 2023/24, the local authority to local authority market lacked any

meaningful measure of depth, forcing short-term investment rates above 7% in the last week of March.

While the Council has taken a prudent approach to investing surplus monies, it is also fully appreciative of changes to regulatory requirements for financial institutions in terms of additional capital and liquidity that came about in the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis of 2008/09. These requirements have provided a far stronger basis for financial institutions, with annual stress tests by regulators evidencing how institutions are now far more able to cope with extreme stressed market and economic conditions.

4.2 Borrowing strategy and control of interest rate risk

During 2023/24, the Council maintained an under-borrowed position. This meant that the capital borrowing need, (the Capital Financing Requirement), was not funded by external loan debt as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow was used as an interim measure. This strategy was prudent as although near-term investment rates were equal to, and sometimes higher than, long-term borrowing costs, the latter are expected to fall back through 2024 and 2025 as inflation concerns are dampened.

The policy of avoiding new borrowing by running down spare cash balances has served well over the past few years. However, this is kept under review to avoid incurring higher borrowing costs in the future when the Council may not be able to avoid new borrowing to finance capital expenditure.

Against this background and the risks within the economic forecast, caution was adopted with the treasury operations. The Director, Finance therefore monitored interest rates in financial markets and adopted a pragmatic strategy.

Interest rate forecasts initially suggested further gradual rises in short, medium and longer-term fixed borrowing rates during 2023/24. Bank Rate had initially been forecast to peak at 4.5% but it is now expected to have peaked at 5.25%.

By January it had become clear that inflation was moving down significantly from its 40-year double-digit highs, and the Bank of England signalled in March 2024 that the next move in Bank Rate would be down, so long as upcoming inflation and employment data underpinned that view. Currently the CPI measure of inflation stands at 3.4% but is expected to fall materially below 2% over the summer months and to stay there in 2025 and 2026. Nonetheless, there remains significant risks to that central forecast, mainly in the form of a very tight labour market putting upward pressure on wages and continuing geo-political inflationary risks emanating from the prevailing Middle East crisis and the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The forecast at the time of approval of the treasury management strategy report for 2023/24 was:

Link Group Interest Rate View		19.12.22											
	Dec-22	Mar-23	Jun-23	Sep-23	Dec-23	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25
BANK RATE	3.50	4.25	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.00	3.75	3.50	3.25	3.00	2.75	2.50	2.50
3 month ave earnings	3.60	4.30	4.50	4.50	4.50	4.00	3.80	3.30	3.00	3.00	2.80	2.50	2.50
6 month ave earnings	4.20	4.50	4.60	4.50	4.20	4.10	3.90	3.40	3.10	3.00	2.90	2.60	2.60
12 month ave earnings	4.70	4.70	4.70	4.50	4.30	4.20	4.00	3.50	3.20	3.10	3.00	2.70	2.70
5 yr PWLB	4.20	4.20	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.60	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.20	3.10
10 yr PWLB	4.30	4.40	4.40	4.30	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.60	3.50	3.40	3.30	3.30
25 yr PWLB	4.60	4.60	4.60	4.50	4.40	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.70	3.60	3.50	3.50
50 yr PWLB	4.30	4.30	4.30	4.20	4.10	3.90	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.50	3.30	3.20	3.20

The current forecast is:

Link Group Interest Rate View		08.01.24												
	Mar-24	Jun-24	Sep-24	Dec-24	Mar-25	Jun-25	Sep-25	Dec-25	Mar-26	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27	
BANK RATE	5.25	5.25	4.75	4.25	3.75	3.25	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	
3 month ave earnings	5.30	5.30	4.80	4.30	3.80	3.30	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	
6 month ave earnings	5.20	5.10	4.60	4.10	3.70	3.30	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	
12 month ave earnings	5.00	4.90	4.40	3.90	3.60	3.20	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.10	3.20	3.20	
5 yr PWLB	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.80	3.70	3.60	3.60	3.50	3.50	3.50	
10 yr PWLB	4.70	4.50	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.70	3.70	3.70	3.70	
25 yr PWLB	5.20	5.10	4.90	4.80	4.60	4.40	4.30	4.20	4.20	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	
50 yr PWLB	5.00	4.90	4.70	4.60	4.40	4.20	4.10	4.00	4.00	3.90	3.90	3.90	3.90	

5. Investment Outturn

Investment Policy – the Council’s investment policy is governed by DLUHC investment guidance, which has been implemented in the annual investment strategy approved by the Council on 21st February 2023. This policy sets out the approach for choosing investment counterparties and is based on credit ratings provided by the three main credit rating agencies, supplemented by additional market data, (such as rating outlooks, credit default swaps, bank share prices etc.).

The investment activity during the year conformed to the approved strategy, and the Council had no liquidity difficulties.

Resources – the Council’s cash balances comprise revenue and capital resources and cash flow monies. The Council’s core cash resources comprised as follows:

Balance Sheet Resources (£000)	31.3.23	31.3.24
Earmarked reserves	14,964	14,972
Provisions	1,050	1,066
Usable capital receipts	1,481	1,786
CIL / Section 106	13,903	16,169
Collection Fund (Council Tax / NNDR)	2,025	4,689
Cash / Debtors	6,645	3,549
Internal Borrowing	(10,127)	(10,652)
Total	29,941	31,579

Investments held by the Council

- The Council maintained an average balance of £33.9 million of internally managed funds.
- The internally managed funds earned an average rate of return of 5.49%.
- The comparable performance indicator is the average 7-day backward SONIA compound rate, which was 5.01%.
- Total investment income was £2,115,332 compared to a budget of £801,590.

6. The Economy and Interest Rates

UK Economy

Against a backdrop of stubborn inflationary pressures, the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and war in the Middle East, UK interest rates have continued to be volatile right across the curve, from Bank Rate through to 50-year gilt yields, for all of 2023/24.

Markets have sought an end to central banks' on-going phase of keeping restrictive monetary policy in place on at least one occasion during 2023/24 but to date only the Swiss National Bank has cut rates and that was at the end of March 2024.

UK, EZ and US 10-year yields have all stayed stubbornly high throughout 2023/24. The table below provides a snapshot of the conundrum facing central banks: inflation is easing, albeit gradually, but labour markets remain very tight by historical comparisons, making it an issue of fine judgment as to when rates can be cut.

	UK	Eurozone	US
Bank Rate	5.25%	4%	5.25%-5.5%
GDP	-0.3%q/q Q4 (-0.2%/y/y)	+0.0%q/q Q4 (0.1%/y/y)	2.0% Q1 Annualised
Inflation	3.4%/y/y (Feb)	2.4%/y/y (Mar)	3.2%/y/y (Feb)
Unemployment Rate	3.9% (Jan)	6.4% (Feb)	3.9% (Feb)

The Bank of England sprung no surprises in their March meeting, leaving interest rates at 5.25% for the fifth time in a row and, despite no MPC members no longer voting to raise interest rates, it retained its relatively hawkish guidance. The Bank's communications suggest the MPC is gaining confidence that inflation will fall sustainably back to the 2.0% target. However, although the MPC noted that "the restrictive stance of monetary policy is weighing on activity in the real economy, is leading to a looser labour market and is bearing down on inflationary pressures", conversely it noted that key indicators of inflation persistence remain elevated and policy will be "restrictive for sufficiently long" and "restrictive for an extended period".

Of course, the UK economy has started to perform a little better in Q1 2024 but is still recovering from a shallow recession through the second half of 2023. Indeed, Q4 2023 saw negative GDP growth of -0.3% while y/y growth was also negative at -0.2%.

But it was a strange recession. Unemployment is currently sub 4%, against a backdrop of still over 900k of job vacancies, and annual wage inflation is running at above 5%. With gas and electricity price caps falling in April 2024, the CPI measure of inflation - which peaked at 11.1% in October 2022 – is now due to slide below the 2% target rate in April and to remain below that Bank of England benchmark for the next couple of years, according to Capital Economics. The Bank of England still needs some convincing on that score, but upcoming inflation and employment releases will settle that argument shortly. It is noted that core CPI was still a heady 4.5% in February and, ideally, needs to fall further.

Shoppers largely shrugged off the unusually wet weather in February, whilst rising real household incomes should support retail activity throughout 2024. Furthermore, the impact of higher interest rates on household interest payments is getting close to its peak, even

though fixed rate mortgage rates on new loans have shifted up a little since falling close to 4.5% in early 2024.

From a fiscal perspective, the further cuts to national insurance tax (from April) announced in the March Budget will boost real household disposable income by 0.5 - 1.0%. After real household disposable income rose by 1.9% in 2023, Capital Economics forecast it will rise by 1.7% in 2024 and by 2.4% in 2025. These rises in real household disposable income, combined with the earlier fading of the drag from previous rises in interest rates, means GDP growth of 0.5% is envisaged in 2024 and 1.5% in 2025. The Bank of England is less optimistic than that, seeing growth struggling to get near 1% over the next two to three years.

As for equity markets, the FTSE 100 has risen to nearly 8,000 and is now only 1% below the all-time high it reached in February 2023. The modest rise in UK equities in February was driven by strong performances in the cyclical industrials and consumer discretionary sectors, whilst communications and basic materials have fared poorly.

Despite its performance, the FTSE 100 is still lagging behind the S&P 500, which has been at an all-time high for several weeks.

USA Economy

Despite the markets willing the FOMC to cut rates as soon as June 2024, the continued resilience of the economy, married to sticky inflation, is providing a significant headwind to a change in monetary policy. Markets currently anticipate three rate cuts this calendar year, but two or less would not be out of the question. Currently, policy remains flexible but primarily data driven.

In addition, the Fed will want to shrink its swollen \$16 trillion balance sheet at some point. Just because the \$ is the world's foremost reserve currency (China owns over \$1 trillion) does not mean the US can continually run a budget deficit. The mix of stubborn inflation and significant treasury issuance is keeping treasury yields high. The 10 year stands at 4.4%.

As for inflation, it is currently a little above 3%. The market is not expecting a recession, but whether rates staying high for longer is conducive to a soft landing for the economy is uncertain, hence why the consensus is for rate cuts this year and into 2025...but how many and when?

EZ Economy

Although the Euro-zone inflation rate has fallen to 2.4%, the ECB will still be mindful that it has further work to do to dampen inflation expectations. However, with growth steadfastly in the slow lane (GDP flatlined in 2023), a June rate cut from the current 4% looks probable.

TITLE: ASSETS UPDATE

Committee: Finance & Assets

Date: 27 June 2024

Author: Open Spaces & Facilities Manager

Report number: Z21

Contact officer:

Spencer Clark, Open Spaces & Facilities Manager

Spencer.clark@eastcambs.gov.uk, 01354 665555, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely.

1.0 Issue

1.1. To receive an update on Council owned assets.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1. Members are requested to:

- i) Note the update on Council owned assets, and
- ii) Note the expenditure tracking sheet at Appendix 1.

3.0 Background/Options

- 3.1. On 28 March 2024 (Agenda Item 10) Finance & Assets Committee received a report detailing Council owned assets which provided a summary of each asset. This report provides an update to assets contained within that report.
- 3.2. The Asset Management budget expenditure sheet at Appendix 1 identifies areas of planned spend and provides an update on actual spend to date. Members will continue to receive the expenditure tracking sheet as part of the Asset Update.

4.0 Council Assets Update

- 4.1. Depot Improvement Project- The planned internal works are now complete. The traffic management of the site is being reviewed and this will inform the works that need to be completed externally.
- 4.2. Inclusive Play Audit- Discussions have commenced with Plan Inclusive Play Areas (PiPA), an independent charity. PiPA is the only organisation that can provide a truly independent audit that focuses on all aspects of a play space (including sensory space) and doesn't just focus on play equipment.
- 4.3. PiPA has identified that it does not currently have the capacity to carry out the audit as quickly as the Council might have initially expected. No commitment has been made as to when the audit should complete, and it is important that the audit is carried out in a meaningful way that will enable the Council to properly understand what the current position is and what can be done in the future. For this reason, whilst it may take longer than originally envisaged, Officers will continue to work with PiPA.

PiPA is working on a proposal and will submit it in the coming weeks for Officers to review. Once this is done Officers will then write to the Parish Councils to invite them to submit their play areas for audit.

5.0 Additional Implications Assessment

5.1 In the table below, please put Yes or No in each box:

Financial Implications No	Legal Implications No	Human Resources (HR) Implications No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) No	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) No	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) No

6.0 Appendices

Appendix 1- Asset Spend Tracker

7.0 Background documents

Finance & Assets Committee- 27 March 2024- Agenda Item 10- Assets Update and Asset Management Plan

Asset Management Budget

Appendix 1

Asset	Budgeted Expenditure	Nature of Work	Actual Expenditure	Notes
Public Car Parks				
	50,000.00	Replacement Drainage Gullies Newnham Street		Repair works have been done (not yet invoiced) whilst tendering exercise is completed
	25,000.00	Resurfacing of Roadway at Newnham Street		Repair works have been done (not yet invoiced) whilst tendering exercise is completed
Total Public Car Parks	75,000.00		0.00	
Closed Churchyards				
	£4,000.00	Burwell Church Lower section Limewash		Commenced
	42,000.00	Cheveley Closed Churchyard wall repairs b/fwd		Due to complete in June 2024
Total Closed Churchyards	46,000.00		0.00	
Littleport Depot				
	543,500.00	Depot Improvement Plan	480,549.00	Reviewing the external works
Total Littleport Depot	543,500.00		480,549.00	
Play Areas/Open Space				
		New flagpole in Country Park	820.47	Completed
Total Play Areas	0.00		820.47	
Public Conveniences				
	5,000.00	Annual Deep Cleaning of all Public Toilets		To be completed by end of July
	15,000.00	Refurbishment of Cloisters		Not commenced
Total Public Conveniences	20,000.00		0.00	
Public Footpaths/Open Spaces				
	5,000.00	Reactive work budget for street lighting		None in Q1
Total Public Footpaths/Open Space	5,000.00		0.00	
The Grange				
		The annexe lift		Tender package now complete and ready to invite quotes
Total The Grange	0.00		0.00	

Asset Management Budget

70 Market Street, Ely				
	9,000.00	Installtion of secondary double glazing		Action plan being agreed with tenant
Total 70 Market Street, Ely	9,000.00		0.00	
72 and 74 Market Street, Ely				
	15,000.00	Installation of secondary double glazing		Action plan being agreed with tenant
Total 72 Market Street, Ely	15,000.00		0.00	
Cemetery Lodge				
Total Cemetery Lodge	0.00		0.00	
Ely Museum				
	1,000	Annual Gutter Cleaning		To be scheduled for Autumn
Total Ely Museum	1,000.00		0.00	
St Johns Road Garages				
	5,000.00	Budget for reactive works where necessary		None identified in Q1
Total St Johns Road Garages	5,000.00		0.00	
The Old Barn, Littleport				
Total The Old Barn, Littleport	0.00		0.00	
Mepal Outdoor Centre				
	11,471.40	Site security cameras		
Total Mepal Outdoor Centre	11,471.40		0.00	
Other				
Total Other	0.00		0.00	

Total Budgeted Expenditure	730,971.40	Spend to Date	481,369.47
Asset Management Budget	170,194.00		
Depot Reserve	543,500.00		
Contribution from S106/Other	30,000.00		

TITLE: ELY HIGH STREET RENEWAL – CAPITAL GRANT FUND

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 27 June 2024

Author: Economic Development Manger

Report number: Z22

Contact officer: Kieran Carr Economic Development Manager

kieran.carr@eastscambs.gov.uk

Tel 616267 Room 12 The Grange, Ely

1.0 Issue

1.1. To approve the Ely High Street Renewal Capital Grant Fund.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1. Members are requested to

2.1.1 Consider and approve the fund eligibility criteria at Appendix 1, and

2.1.2 Agree that the fund will open to applicants on Monday 15th July 2024 and close on Friday 30th August at 4pm. In the event that the fund is fully utilised before the close date, the Council reserves the right to close the fund to pending or new applications.

3.0 Background/Options

3.1. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) has ringfenced £1 million of funding for each market town in the Combined Authority area to enable it to deliver interventions identified in their Masterplan documents, which will secure economic growth for the market towns and contribute towards the economic growth of the Combined Authority region.

3.2. East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) has allocated £75,000 from its Market Towns Programme funding for Ely towards a scheme to support small projects in Ely city centre including building front renewal and street improvement projects.

4.0 Arguments/Conclusions

4.1. This scheme is specifically aimed at providing capital funding for general improvements to Ely city centre as well as the frontage of buildings. The map at appendix 2 shows the eligible city centre area.

4.2. Grant funding under this scheme will only cover the cost of improvements (capital expenditure) and is not intended for associated work such as surveys, advice or other costs that might be considered non-capital expenditure.

4.3. For building renewal grants the minimum award will be £500 with a maximum of £20,000. Other improvement projects will be considered separately.

4.4. Members are requested to approve the Grant Funding Criteria at appendix 1.

5.0 Additional Implications Assessment

5.1 In the table below, please put Yes or No in each box:

Financial Implications No	Legal Implications No	Human Resources (HR) Implications No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) No	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) No	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) No

6.0 Appendices

5.2. Appendix 1: Ely High Street Renewal – Capital Grant Fund Scheme Grant Funding Criteria.

5.3. Appendix 2: Scheme Coverage Map

7.0 Background documents

None

Grant Funding Criteria

East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) has allocated **£72,817.42** remaining from its Market Towns Programme funding towards a building renewal grant scheme that supports projects in Ely Town Centre.

This scheme is specifically designed to enable bids to be made for capital funding to enable improvements to the frontage of buildings or the general appearance of Ely's Town Centre area. All interested organisations will need to submit a formal application and will need to meet the criteria set out below. Grants may be awarded in whole or in part.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria set out below and then awarded a grant between £500 - £20,000 based on their requirements until all funding has been fully utilised.

Criteria

1. Applications are welcomed from interested organisations who maybe landlords, property owners, tenants, businesses, community groups, or other like-minded stakeholders.
2. Applications to this grant fund will only be considered for capital improvements to the frontage of buildings or the general appearance of Ely's town centre area.
3. For the purposes of this grant fund the town centre area will be Buttermarket, Forehill, High Street, High-Street Passage, Lynn Road, Market Place, Market Street, Newnham St, Nutholt Lane, and St Marys Street and inclusive of interconnecting streets in this area.
4. Examples of projects that will be considered are, but not limited to, minor structural or aesthetic repairs to frontages, new or improved signage (not illuminated), street furniture, glazing, painting, planting, improved awnings and improved access into and out of premises and general street improvements that improves the visitor experience.
5. The minimum value of grant funding will be £500 and the maximum £20,000
6. Grant funding under this scheme will only cover the cost of improvements (capital expenditure) and are not intended for work such as surveys, advice or other costs that might be considered non-capital expenditure.

7. Applicants will provide ECDC officers with full written details of their proposed project which includes the purpose of the work, anticipated timescales, full costs and specification.
8. The town centre areas fall within the Ely conservation area and contains a number of listed buildings. Our Conservation Officer will be pleased to offer advice/guidance prior to submission of any application to this scheme. To get advice please email conservation@eastcambs.gov.uk

Where appropriate, proposals should take account of the advice set out in the Council's Shop Front Design Guide. [Shop Front SPD Final Copy 0.pdf \(eastcambs.gov.uk\)](#)

9. Applicants will be expected to pay 100% of the project costs and then submit a claim to recover these costs (equivalent to the grant awarded) when the project is completed.
10. The fund will be opened on 15th July 2024 and close on 30th August 2024.
11. In the event that the fund is fully utilised before the close date, ECDC reserve the right to close the fund to either pending or new applications.

We can only accept one application per applicant or location.



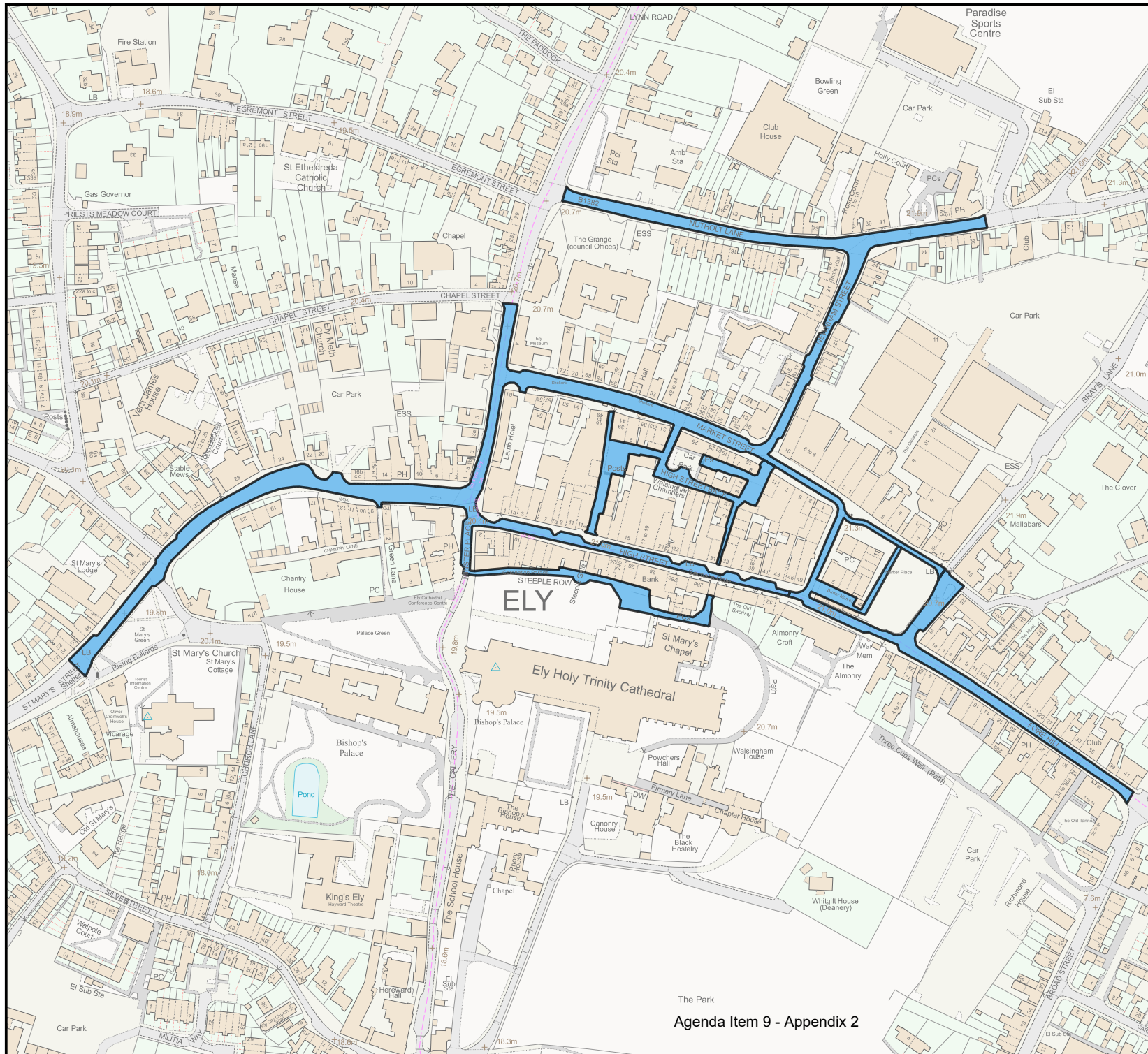
East Cambridgeshire District Council

Scheme Coverage Map

Ely City Centre Grant Fund Areas

Inclusive of streets as marked in blue on the map

If grant scheme applicants require further information on applicable locations, please contact us at towngrants@eastcamb.gov.uk



Date: 26/02/2024

Scale: 1:3,250

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TITLE: Climate and Nature Strategy 2024-28 and Climate and Nature Monitoring Report and Action Plan 2024

Committee: Finance and Assets

Date: 27 June 2024

Author: Strategic Planning Manager

Report number: Z23

Contact officer:

Richard Kay, Strategic Planning Manager

richard.kay@eastcamb.gov.uk, 01353 665555, Room 12, The Grange, Ely

1.0 Issue

- 1.1. To consider a new approach to reporting and engagement relating to the Council's Environment Plan and an extension to the Pride of Place grant scheme.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1. Members are requested to:

- (i) Approve the Climate and Nature Strategy 2024-2028 (Appendix A)
- (ii) Approve the summary Climate and Nature Top 20 Actions for 2024 (Appendix B), together with the more comprehensive Climate and Nature Action Plan and Monitoring Report 2024 (Appendix C)
- (iii) Supports the principle of our website to have a greater focus on live information and campaigns associated with climate and nature, as well as the home for any detailed technical and monitoring information
- (iv) Approves the extension of the Pride of Place grant scheme into 2024/25, with a maximum of £60,000 available to bid for this financial year on a first come first served basis, with the fund closing for applications no later than 31 October 2024 (for spend by March 2025).

3.0 Background/Options

- 3.1. On 17 October 2019, Full Council approved a wide-ranging motion relating to climate change matters and which, in short, had the effect of this Council declaring that there is a climate emergency. In November 2022, the Finance and Assets Committee also agreed to acknowledge "*the global biodiversity emergency and the local impact this could have on the communities and businesses we serve.*"
- 3.2. Since June 2020, the Operational Services Committee has been tasked with keeping up to date the Council's Environment Plan. With the recent constitution changes, it is now within the remit of the Finance and Assets Committee to agree the Council's approach and actions relating to climate and nature issues.
- 3.3. For the previous four years, an annual 'Environment Plan' has been approved as a single comprehensive document covering everything from long term aims and

targets, various monitoring statistics, annual actions and activities, and detailed technical matters.

- 3.4. Broadly speaking, the approach has worked well, and has brought various environment related matters to the attention of our communities. It has also helped focus our internal activities by staff and members across the Council, in a coordinated way.
- 3.5. However, the fundamental drawback of the approach of the past four years has been the arguably repetitive nature of the Environment Plan each year, including some detailed technical matters which are perhaps only of interest to a limited few whereas the elements of most interest to most people (especially the 'Top 20 Actions') can get somewhat lost within it.
- 3.6. Having reflected on both the success of the current approach, as well as its drawbacks, it is proposed that we adjust how we establish our approach to making short- and long-term commitments on climate and nature, and how we report on activities and progress we are making. It is also proposed that we publish such commitments and reporting in a way which is as accessible and engaging as possible.
- 3.7. It is therefore proposed we establish the following three strands as a substitute for the current all-encompassing annual Environment Plan.
- 3.8. First, we separate out our 'strategy' and longer term aims/targets into a single strategy document which is updated every four years, with the update taking place approximately one year after all-out elections at this Council (thereby giving the new administration a year to develop its own updated strategy and targets for the coming four years). It is also proposed to make the strategy as accessible as possible by making it fit on a single A3 sheet of paper. By reducing it to a single side of paper, presented in a 'poster' style, there is a much greater chance people will find the time to flick through it and capture the key elements of what we are trying to achieve.
- 3.9. Second, and partly as a consequence of the first, it is proposed we have a greater focus on placing content on our website. Busy people do not want to download lengthy pdf documents on their mobile phone to try to find what they want. Modern organisations capture people's attentions through short downloads where necessary, but then focus the detail and attention via weblinks and additional resources (not pdfs). Thus, detailed technical matters can be located on our website rather than as appendices in lengthy pdf documents. A more active and engaging website is also much easier at running campaigns, updating on actions and providing 'live' information.
- 3.10. Third, it is proposed we broadly continue the successful approach of setting annual 'Top 20 Actions', but instead of doing so slightly hidden away at page 59 of the Environment Plan (as it is in our June 2023 version), we bring it out more prominently in two ways: first, in summary form on a single page and again in a 'poster' style; and second in a more comprehensive format via an annual 'Action Plan and Monitoring Report' which also includes reporting on performance.
- 3.11. The following sections elaborate on the above approach in more detail.

Four Year Climate and Nature Strategy 2024-2028

- 3.12. Assuming the 'strategy on a page' is agreed in principle, it is proposed the strategy is structured around three themes: Bring Back Nature; Reducing our Carbon Emissions; and Adapting to a Changing Climate.
- 3.13. Each theme then has a small number of longer-term priorities which are expected to remain priorities until at least 2028 and probably beyond (but with an opportunity to review them every four years). Each priority is then complemented with 'Goals by 2028'. These Goals are specific measurable actions or targets we hope to achieve in the four-year lifetime of the strategy.
- 3.14. The collection of 'Priorities' and 'Goals by 2028' are a blend of what we hope to achieve in terms of our own operations (such as how we manage our own land and assets for nature, or how we are going to reduce our own carbon emissions) and what we hope to achieve in terms of supporting our communities to make changes to help nature, reduce emissions or adapt to a changing climate.
- 3.15. The 'Priorities' and 'Goals by 2028' are, as much as we are able, quantifiable or otherwise specifically worded so progress can be demonstrated whether we are on track to achieve them. However, they are also broad enough to allow for flexibility and innovation in the 'Top 20 Actions' we will set each year.
- 3.16. Overall, the 'Priorities' and 'Goals by 2028' are, as a package, intended to deliver meaningful change which can be identified by the public. Whilst ambitious, they are also realistic, taking account of the resources at our disposal and the degree of influence we have. They avoid matters which are predominantly outside of our control or influence (such as road travel and public transport) and focus on matters where we do have at least a reasonable degree of influence.
- 3.17. Members are asked to approve the Strategy at Appendix A, which then forms the starting point for establishing this years' Top 20 Actions, as well as establishing the Top 20 Actions for 2025/26, 2026/27 and 2027/28.

Top 20 Actions

- 3.18. Reporting on our successes and challenges of the past year is just as important as establishing our new Actions for the coming year. However, just like the 2024-28 Strategy described above we need to make this reporting as accessible and engaging to the public as possible.
- 3.19. Appendix B therefore sets out on a single A3 page both a summary of our successes in 2023/24 together with a summary of our Top 20 Actions for 2024/25.
- 3.20. For more detail on our successes (as well as challenges) from the last 12 months, together with the new Top 20 actions in more detail for the coming year, then Appendix C provides the fuller Action Plan and Monitoring Report.

Successes in 2023/24

- 3.21. There are a number of achievements we made in 2023/24 which the Council should be proud of which include the following:
 - Awarded more than £60,000 towards **18 community nature projects** across East Cambridgeshire, delivering new ponds, tree planting, hedgerow planting, bird and bat box installations, churchyard restoration, wildflower sowing and much more.

- Committed to the **long-term recovery of hedgehogs** in the district, after the public voted for hedgehogs as the species most wanted to be seen supported.
- **Gave away 75 oak trees to 21 communities** to mark the King's Coronation and 75th Birthday.
- Set up a **Biodiversity Net Gain system in our planning department**, meaning all new development now must deliver a gain for nature as part of their planning applications. This included funding the recruitment of the Council's first ever senior ecologist.
- Commenced the use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel in all our refuse collection vehicles from April 2024. HVO fuel has the potential to more than **halve** the Council's entire carbon emissions.
- Reduced the amount of paper we use by more than a third! That's a whopping **250,000 less sheets of paper used**. If stacked up, it would exceed the height of four adult giraffes standing on top of each other!
- **Reduced our electricity bill by nearly £14,000** in the first year of operating our newly installed solar panels at our business start-up office block at E-Space North, Littleport. The solar panels saved around 7.3 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions, and produced enough electricity in a year to boil around 200,000 full kettles!
- Achieved **Investors in the Environment silver accreditation**, and moved into the **top 20% of best rated district council's** in the country for our climate action according to the independent Climate Emergency UK organisation.
- Commenced **carbon literacy training for all staff**, with around half of staff accredited by June 2024, and more training for remaining staff underway.
- Continued to **support households with advice and tips** to reduce energy use and adapt/retrofit their homes. Our joint website is a great starting point: <https://www.actiononenergycambs.org/>.
- Adjusted how we **manage our parks and open spaces**, with earlier grass cuttings due to warmer wetter winters, and being prepared more for hotter drier summers.
- Carried out a review and started to investigate key risks to the Council and our communities from a changing climate.

Challenges encountered in 2023/24

3.22. Notwithstanding the above successes, it is important we recognise the challenges we faced in 2023/24, and what action we took (or intend to take) for them:

- Decided against launching the planned bird/bat box campaign (Action 6 of 2023/24), so we could focus more on the hedgehog recovery campaign.
- We have shifted our trees and woodland strategy (Action 8) preparatory work into 2024/25, early work on the strategy has been prepared but it is not ready for Council consideration.
- We did not manage to reduce our black bin waste volume across the district as hoped (Action 14), though with an ever-growing number of households

(c1.5-2% increase in households per year recently), it is always a challenge to reduce total waste collected.

- We were unable to identify any easy-win electric vehicle (EV) charging point grants (Action 12), either for use on our own land or for supporting parish council's with their EV charging point bids.
- We postponed to 2024/25 further investment in solar panels on our own estate (Action 2). This was partly to align to, and take advantage of, government funding for solar panels for public swimming pools (which we successfully gained a grant for in 2023/24, for spend in 2024/25).
- We were unable to reduce our overall carbon emissions in our latest reporting year (2022/23) and our overall emissions remain stubbornly near to our baseline year of 2018/19, but we are hopeful of a significant reduction in the coming year due to the use of HVO fuel.
- We only made limited progress on preparing a new climate and nature chapter for the Local Plan (Action 17), as a result of new limitations on the content of such chapters set by Government in December 2023.
- We struggled to engage with a wide range of our community on developing a 'climate action plan' for the district as a whole (Action 18). We therefore postponed the establishment of such an action plan, but intend to re-look at this option once further work at the county level has been completed relating to what Cambridgeshire (as a whole) should establish as its 'locally determined contribution' to mitigating climate change.

New Top 20 Actions for 2024/25

- 3.23. In establishing a new set of Top 20 Actions for 2024/25, we are proposing to build on our past successes, we have listened to what our communities are asking us to support and we have reflected on the challenges we faced in 2023/24.
- 3.24. Officers have focussed on a preparing a set of Actions which will not only deliver meaningful outcomes but will involve engagement with communities and will deliver visible results. As usual, they are a mix of direct action on our own estate together with advice, support and grants to assist communities to make a difference.
- 3.25. Perhaps the most headline grabbing proposed actions are:
- Further Hedgehog Recovery projects, including a 'hedgerows for hedgehogs' campaign to support the increase in native hedgerows, helped by a hedgerow plants giveaway (similar to how we have successfully given away orchard trees and oak trees in past campaigns).
 - Several on-the-ground nature projects, including a new accessible woodland in Bottisham, an extension to our Pride of Place grant scheme and the creation of a butterfly mound to support butterflies and other pollinators.
 - Confirmation of a shift to HVO fuels in our refuse collection vehicles, potentially halving the carbon footprint of the Council's operations.
 - Installation of solar panels on The Hive swimming pool.
 - A new focus on helping both the Council and our communities be resilient to a changing climate, including a special focus on water.

- Children/youth interest actions, including a fun (but important) awareness raising on invasive species as well as a poll to help chose the design of the butterfly mound.
 - Actions to attract investment (with a financial return) in climate or nature, such as creation of habitat banks or investment in energy efficiency, together with an update of our procurement policy to encourage suppliers to be more aware of the impact of the goods and services they supply to the Council.
- 3.26. Members are asked to approve the new set of Top 20 Actions, as set out in summary form (Appendix B) and in slightly more detail in the separate Action Plan and Monitoring Report (Appendix C)

Update on preparation of a full plan to achieve an 80% reduction in emissions

- 3.27. At the Operational Services Committee on 19 June 2023, Members agreed the following recommendation alongside approving that years' Environment Plan:

“That officers be instructed to draft a full plan that details how to achieve a reduction of at least 80% in carbon emissions for all the Council’s operations by 2030.”

- 3.28. Preparation of that Plan has commenced, though detailed work has not been undertaken to date. The primary reason holding back detailed work has been that it took some time to resolve the issue of our fuel use in our fleet vehicles.
- 3.29. In early 2024, we commenced a trial of the use of HVO fuel in one of our refuse collection vehicles (RCVs). With no apparent impact on vehicle use or service delivery, Council agreed to fund the commencement of HVO fuel use in all its RCVs from April 2024. We now use HVO fuel in all our RCVs.
- 3.30. Thus, now we have made significant inroads to reducing emissions form our fleet vehicles (or at least on an interim basis for the coming years, until an alternative even lower carbon fuel can be considered, such as electricity or hydrogen), we can concentrate on working out how to tackle our remaining emissions and thereby establish how to reduce our overall emissions (including as many indirect ‘scope 3’ emissions) by 80% by 2030. Work on that ‘full plan’ as requested by Members in June 2023 will now begin in earnest.

Pride of Place Grant Fund Extension

- 3.31. On 30 March 2023, the Finance and Assets Committee approved the Pride of Place grant scheme criteria and application form (Decision reference X186). This included a commitment of “up to £100,000” available to distribute in 2023/24, out of the total SPF funding pot for ‘Pride of Place’ of £180,000 over the two-year period 2023-25.
- 3.32. The grant scheme has been very well received by communities, and some excellent projects have had funding approved (and are now being delivered) across East Cambridgeshire. Very close to £60,000 was paid out in 2023/24, though interest has continued, with some further grants approved in early 2024/25 (following applications received in late 2023/24). It is requested by way of recommendation in this agenda item to formalise an extension of the Pride of Place grant scheme into 2024/25, and make available up to £60,000 of the SPF funding for the period to October 2024 (for spend by March 2025 at the latest). All other fundamental terms

and conditions are to remain the same, and the opportunity is taken to emphasise that this is a first come first served 100% grant scheme, with no set application deadline dates (other than the end date of 31 October 2024 for last applications to be received by, or earlier if the fund has been fully subscribed before then). Any application received is targeted to be approved and funded (if appropriate to do so) in approximately one month after receiving the application.

- 3.33. If approved, this would result in up to £120,000 in total being made available for Pride of Place community projects over the full two-year period, with the remaining £60,000 (of the total £180,000 available) being for council-led projects on council-owned land which equally deliver ‘pride of place’ positive outcomes for nature and for people.

4.0 Arguments/Conclusions

- 4.1. Members are asked to approve a package of documents which, collectively, establish the Council’s overall strategy towards climate change and the natural environment, together with targets and actions for both the next four years and the immediate year.
- 4.2. Funding the package presented will be from a variety of sources, including: the Council’s agreed £100,000 annual environment revenue fund; carried over capital funding from 2023/24 (for The Hive solar panels); Combined Authority funding (for the Pride of Place programme and the Habitat Management Plans); the increased management fee that Council has agreed for ECSS (to cover, in part, the additional cost associated with HVO fuel); and a ‘new burdens’ funding contribution from DEFRA as a part contribution towards BNG implementation costs. No additional funding is required from Council as a consequence of the recommendations in this agenda item, and officers will of course seek out grant opportunities should they arise during the course of the year if this enables a project to be expanded in scope.
- 4.3. The proposals are considered ambitious, achievable and affordable. They engage across all communities and all age groups. Collectively, they should help achieve the Council’s priority of a *Cleaner, Greener East Cambridgeshire*.

5.0 Additional Implications Assessment

- 5.1 In the table below, please put Yes or No in each box:

Financial Implications No	Legal Implications Yes	Human Resources (HR) Implications No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) No	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) Yes	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) No

Legal Implications

- 5.2. The Council has no direct statutory responsibility to mitigate climate change. However, it does have a statutory responsibility via the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 to “[further] *the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in England through the exercise of [its] functions*” (s40(A1)) and

“determine such policies and specific objectives as it considers appropriate for taking action” (s40(1A)(a)) to meet that duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

- 5.3. The Act (s40/s40A) also requires a number of reports to be published setting out how it will achieve the above duty.
- 5.4. The documents as recommended for approval in this agenda item will assist in meeting the above requirements and are considered entirely compatible with what the statutory duty seeks.

Carbon Impact Assessment

- 5.5. The assessment of the impact of the recommendations from a carbon impact perspective has been limited to those actions within the recommendations which are not agreed through a separate Council consideration. For example, the reduction in carbon emissions arising from the use of HVO fuel is not considered in the CIA for this agenda item, because the decision to move to HVO fuel is not a matter being agreed today (because it has been agreed by a separate Council decision).
- 5.6. Further, any proposals in the recommendations which are ‘target setting’ or encouraging others to take action to reduce carbon emissions do not score positively or negatively in the CIA for this agenda item because directly they will not reduce or increase carbon emissions.
- 5.7. The scope of the CIA for this agenda item is therefore limited to those actions to be taken directly by the Council and which are not to be subject to a separate Council decision making process.
- 5.8. Consequently, the positive or negative implications are, directly, somewhat negligible arising from the recommendations of this agenda item and are limited perhaps to gains from tree planting (hedge plant giveaway; Bottisham wood creation). However, indirectly, it is anticipated that by approving the Strategy and associated actions will consequently lead to (or help lead to) such actions being implemented, which in turn should lead to considerable net positive carbon emission savings, such as through: use of HVO fuel; carbon-capturing habitat creation via Pride of Place, habitat banks and habitat management plans; solar panels on The Hive; behavioural change via the carbon literacy training; and retrofit/adaptation measures to make homes and businesses more energy efficient.

6.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Climate and Nature Strategy 2024-2028

Appendix 2 - Summary Climate and Nature Top 20 Actions for 2024

Appendix 3 - Climate and Nature Action Plan and Monitoring Report 2024

7.0 Background documents

None



East Cambridgeshire District Council

Our Climate and Nature Strategy 2024 to 2028

At East Cambridgeshire District Council, we are committed to delivering a cleaner, greener East Cambridgeshire. The council is committed to act on urgent environmental issues facing the district and the wider world, especially the climate emergency and the biodiversity crisis we face.

Whether you are a resident, business or community group, by coming together we can all help tackle climate change, help bring back nature and help communities adapt to an uncertain world. Together, we can create an even better East Cambridgeshire, which is cleaner, greener and healthier for all, forever.

Bring Back Nature

Priorities	Goals by 2028
To make our own land and buildings as nature friendly as possible, progressively enhancing the variety of plants and animal species.	Put in place long term habitat management plans for all our significant public open spaces, and report progress towards delivering them.
To help our communities, through guidance and financial assistance, to undertake nature friendly projects across East Cambridgeshire.	Provide financial or expert assistance to local communities, through grant schemes such as Pride of Place and free tree giveaways, with a target of helping deliver at least 100 nature related community projects across the district.
Utilise our expertise and legislative powers to maximise opportunities for nature recovery.	Successfully deliver biodiversity net gain for all new developments by partnership working with developers and landowners.
Put in place long term frameworks for nature recovery in East Cambridgeshire, including opportunities for nature-based investment.	Be an active supporting authority for the Cambridgeshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and establish East Cambridgeshire’s locally determined contribution for nature recovery.

Reducing our Carbon Emissions

Priorities	Goals by 2028
To put the council on a clear pathway to reduce our own direct carbon emissions (such as the fuel we use) to net zero by 2036, and our indirect emissions (such as from the goods and services we buy) to net zero by 2040.	By 2025/2026 reduce our direct emissions by 50% (compared with our baseline year of 2019/2020) and be on track to meet our target of an 80% reduction by 2030/2031. Establish more clearly and comprehensively what our indirect emissions are and demonstrate a clear downward trajectory of such emissions by 2028.
To help reduce the emissions arising from East Cambridgeshire as whole, targeting net zero by 2040 (excluding emissions arising from Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF), which are a special category of emissions arising from land itself).	Work with our Cambridgeshire partners to establish an effective action plan for emission reductions across the county, and set out East Cambridgeshire’s local determined contribution towards that action plan. Demonstrate a continued reduction in emissions per person across East Cambridgeshire, targeting a 50% reduction on average per person by 2028 (% reduction excludes LULUCF and is for a 2005 baseline. By 2021, we have already achieved a 34% reduction).

Adapting to a Changing Climate

Priorities	Goals by 2028
To have an up-to-date Climate and Nature – Risk and Adaptation Plan in place, which recognises the challenges we face due to a changing climate.	Establish a Climate and Nature – Risk and Adaptation Plan, followed by an annual monitoring report on progress.
Assist our communities to adapt, through advice and practical solutions.	Use all our communication channels to provide clear, practical and easy to understand advice, helping residents be prepared for severe weather, how to adapt their homes and how to help nature recover. Work with our partners to deliver practical measures, such as warm hubs in winter, cool hubs in summer heatwaves and home retrofit support.
To prepare for the increasing extremes of summer water shortages and winter floods, using nature-based solutions where appropriate.	Reduce the Council’s consumption of water by 15%, and ensure we manage our own land to function effectively during flooding, including our drainage ditches. Help the wider conservation of water, by using our communication channels to share water saving advice and other information.
Have up-to-date planning policies which deliver new homes and businesses that are fit for the future.	Update our Local Plan policies, so that new development will have high water and energy efficiency; be adaptable to a changing climate and provide open spaces for nature to thrive.



East Cambridgeshire
District Council

Our Climate and Nature Top 20 Actions for 2024

At East Cambridgeshire District Council, we are committed to delivering a cleaner, greener East Cambridgeshire. Every June, we set ourselves a new set of Top 20 Actions which we aim to achieve over the coming 12 months. Each action will help the natural environment, help reduce our contribution to climate change or help everyone to adapt to a changing climate. For more information and progress on these action, please visit our website at www.eastcambs.gov.uk/content/climate-change-and-nature.

Highlights of 2023/2024

Bring Back Nature

Awarded more than £60,000 towards 18 community nature projects across East Cambridgeshire, delivering new ponds, tree planting, hedgerow planting, bird and bat box installations, churchyard restoration, wildflower sowing and much more!

Following a public vote, committed to the long-term recovery of hedgehogs in the district.

Gave away 75 oak trees to 21 communities to mark the King's Coronation and 75th birthday.

Set up a Biodiversity Net Gain system in our planning department, meaning all new development must now deliver a gain for nature as part of their planning applications.

Reducing our Carbon Emissions

Commenced the use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel in all our refuse collection vehicles from April 2024. HVO fuel has the potential to more than halve the council's entire carbon emissions.

Reduced the amount of paper we use by more than a third! That's a whopping 250,000 less sheets of paper used. If stacked up, it would exceed the height of four adult giraffes standing on top of each other!

Reduced our electricity bill by nearly £14,000 and saved over 7 tonnes of carbon emissions in the first year of operating our newly installed solar panels at our business start up office building at E-Space North, Littleport.

Achieved Investors in the Environment silver accreditation, and moved into the national top 20% of best rated district councils for climate action.

Commenced carbon literacy training for all staff.

Adapting to a changing climate

Continued to support households with advice and tips to reduce energy use and adapt/retrofit their homes. For more information visit www.actiononenergycambs.org/.

Adjusted how we manage our parks and open spaces, including winter grass cutting and being prepared for hot summers.

In 2024/2025 our Top 20 Actions are (in summary)

- 1 A new 'Hedges for Hedgehogs' campaign with free native hedgerow plants given away to local communities.
- 2 Further hedgehog recovery support including grants, training for landowners and new planning policy.
- 3 Extending the successful Pride of Place grant application scheme to the end of October 2024, giving 100% grant support to even more communities for open space and nature led projects in our district.
- 4 We will work with local residents to create an accessible one-acre (0.5 ha) woodland in Bottisham.
- 5 Further nature improvements in our parks and open spaces, including grass cutting and wildflowers.
- 6 Deliver Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) via the planning system, including creation of large scale 'habitat banks'.
- 7 Publish long term nature recovery plans via the creation of a Cambridgeshire-wide Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- 8 We will deliver a Trees and Woodlands strategy.
- 9 We will create a 'butterfly mound' in one of public parks, constructed and seeded to attract butterflies and pollinators, with the design chosen via a poll.
- 10 Make our Phase 3, Arbour Square, Ely development as nature friendly as possible, including measures for hedgehogs, swifts, native planting and water saving.
- 11 Move substantially all our Refuse Collection Vehicles to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel, which has at least an 80% reduction in carbon emissions compared with regular diesel.
- 12 Install solar panels on the roof of the Hive swimming pool, aiming to save at least 5 tonnes of CO2e emissions and save over £10,000 in annual running costs.
- 13 We will consider options for including environmental considerations when revising the council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 14 Continue to deliver Carbon Literacy training for all staff at the council.
- 15 Continue to provide support and advice to residents who want to undertake energy efficiency improvements in their homes. This includes £1.5m of Home Upgrade Grant 2 (HUG2) funding for spend across East Cambridgeshire.
- 16 'Water, water everywhere (then) not a drop to drink'; we will commence a water resilience campaign to help all of us be prepared to the dual threat of 'water, water everywhere in winter, but then not a drop to drink in summer'.
- 17 Reduce water use in our own office buildings, aiming for a 10% reduction by June 2025.
- 18 Deadly Top Twenty! A public campaign to spot the top 20 most unwanted, damaging and deadly invasive species in the district, and informing residents what they could do to help.
- 19 Let's Adapt Together. We will arrange community events and boost our engagement work as we foster a coming together to tackle the issues of climate change, nature recovery and adapting to a changing climate. £5,000 set aside for local community engagement activities.
- 20 We will engage with businesses and investors to help them thrive on our journey to a greener, cleaner East Cambridgeshire.

East Cambridgeshire District Council
Climate and Nature Action Plan and Monitoring
Report 2024

[draft for Finance and Assets Committee 27 June 2024]

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1. Highlights Report (June 2024)

Achievements 2023-24

- 1.1. East Cambridgeshire District Council remains committed to tackling climate change and bringing back nature to East Cambridgeshire. It is pleased to publish this annual report of our activities in the past year and our planned actions for the coming 12 months. In summary, the highlights from 2023-24 for this 2024 annual report are as follows.
- 1.2. Helping to **Bring Back Nature** to East Cambridgeshire, in the period June 2023-May 2024 the Council:
- Awarded more than £60,000 towards **18 community nature projects** across East Cambridgeshire, delivering new ponds, tree planting, hedgerow planting, bird and bat box installations, churchyard restoration, wildflower sowing and much more!
 - Committed to the **long-term recovery of hedgehogs** in the district, after the public voted (August 2023) for hedgehogs as the species most wanted to be supported.
 - **Gave away 75 oak trees to 21 communities** to mark the King's Coronation and 75th Birthday.
 - Set up a **Biodiversity Net Gain system in our planning department**, meaning all new development now must deliver a gain for nature as part of their planning applications. This included funding the recruitment of the Council's first ever senior ecologist.
- 1.3. Helping to **tackle climate change**, in the period June 2023-May 2024 the Council:
- Commenced the use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel in all our refuse collection vehicles from April 2024. HVO fuel has the potential to more than **halve** the Council's entire carbon emissions.
 - Reduced the amount of paper we use by more than a third in a year! That's a whopping **250,000 less sheets of paper used**. If stacked up, it would exceed the height of four adult giraffes standing on top of each other!
 - **Reduced our electricity bill by nearly £14,000** in the first year of operating our newly installed solar panels at our business start-up office block at E-Space North, Littleport. The solar panels saved around 7.3 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions, and produced enough electricity in a year to boil around 200,000 full kettles!
 - Achieved **Investors in the Environment silver accreditation**, and moved into the **top 20% of best rated district council's** in the country for our climate action according to the independent Climate Emergency UK organisation.
 - Commenced **carbon literacy training for all staff**, with around half of staff accredited by June 2024, and more training for remaining staff underway.
- 1.4. Helping the Council, our local residents and our communities **adapt to a changing climate**, the Council:
- Continued to **support households with advice and tips** to reduce energy use and adapt/retrofit their homes. Our joint website is a great starting point: <https://www.actiononenergycambs.org/>.
 - Adjusted how we **manage our parks and open spaces**, with earlier grass cuttings due to warmer wetter winters, and being better prepared for hotter drier summers.
 - Carried out a review and started to investigate key risks to the Council and our communities from a changing climate.
- 1.5. Our latest 'carbon footprint' (carbon emissions) data is as follows:
- **For the Council, as an organisation:** 1,282 tonnes CO₂e (period 2022-23). This is up 8% compared with the previous year, but down 2% compared with our baseline year of 2018-19.

- **For East Cambridgeshire, as a district:** 1,410,000 tonnes CO₂e in 2021. This is up 3% compared with the previous covid impacted year (2020), but down 25% from the baseline year of 2005.
- **For Cambridgeshire, as a county:** 6,790,000 tonnes CO₂e in 2021. This is up 6% compared with the previous covid impacted year (2020), but down 15% from the baseline year of 2005.

1.6. Some of the main challenges we faced in 2023/24 were as follows:

- Decided against launching the planned bird/bat box campaign, so we could focus on the hedgehog recovery campaign.
- We have shifted our trees and woodland strategy (Action 8) preparatory work into 2024/25, early work on the strategy has been prepared but it is not ready for Council consideration.
- We did not manage to reduce our black bin waste volume across the district as hoped, though with an ever-growing number of households (c1.5-2% increase in households per year recently), it is always a challenge to reduce total waste collected.
- Unable to identify any easy-win electric vehicle (EV) charging point grants, either for use on our own land or for supporting parish councils with their EV charging point bids.
- We postponed to 2024/25 further investment in solar panels on our own estate. This was partly to align to, and take advantage of, government funding for solar panels for public swimming pools (which we successfully gained a grant for in 2023/24, for spend in 2024/25).
- We were unable to reduce our overall carbon emissions in our latest reporting year (2022/23) and our overall emissions remain stubbornly near to our baseline year of 2018/19, but we are hopeful of a significant reduction in the coming year due to the use of HVO fuel.
- We only made limited progress on preparing a new climate and nature chapter for the Local Plan, as a result of new limitations on the content of such chapters set by Government in December 2023.
- We struggled to engage with a wide range of our community on developing a 'climate action plan' for the district as a whole. We therefore postponed the establishment of such an action plan, but intend to re-look at this option once further work at the county level has been completed relating to what Cambridgeshire (as a whole) should establish as its 'locally determined contribution' to mitigating climate change.

Top 20 Actions for 2024-25

- 1.7. For the coming 12 months (June 2024-May 2025), we have set ourselves a **new set of 'Top 20' actions** to help bring back nature to East Cambridgeshire, mitigate climate change and adapt to a changing climate.
- 1.8. For a summary of the Top 20 Actions please see our separately published poster entitled 'Our Climate and Nature Top 20 Actions for 2024'
- 1.9. For a fuller explanation of each of the Top 20 actions, please see the main part of this Monitoring Report.

2. Bringing Back Nature to East Cambridgeshire

Our achievements for the period June 2023 to May 2024

- 2.1. During the last monitoring year, we delivered many activities to help Bring Back Nature to East Cambridgeshire, as the following sections illustrate.
- 2.2. We list below all those activities which we committed to as a Top 20 priority action in June 2023, and set out progress on each:

Hedgehog Recovery Launch (*Top 20 Action #7 of 2023-24*)

- 2.3. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Action 7: Via the ‘Green Fair’ in August 2023 (see action 10), put to the public vote the launch of a single species recovery programme for East Cambridgeshire, with the long term aim of East Cambridgeshire being recognised as the national hub helping the recovery of that species - East Cambridgeshire: Home of [You Choose the Species!] Recovery. By June 2024, we will have invested at least £5,000 to kick start on-the-ground improvements for the species you vote for.
- 2.4. In addition to the Green Fair event, we also held additional voting opportunities (alongside general opportunities to engage with residents on nature and climate issues) at all three Youth Fusion events (at Soham, Bottisham and Littleport), as well as a one-off stall in Ely Market Square. The animals voted upon were: bats; barn owls; toads/frogs; otters; hedgehogs; and bees.
- 2.5. Whilst there was a good spread of votes across all the animals, hedgehogs came out on top. This means we kicked off a series of activities, actions and education programmes, focussed on hedgehogs but at all times utilising that ‘people’s favourite’ to help encourage and educate on wider habitat and biodiversity issues.
- 2.6. We are committed to this being a long-term recovery programme over many years, rather than a one-off activity. We have commenced establishing what a comprehensive ‘hedgehog recovery’ programme will contain. To help gain momentum, and since the August 2023 vote, activities have included:
 - Running several hedgehog awareness events including a very popular Hedgehog café and two Ely library engagement events
 - Set up our own Hedgehog hero’s project on the ‘The Big Hedgehog Map’
 - Prepared a draft Hedgehog Recovery Supplementary Planning Document to embed hedgehog protection and support as part of all new planning applications
 - Wider communications and events, especially around ‘Hedgehog week’ in early May 2024
 - Hedgehog house competition and giveaway, during May 2024
- 2.7. We’ve received excellent local press coverage, as well as national recognition on the BBC and social media.

Coronation Oak Tree Giveaway (*Top 20 Action #8 of 2023-24*)

- 2.8. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Action 8 (part): To mark the Coronation of King Charles III, as well as his 75th birthday in November 2023, we will plant 75 oak trees, via gifting the trees to parish councils, community groups and schools. For schools, we will also provide a selection of tree related literature to help children appreciate and understand the value of trees.
- 2.9. The Coronation oak project was popular with communities with a good distribution of applicants across East Cambridgeshire. The oak trees will not only improve biodiversity in their area but help boost local pride and provide significant health and wellbeing gains, including shade for our ever-warming summers. Most of the trees were planted in public areas, but four schools also took part

and planted the oak trees in their grounds. Each school also received a bonus nature themed book bundle, helping excite the next generation of nature lovers.

Pride of Place (*Top 20 Action #9 of 2023-24*)

2.10. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Action 9: The Council will implement its £100,000 ‘Pride of Place’ grant scheme, aiming to 100% grant support dozens of open space improvements and nature led projects in our communities.

2.11. Our Pride of Place grant scheme has been a considerable success, with community groups applying for funds from across the district. Projects have ranged from new ponds to wildflower meadows, from trees to a plethora of various bird and bat box installations. There were 18 projects approved by end of March 2024, and at last count a further 4 projects have been approved with applications continue to be received. Following the success, we are proposing to extend the grant scheme through to end of October 2024 (for projects completing by March 2025).

Ely Green Fair (*Top 20 Action #10 of 2023-24*)

2.12. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Action 10: Working alongside Ely Cathedral’s ‘Green Fair’ on 5 August 2023, set up a family friendly activity and education day on Palace Green, with a focus on nature related hands on activities, engagement events and children’s activities.

2.13. We successfully trialled this collaboration event with the Cathedral by opening up Palace Green to allow a greater number of charities to be represented on the day. Charities were free to display with many offering giveaways and activities for families. Sadly, the weather was exceptionally wet and cold for the August event, and this affected footfall on the day. Nevertheless, the principle of the event was confirmed, and we will look to continue to support the Cathedral’s Green Fair in future years.

2.14. Partly reflecting the poor weather for the Green Fair, we held over the past 12 months a series of additional mini-fairs or stalls to engage with the public, including in Ely Library, Ely Market square and the three Youth Fusion events (at Soham, Littleport and Bottisham).

Fulfil our new Biodiversity Duty (*Top 20 Action #19 of 2023-24*)

2.15. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Action 19: To proactively fulfil our duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity, we will:

- (a) by 1 January 2024, publish an ‘ECDC Biodiversity Action Plan’ which will contain policies and specific action that we will take to conserve and enhance biodiversity***
- (b) support all parish council with their duty to publish a similar such action plan for their parish***
- (c) play an active role in the preparation of the first ever county-wide Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). To help deliver and communicate all these actions, we will establish and dedicate a special section on our website to biodiversity.***

2.16. Nature recovery and wider biodiversity actions are a rapidly increasing area of attention for all councils, and East Cambridgeshire District Council is warmly embracing its new duties. Over the past 12 months, we’ve commenced a long-term process of proactively helping nature to recover and thrive in our district, including on our own land.

2.17. In January 2024 we published a report exploring the possible ways we, as a Council, can help take action to help nature recover. We are also actively supporting the production of the cross-Cambridgeshire LNRS. To read the report, and other activities by the council including the LNRS, please review our natural environment webpage at <https://www.eastcamb.gov.uk/content/nature-recovery>

- 2.18. We have also taken opportunities to advise and support parish councils, who equally have a set of new biodiversity duties to comply with. This includes supporting parishes to prepare a parish based nature recovery plan, with further details at this page:
<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/content/parish-nature-recovery-plans>
- 2.19. To help make sure we are taking the right action for nature, and supporting others take the right action (including developers), in autumn 2023 we appointed our first ever senior ecologist.
- Parish based nature recovery plans (Top 20 Action #20 of 2023-24)**
- 2.20. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:
- Action 20 (part): Work with Natural Cambridgeshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP), with a special focus over 2023/24 on supporting community-led preparation of local nature recovery plans.***
- 2.21. As stated under the previous action, we have assisted parish councils to prepare their own nature recovery plans.
- 2.22. More generally, the LNP for our area continues to provide support and advice across the County.

Actions outstanding from the period June 2023 to May 2024

- 2.23. In the last monitoring year of 2023-24, there were a number of nature related actions we set ourselves to achieve that presently haven't yet been complete. These are listed below, together with commentary on their progress and our future intentions for each.

Heaton Drive nature area (Top 20 Action #5 of 2023-24)

- 2.24. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:
- Top 20 Action #5: Spend up to £40,000 tackling one or more disused public areas, and turning them into nature rich community areas. One such area, off Heaton Drive, Ely, will be achieved in collaboration with Palace Green Homes.***
- 2.25. We have made some progress with this action, with the site now cleared and ready to be transformed. We are firming up plans for the land. As such, the above Action from 2023-24 will be completed in 2024-25.

Bird and Bat Box Campaign (Top 20 Action #6 of 2023-24)

- 2.26. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:
- Top 20 Action #6: Launch in summer 2023 a new long term 'one plus one' campaign, seeking to achieve the installation of one bird or bat box for every household in the district.***
- 2.27. This Action has predominantly been postponed, and we will consider whether to launch it at a future date. Whilst we did some limited work on encouraging bird and bat box installations in gardens, including a free birdbox giveaway to all those who attended the free mini-green fair in Ely Library, we became concerned with the resource implications of attempting to run and monitor a district wide target. We were also concerned with launching a second district-wide and long-term nature related campaign at a similar time to the very successful launch of the hedgehog recovery campaign, and the risk that such a second separate campaign might undermine that hedgehog campaign.
- 2.28. Therefore, whilst we will continue to take opportunities to encourage residents to install bird and bat boxes in their garden, including ad hoc free giveaways at relevant fairs or other events, it is uncertain whether we will formally launch a comprehensive one-plus-one campaign as originally envisaged in June 2023.

Trees and Woodland Strategy (Top 20 Action #8 (part) of 2023-24)

- 2.29. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Top 20 Action #8 (part): We will update our Trees and Woodland Strategy, so that we maximise tree planting and tree protection through both the planning system and on our own land; and at the same time, emphasise the need for the right tree to be planted in the right place.

- 2.30. Action 8 comprised two parts, first the Coronation Oak giveaway, which was successfully achieved as reported earlier, and second the preparation of an updated Trees and Woodland Strategy. Early work on such a Strategy has been prepared, but it is not ready for Council consideration.
- 2.31. As such, and considering the scale of resource required to achieve it, this Action from 2023-24 will be rolled forward into 2024-25 as a specific action.

Our proposals to help Bring Back Nature, for the period June 2024 to May 2025

2.32. The following section lists our priority actions in full that the Council will undertake over the coming year, to help Bring Back Nature to East Cambridgeshire.

Top 20 Action Reference Number	Action to be undertaken
1	A new 'Hedges for Hedgehogs' campaign will be launched by Autumn 2024, including free native hedgerow plants given away to local communities for planting in Winter 2024/25, benefitting not just hedgehogs but lots of wildlife.
2	Further Hedgehog Recovery actions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • financially supporting local hedgehog rescue centres, helping them to pay for basic care to nurse more hedgehogs back to health • providing training for our Open Spaces team and other interested local land managers to raise awareness of hedgehog safety and hedgehog friendly land management • adopting a new Hedgehog Recovery planning policy, so all new developments are hedgehog friendly.
3	The Council will extend the successful Pride of Place grant application scheme to the end of October 2024, giving 100% grant support to even more communities for open space and nature led projects in our district.
4	We will work with local residents to create an accessible one-acre (0.5 ha) woodland in Bottisham, a woodland designed for people and for nature.
5	The Council will prepare and publish Habitat Management Plans for each of its significant parks and open spaces by May 2025, with each Plan showing what we will do to manage the site, including grass cutting and wildflowers seeding, in the best way for people and for nature.
6	Delivering Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG): We will work with local farmers to help them set up large scale 'habitat banks' in our district and proactively support BNG via the planning system by educating, helping and explaining its benefits.
7	We will strengthen our plans and activities for long term nature recovery in the district by assisting the creation of a Cambridgeshire-wide Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
8	We will deliver a Trees and Woodlands strategy, which sets out how we will manage trees on our land, where we would like landowners to prioritise planting new woodlands (including incentives to do so), and how we will deal with planning applications for new or replacement trees or other tree works.
9	We will create a 'butterfly mound' in one of our public parks, constructed to attract butterflies and other pollinators. It will be wildflower seeded, with the winning design chosen via a poll.
10	Palace Green Homes, part of the Council's trading company, commits to its developments being nature friendly, including our upcoming proposal for Phase 3, Arbour Square, Ely. Specifically, this Phase 3 development will include hedgehog friendly gardens, the use of swift bricks in appropriate places, and climate change resistant native plants in our garden layouts. Water butts will be included in all appropriate gardens to help reduce tap water use and help slow storm water flows.

2.33. Progress on achieving the above actions will be reported on in June 2025.

3. Tackling Climate Change

Our achievements for the period June 2023 to May 2024

- 3.1. During the last monitoring year, we delivered many activities to help mitigate climate change, as the following sections illustrate.
- 3.2. We list below all those activities which we committed to as a Top 20 priority action in June 2023, and set out progress on each:

Use of HVO fuel in our Refuse Collection Vehicles (*Top 20 Action #1 of 2023-24*)

- 3.3. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Action 1: Via an investment of over £2m in new vehicles, commence by the first half of 2024 the use of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel in our refuse collection vehicles (RCVs), aiming to reduce the carbon emissions of such vehicles by up to 90%.
- 3.4. In early 2024, we commenced a trial on the use of HVO fuel in one of our refuse collection vehicles (RCVs). With no apparent impact on vehicle use or service delivery, Council agreed to fund the commencement of HVO fuel use in all its RCVs from April 2024. We now use HVO fuel in all our refuse collection vehicles.
- 3.5. Whilst we recognise the considerable emission savings arising from the use of HVO fuel, which will considerably reduce the Council's 'carbon footprint', we also recognise this is an interim measure as we make the transition to very low or zero-carbon fuels in the future (which is mostly likely to be all-electric vehicles). HVO fuel is not an ideal long-term solution because of the potential risks in the supply chain, with such fuel coming from overseas (*the risks include the risk of supply itself due to ever increasing demand for HVO fuel, and the risk of being able to guarantee that the source of supply is reputable and sustainable and not, for example, palm oil derived from rainforest destruction. The Council is working hard to minimise these risks as much as possible*).

Reducing Paper Use (*Top 20 Action #3 of 2023-24*)

- 3.6. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Action 3: The Council will make further reductions in its paper use, so that, by 2030/31, we will use 70% less paper per year than we did, on average, during the period 2017-2019 (when we used an average 1.07million sheets a year). Specifically, we will reduce our paper use by 10% every year compared with 2022/23 paper use, meaning our targets are:

 - ***2023/24 = 630,000 sheets of paper used (max)***
 - ***10% reduction each year thereafter***
 - ***By 2030/31 = 335,000 sheets of paper used (max)***
- 3.7. The Council is on track to reach its 2030-31 target of using less than 335,000 sheets of paper a year. Most services actively reduced their daily paper use in the past year. Across the Council we used 250,000 less sheets of paper than we did in 2022-23. If stacked up, this amount of paper saved would exceed the height of four adult giraffes standing on top of each other! We therefore easily beat our target of 630,000 sheets for 2023/23, instead consuming just 449,000 sheets.

Staff Travel Plan (*Top 20 Action #4 of 2023-24*)

- 3.8. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Action 4: The Council will finalise its staff Travel Plan, and implement at least five actions from it by June 2024.
- 3.9. The travel plan was finalised in December 2023 and adopted by the Council with actions beginning in January 2024. Actions so far include:
 - a new travel expenses policy from HR including for the first time a payment for cycle miles travelled

- commenced procurement of a new shower facility in The Grange, enabling current and future cyclists to shower at work
- commenced procurement of new lockers for cyclists
- A two-day bike repair service was provided for council staff in May 2024. Thirty-six staff had their bike serviced and mended, with some staff saying they will now use their bike for the first time in years!
- We are investigated other options such as using the Lift share app, making it easier for staff members to make less single person commutes to work.

Water Bottle Filling Stations (*Top 20 Action #11 of 2023-24*)

- 3.10. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Action 11: The Council will identify candidate sites for installing free water bottle filling stations, with a target of installing a minimum of three such stations during 2023/24. Candidate sites will be investigated based on ease of installation and high public footfall (such as Ely Market and Riverside area – we'd welcome other suggested locations by emailing us at climatechange@eastcambs.gov.uk).

- 3.11. Three sites have now been identified for such water bottle filling stations to be installed, which will hopefully be installed ready for Summer 2024 use. We will communicate their locations once installed and ready to use.

Carbon Literacy Training (*Top 20 Action #15 of 2023-24*)

- 3.12. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Action 15: Undertake an environment training programme for all Councillors and staff ('carbon literacy' training), so the whole organisation understands the scale of the climate and biodiversity crisis, what the options are to tackle the crisis and what each individual can do in their role to help address the emergency. By June 2024, target Carbon Literate Silver accreditation, which means at least 50% of employees and councillors have undertaken the training by that stage.

- 3.13. We have so far delivered eight fully accredited carbon literacy training sessions to 98 members of staff, which is just over half of total employees. 66 of those attendees have so far completed the post-course pledges (one personal and one work-based) and successfully completed the course understanding questionnaire, meaning they have formally achieved carbon literacy status and been awarded a certificate from the Carbon Literacy Trust. This means 66 staff have so far made a combined 66 personal pledges to reduce impact on the environment as well as 66 work-based pledges. Pledges have included greater energy efficiency across offices, better recycling habits, more sustainable commuting to work, as well as commitments to share learning and encourage others to take more action.
- 3.14. Therefore, approximately half of ECDC staff have now completed the training, and we are getting close to 50% of staff completing their pledges and gaining full accreditation.
- 3.15. We have a few more training courses to go for remaining staff that have not attended the course, and we will also consider how best to accommodate Councillors that want to attend a course. In the Autumn we will consider formally applying for a corporate 'carbon literate council' accreditation.

Investors in the Environment (*Top 20 Action #16 of 2023-24*)

- 3.16. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Action 16: The Council will aim to achieve, as an organisation, Investors in the Environment (iIE) accreditation Silver award in 2023, and work towards achieving Green award in 2024.

- 3.17. Following our application submission in November 2023, the Council was successful in being awarded Silver Accreditation IIE in January 2024. We will now commence the process of achieving the most challenging 'Green' level, though that is unlikely to be achieved until 2025.

Actions outstanding from the period June 2023 to May 2024

- 3.18. In the last monitoring year of 2023-24, there were a number of climate related actions we set ourselves to achieve that presently have not yet been complete. These are listed below, together with commentary on their progress and our future intentions.

Solar Panel Investment (*Top 20 Action #2 of 2023-24*)

Top 20 Action #2: Progress up to £100,000 further investment in photovoltaic (PV) solar panels on our own estate.

- 3.19. After the successful installation of panels on our E-Space North (Littleport) building in early 2023, we first explored the potential to install panels on the sister office building E-Space South (Ely).
- 3.20. However, E-Space South is unusually connected to the electricity grid, in that all individual office units within the building have their own separate electricity meter and connection to the wider external electricity network. This makes it extremely challenging (and expensive) to install solar panels, because there is no single electricity connection in and out of the building. We unfortunately, therefore, decided it was not practical or cost effective to install panels on that building.
- 3.21. We then turned our attention to The Hive. However, at the same time, Government launched a swimming pool support scheme, which targeted projects which improve the energy efficiency of pools and reduce their running costs. We submitted a bid for The Hive and were successful in being awarded grant funding for the majority of the PV solar panel costs. The £100,000 of our money will pay for the additional costs involved, and the remaining funds retained for investigating other potential energy savings initiatives.
- 3.22. We are therefore now progressing proposals to install PV solar panels on The Hive, with a forecast installation being in early 2025.

Electric Vehicle Charging (*Top 20 Action #12 of 2023-24*)

- 3.23. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Action 12: The Council will undertake a programme of Electric Vehicle Charging (EVC) initiatives, including:

- ***improved information on our website about EVC***
- ***assisting parish councils and residents to find grants to help install EVC points***
- ***bid for grants to instal more EVCs in our own public carparks.***

- 3.24. Whilst some limited improved information on our website about EVCs was undertaken, we were unsuccessful at identifying further grants to install further charge points in our carparks, or assistance for parish councils and residents.

Reducing Black Bag Waste (*Top 20 Action #14 of 2023-24*)

- 3.25. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Action 14: East Cambs Street Scene (ECSS), the Council's wholly owned company that collects your domestic waste, will target a reduction of over 100 tonnes of black bag waste collected over the year to March 2024. To achieve this, ECSS will further promote ways for residents to reduce waste, recycle more and compost more food and green waste where possible.

- 3.26. Unfortunately, our residual waste has increased by over 500 tonnes in Q1-3, which equates to just over a 5% increase. Whilst we await Q4 data at time of writing, it is extremely unlikely that over the full year that we will meet our target of a 100 tonne reduction.
- 3.27. Part of the increase in waste collected arises from the fact there were c2% more households to collect from in 2023/24 than the previous year. However, waste per household also increased by around 2% on average, with similar trends in recycling and organic waste collected.
- 3.28. ECSS has worked with colleagues across the county this past year to devise waste minimisation initiatives, including:

- the Metal Matters campaign: we know that some metal which can be collected in the blue lidded bin is still being disposed in black bags. This is also the heaviest and most valuable item of recycling and so a campaign has been launched in the county to increase awareness and drive behaviour change.
- the Wipe Out Waste project, a collaboration with Anglian Water and the Rivers Trust. The project aimed to encourage the use of reusable wipes by providing lower income families with a free kit. These were distributed at food or baby banks and community events, and feedback was requested to understand the barriers to using these more sustainable options and opportunities for scaling up.
- the Fight Food Waste Pledge, a social media campaign asking residents to pledge to cut the amount of their food waste at home, preventing it from going to landfill. The message focused on economic benefits as well as on the link between food waste and climate change. Residents were supported with information and tips to help reduce the amount of food waste and incentivised with a monthly prize of shopping vouchers.

3.29. ECSS continue to supply discount codes for the purchase of reusable nappies, attend various events to raise awareness and, where requested, speak at local primary schools.

District Wide Climate and Nature Action Plan (*Top 20 Action #18 of 2023-24*)

3.30. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Top 20 Action #18: How do you imagine a future ‘cleaner, greener East Cambs?’. By June 2024, we will facilitate an engagement programme with residents, businesses and the wider community, and come up with a collectively generated set of targets for East Cambridgeshire as a whole. For example, we want your help to establish targets such as:

- ***net zero emissions for the district as a whole***
- ***increased recycling rates***
- ***and/or electric vehicle uptake.***

3.31. We commenced work on this project with our already established partnership groups, and also attended an ‘Earth Café’ event to commence a conversation. However, it quickly proved challenging to reach out beyond these small circles, and it was realised that it would require a considerable staff resource to attempt to achieve the action as envisaged.

3.32. Consequently, we paused further work on it, and will reconsider our options. This will include reflecting on the realistic resources available to achieve the task as planned.

Our proposals to help mitigate climate change, for the period June 2024 to May 2025

3.33. The following section lists our priority actions in full that the Council will undertake over the coming year, to help mitigate climate change.

Top 20 Action Reference Number	Action to be undertaken
11	Through 2024, we will move substantially all our Refuse Collection Vehicles to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel, which has at least an 80% reduction in carbon emissions compared with regular diesel. This move will be subject to any supply or excessive price constraints which temporarily prevents HVO being used.
12	By June 2025, we will have installed solar panels on the roof of the Hive swimming pool, aiming to save at least 5 tonnes of CO ₂ e emissions and save over £10,000 in annual running costs. We will also support other leisure venues to become more energy efficient.
13	We will consider options for including environmental considerations when revising the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
14	Continue to deliver Carbon Literacy training for all staff at the Council; seeking to achieve well over 50% of staff to be fully carbon literate accredited by December 2024. In 2025, run one or more carbon literacy training courses to parish councils.
15	Continue to provide support and advice to residents who want to undertake energy efficiency improvements in their homes, with targeted events in communities. We will participate in all available domestic retrofit grant funded schemes to enable low income, fuel poor and vulnerable to cold residents improve the thermal comfort of their homes. This includes £1.5m of Home Upgrade Grant 2 (HUG2) funding for spend across East Cambridgeshire.

3.34. Progress on achieving the above actions will be reported on in June 2025.

4. Adapting to a Changing Climate

Our achievements for the period June 2023 to May 2024

- 4.1. During the last monitoring year, we commenced activities to help all of us to be more prepared for the impacts of a changing climate, as the following sections illustrate.
- 4.2. We list below all those activities which we committed to as a Top 20 priority action in June 2023, and set out progress on each:

Retrofitting Homes (*Top 20 Action #13 of 2023-24*)

- 4.3. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Action 13: We will aim to spend up to £2m investing in energy efficiency measures for non-gas homes in East Cambridgeshire, as part of a wider £10m Cambridgeshire Energy Retrofit Partnership (CERP) scheme of which we are a member. We will also provide wider support to help other residents, including those on-gas, to access grants for energy efficiency installations, partly through our new website Action on Energy Cambs.

- 4.4. We have just ended year 1 of this two-year scheme. As seen with previous schemes it takes time for installers to increase capacity and confidence in delivering a new scheme, but we now have good capacity in the East Cambridgeshire area and are actively promoting the scheme to residents who we feel may be eligible. This project therefore continues to progress into year 2, as planned.

Actions outstanding from the period June 2023 to May 2024

- 4.5. In the last monitoring year of 2023-24, there was an adaptation related action we set ourselves to achieve that presently has not yet been completed. This is listed below, split into two sections, with commentary on progress and our future intentions.

Climate Adaptation and Climate Risk Plan (*Top 20 Action #17(part) of 2023-24*)

- 4.6. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Top 20 Action #17 (part): In acknowledgement that climate change is happening, and will continue to accelerate, the Council will establish a climate adaptation and climate risk plan, identifying the greatest risks to the Council and its services, and how it can start to help our communities adapt to a changing climate and biodiversity loss.

- 4.7. An informal process was undertaken to identify potential risks for the Council's operation as a consequence of a changing climate. This considered potential risks such as major floods, severe heatwaves, extended drought periods and wildfires (and the cascading impacts on supply chains, inflation and staff health and wellbeing).
- 4.8. It was, however, decided not to prepare a *climate adaptation and climate risk plan* as originally intended and set out in Action 17. Instead, lessons learnt from the informal exercise will assist in future updates of the corporate risk register and help inform wider resilience planning.

New Climate and Nature Chapter for the Local Plan (*Top 20 Action #17(part) of 2023-24*)

- 4.9. In June 2023, we set ourselves the following action:

Top 20 Action #17 (part): We will commence preliminary work and consultation on a new 'climate' chapter for the Local Plan, which will look at how new buildings can be both more energy efficient and have the ability to adapt to a changing (warming) climate.

- 4.10. Work on this new chapter was commenced in 2023, with the broad scope and structure for such a chapter approved by the Council at its Finance and Assets Committee meeting of 23 November 2023. For further details, see Item 8 of <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/finance-assets-committee-231123>.

- 4.11. Further work on the chapter continued over Winter 2023-24, with the intention of commencing public consultation in Spring 2024. However, due to uncertainty over national policy on this matter following a Written Ministerial Statement of December 2023, a pause on the work was agreed by the Council in March 2024 until greater clarity emerged on national policy. For further details, see Item 8 of <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/finance-assets-committee-280324>.

Our proposals to help adapt to a changing climate, for the period June 2024 to May 2025

4.12. The following section lists our priority actions in full that the Council will undertake over the coming year, to help the Council and its communities get ready to adapt to a changing climate.

Top 20 Action Reference Number	Action to be undertaken
16	<i>'Water, water everywhere [then] not a drop to drink'</i> : Water runs through the heart of East Cambridgeshire's rich history, and its future is also entwined with this vital resource. Partly climate change driven, we need to become more resilient to the dual threat of <i>water, water everywhere</i> in winter, but then <i>not a drop to drink</i> in summer. We will therefore commence a water resilience campaign, sharing tips and resources from partners to help conserve water, how to be prepared for winter storms and floods, and what can be done to help nature access water it needs.
17	Investigate and then implement measures to reduce water use in our own main office building (The Grange), aiming for a 10% reduction by June 2025 and further reductions in future years.
18	Deadly Top Twenty! We will support native species to adapt and thrive in East Cambridgeshire through a public campaign to spot the Top 20 most unwanted, damaging and deadly invasive species in the district, and informing residents what they could do to help.
19	Let's Adapt Together: We all need to do our bit to help bring back nature, minimise climate change and adapt to a changing climate. We will therefore arrange community events and boost our engagement work as we foster a coming together approach to tackle these crucial issues. We will set aside up to £5,000 to help local community groups, charities and parish councils establish their own community engagement forums and events on climate or nature.
20	We want our local businesses to thrive on our journey to a greener, cleaner East Cambridgeshire. We will engage with businesses and investors to identify opportunities for green and sustainable economic growth.

4.13. Progress on achieving the above actions will be reported on in June 2025.

5. Carbon Footprint Reporting Data

Carbon Footprint Calculations

- 5.1. Before deciding what to do differently to reduce emissions, we need to properly understand what our current activities are emitting. This is sometimes known as working out a ‘carbon footprint’ which, in technical terms, is a measure of the greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, emitted into the atmosphere from a specified area (such as Cambridgeshire) or by an organisation (such as East Cambridgeshire District Council) or by an individual. A carbon footprint calculation can provide pointers to where action could be best taken to reduce your impact on the environment.
- 5.2. Whilst not an exact science, you can have a go at calculating your own (or your family’s) carbon footprint using an online tool such as: <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>.
- 5.3. In the next three sections we report on the carbon footprints of:
- **Cambridgeshire, as a geographical area**
 - **East Cambridgeshire, as a geographical area**
 - **East Cambridgeshire District Council, as an organisation**
- 5.4. For the first two sections, the data is compiled by central government, and usually published with at least a two-year lag. Thus, the latest data available at the time of writing was released in July 2023, for the period to 2021. The full dataset for all local authority areas is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2021>.

Cambridgeshire Carbon Footprint (2021 data)

- 5.5. This section reports on the ‘carbon footprint’ of Cambridgeshire as a geographical area.
- 5.6. The latest government data shows the carbon footprint for Cambridgeshire was around 6.79million tonnes CO₂e in 2021 (out of 399MtCO₂e for the UK as a whole). Whilst still an enormous amount, the Cambridgeshire total is on a steady falling trajectory, down from 9.04 MtCO₂e in 2005. However, the 2021 figure identifies a 6% increase in emissions from the year before (2020), but that was primarily due to the steep decline in 2020 as a consequence of covid restrictions. Over the two-year period 2019 to 2021, there was just under 1% reduction in emissions in Cambridgeshire.
- 5.7. The following table splits Cambridgeshire’s emissions of 6.79million tonnes CO₂e (2021) into various main sectors:

Source	CO ₂ e emissions – Cambridgeshire (2021) in thousand tonnes	CO ₂ e emissions – Cambridgeshire (2021) as percentage of all CO ₂ e emissions
Industry	785	12%
Commercial	134	2%
Public sector	222	3%
Domestic	968	14%
Transport	1,815	27%
Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF)	1,525	22%
Agriculture	982	14%
Waste	355	5%
<i>Total</i>	6,786	

- 5.8. Cambridgeshire's largest source of emissions therefore came from transport (27%), followed closely by land use, land use change & forestry (LULUCF) (22%). In fact, Cambridgeshire is the worst performing county in the UK by far under the LULUCF category, emitting twice as much as the next worst county (Norfolk). Indeed, many counties have a minus LULUCF score, meaning their land absorbs more carbon (such as through trees growing) than it emits, which helps them offset some of their emissions from other sectors.
- 5.9. The reason for Cambridgeshire's very high LULUCF emissions is simple: high intensive farming, the subsequent drying of our peat lands, combined with very low levels of tree cover. To reduce our LULUCF emissions will require significant changes in the way we manage and farm our land, and it is unlikely we could ever eliminate emissions arising from this source in Cambridgeshire.

East Cambridgeshire (as a district) Carbon Footprint (2021 data)

- 5.10. This section reports on the 'carbon footprint' of **East Cambridgeshire** as a geographical area.
- 5.11. The latest government data shows the carbon footprint for East Cambridgeshire was around 1.41million tonnes CO₂e in 2021 (out of 399MtCO₂e for the UK as a whole). The following table splits East Cambridgeshire's emissions of 1.41million tonnes CO₂e (2021) into various main sectors:

Source	CO ₂ e emissions – East Cambridgeshire (2021) in thousand tonnes	CO ₂ e emissions – East Cambridgeshire (2021) as percentage of all CO ₂ e emissions	CO ₂ e emissions – East Cambridgeshire (2021) as percentage of all CO ₂ e emissions (excluding LULUCF)
Industry	68	5%	8%
Commercial	11	1%	1%
Public sector	13	1%	2%
domestic	137	10%	17%
Transport	254	18%	31%
Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF)	583	41%	-
Agriculture	295	21%	36%
Waste	46	3%	6%
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,407</i>		

- 5.12. The East Cambridgeshire total is on a very steady falling trajectory, down from 1.66 MtCO₂e in 2005 to 1.41 MtCO₂e in 2021. However, the 2021 figure identifies a 3% increase in emissions from the year before when it was 1.37 MtCO₂e (2020), but that was primarily due to the significant decline in 2020 as a consequence of covid restrictions. Over the two-year period 2019 to 2021, there was a 2% reduction in emissions in East Cambridgeshire.
- 5.13. To help visualise what 1.41 MtCO₂e looks like, that amount of CO₂e emissions would fill somewhere in the region of **1,000 hot air balloons every day**, and for **just East Cambridgeshire**.

Cambridgeshire and East Cambridgeshire Emissions on a Per Capita Basis (2021 data)

5.14. An alternative way to monitor emissions at a geographical level is to look at how much emissions are arising in that area on a per person (sometime known as per capita) basis. The following chart identifies emissions on a per capita basis for the UK, Cambridgeshire and East Cambridgeshire, and does so over the time frame 2005 to 2021.

Year	Emissions per capita (in tCO ₂ e) - UK	Emissions per capita (in tCO ₂ e) - Cambridgeshire	Emissions per capita (in tCO ₂ e) – East Cambridgeshire
2005	10.9	15.5	21.5
2006	10.7	15.2	21.2
2007	10.4	14.8	20.2
2008	9.9	14.2	19.4
2009	9.0	13.1	18.7
2010	9.1	13.0	18.7
2011	8.3	12.3	18.2
2012	8.6	12.7	18.4
2013	8.3	12.3	18.0
2014	7.6	11.6	17.5
2015	7.3	11.2	17.2
2016	6.8	10.9	16.9
2017	6.6	10.7	17.0
2018	6.5	10.6	16.7
2019	6.2	10.2	16.6
2020	5.6	9.5	15.7
2021	6.0	10.0	16.0

5.15. The above figure identifies the very large differences, on a per capita basis, between East Cambridgeshire and the UK average, with Cambridgeshire broadly in the middle.

5.16. In East Cambridgeshire, we emit nearly three times as much CO₂e per person (16.0 tonnes CO₂e in 2021) compared with the average across the UK (6.0 tonnes CO₂e in 2021). The primary reasons for this very high per capita rate in East Cambridgeshire is twofold:

- High levels of emissions from land use and agriculture (and corresponding very low emission capture due to a lack of trees and other functioning carbon sinks such as peatlands)
- Relatively high emissions from transport, reflecting our heavy reliance on cars in the district and the relatively high degree of commuting (with such commuting predominantly by car).

East Cambridgeshire District Council Carbon Footprint (2022-23 data)

- 5.17. The previous sections, looking at Cambridgeshire as a whole and East Cambridgeshire as a whole, used data collected and published by other parties. In this section, we look just at East Cambridgeshire District Council, as an organisation.
- 5.18. To work out the carbon footprint of an individual company or organisation, like East Cambridgeshire District Council, a lot more data collection and analysis is required to be done by that organisation to determine a robust carbon footprint. For an explanation of the method we have adopted for calculating our carbon footprint, please refer to Appendix 1.

The Council's Carbon Footprint 2022-23 – a summary

- 5.19. The baseline carbon footprint (using data for the financial year 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019), as set out in detail in our Environment Plan 2020, resulted in a **baseline (2018-19) carbon footprint for the Council being established as 1,317 tonnes of CO₂e**.
- 5.20. Each year since, the Council has reported an update on its annual emissions. Below is the fifth set of such data, for the financial year 2022-23.
- 5.21. It is estimated that the measurable carbon footprint for the Council in 2022-23 (i.e. to April 2023) as being **1,282 tonnes of CO₂e**. Thus, in headline terms, the Council's calculated carbon footprint has seen **an overall 2% decrease** in its gross emissions in the five-year period starting in 2018-19 and ending in 2022-23.
- 5.22. The change in emissions from baseline to present year is summarised in the table below:

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Scope 1: Direct emissions	839	871	892	843	886
Scope 2: Indirect emissions	164	120	95	95	87
Scope 3: Other Indirect emissions	314	325	254	266	308
Gross emissions total	1,317	1,315	1,241	1,204	1,282

The Council's Carbon Footprint 2022-23 – further detail

- 5.23. A detailed breakdown of the source of the Council's calculated emissions in 2022-23 is set out below (note: 'well-to-tank' is listed as a separate row but is a direct consequence of fuel used by the Council, and therefore primarily arises from the fuel consumed by its fleet vehicles).

Scope 1 (tCO ₂ e)	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Gas Consumption	63.7	71.0	81.6	74.6	68.5
Heating Oil	-	-	17.8	18.4	17.7
Refrigerant gases	9.7	-	-	-	6.7
Fleet Vehicles	765.4	800.1	792.5	750.2	793.0
Scope 1 Total	838.8	871.1	891.9	843.2	885.8

Scope 2 (tCO ₂ e)	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Electricity	152.5	118.3	86.5	72.5	81.6
Street Lighting	12.0	1.4	8.7	8.7	5.7
Scope 2 Total	164.5	119.7	95.2	81.2	87.2

Scope 3 (tCO _{2e})	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Water and sewerage	7.1	7.5	8.1	5.9	6.5
Waste generated in operations	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.4
Business travel	81.9	84.7	24.0	41.8	17.0
Purchased goods and services					65.8
Transmission & Distribution	14.0	10.2	10.2	7.0	8.0
Well-To-Tank	210.0	221.7	210.7	209.6	210.7
Scope 3 Total	313.5	324.7	253.5	265.0	308.4

Tonnes CO _{2e}	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Gross emissions	1,316.9	1,315.5	1,240.7	1,189.3	1,281.5

The Council's Carbon Footprint 2022-23 – commentary and analysis

- 5.24. Calculating an organisation's carbon footprint is very challenging, and reported data each year should be read with some caution. What is reported in this document is given in good faith and to the best of the author's ability, but it has to be acknowledged that there are considerable limitations and uncertainties with calculating and reporting such data.
- 5.25. For example, some data is more easily collected and converted to emissions than others. Electricity and gas use is relatively straight forward, because the data is available on the statements (bills) received from suppliers; whereas emissions arising from refrigeration gases or purchased goods are much more difficult to determine.
- 5.26. Emission calculations rely on the data being collected and available in a useable form. It is therefore prone to under- or over-reporting if the data collected is not fully robust. This is particularly the case at the Council for the following items:
- **'Heating Oil'** was missed from the data collection in the first two years, as reporting officers were unaware we used any heating oil (it was used away from our main office buildings). Once known, the data was requested, and is now reported. Hence, we 'under reported' our heating oil emissions in the first two years.
 - **'Business Travel'** appears to have been over-reported in some early years, though we are still uncertain on this and need to investigate further. The issue appears to be that the data provided by the finance team on 'business travel' may, for some years and for some journeys, been provided as two rows of data for one journey, with one row being the journey and the second row being the 'VAT' refund being claimed by the Council. However, as this was not immediately clear in the spreadsheets provided, both rows appear to have been used in some years/journeys as if they were two separate journeys, and the emissions arising therefore 'double counted'. Consequently, it is highly likely that 'business travel' has been over-reported in some years. Nevertheless, using alternative data as a proxy (namely, the amount, in £, claimed in expenses by staff for business miles), this has persistently shown a steep declining trajectory in total business miles claimed, even allowing for covid restrictions, therefore we are confident the emissions arising from business travel is significantly less than the baseline year of 2018-19.
 - **'Purchased goods and services'** we know is significantly under-reported. For the first four years we did not account for any such emissions arising. For this year, for the first time, we are reporting on a small element of those purchases, namely paper. However, the true emissions arising from all the other goods and services we buy is unknown, yet likely to be a very significant amount.
- 5.27. Despite these acknowledged limitations, we can still draw some useful conclusions from the data we have collected.

- 5.28. For 2022-23, by far the largest single contributing area continues to be the Council's **'fleet vehicles'**, such as the vehicles it uses for waste collection, maintaining our parks and open spaces, general maintenance of our properties and land, and any lease vehicles. This is especially so once 'well-to-tank' is factored in. In total, such vehicles account for over **three-quarters of the council's reported emissions**. Such a figure also excludes any scope 3 emissions arising from the manufacturing and distribution of such vehicles (known as 'embedded carbon'), so the true full-life emissions arising from our fleet vehicles is likely to be an even greater share of the Council's emissions.
- 5.29. Compared with our fleet vehicles, all other sources of emissions are relatively low.
- 5.30. Very few of our emissions appear to have a significant trend down or up, other than electricity use, which is significantly down from the 2018-19 baseline. However, emissions from electricity actually went up in 2022-23. It is not certain why, though it might be accounted for by the extreme heat in summer 2022, which resulted in heavy use of the air conditioning units, and/or the installation by the Council of electric based fan heaters in the rear lobby of The Grange for winter 2022-23. With the national grid becoming increasingly decarbonised, emissions arising from electricity should persistently decrease, even if an organisation does nothing directly to reduce its own electricity use. Thus, any increase in emissions arising from electricity use in an organisation is an area of significant concern.
- 5.31. Allowing for the possible over and under reporting of some items, it is probably fair to say that the 'carbon footprint' of the Council since the baseline year of 2018-19 has remained stable or perhaps a very slight downward trend, though the year 2022-23, broadly speaking, identified a number of areas where the emissions arising actually ticked upwards not down.

6. Renewable Energy in East Cambridgeshire

How much renewable energy do we produce in East Cambridgeshire?

- 6.1. Whilst East Cambridgeshire as a district has one of the highest rates of per capita emissions in the UK, on the flip side (and not reflected in the emissions statistics) we are, as a district, a relatively high producer of renewable energy. According to the latest BEIS data published in September 2023 (Source of data: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics>), East Cambridgeshire **generated** 507,550 MWh of renewable energy in 2022 (+13% compared with 2021) as follows:

Type of Renewable Energy	MWh generated in 2022
Photovoltaics (PV) solar	145,013
Wind	240
Anaerobic Digestion	107,780
Landfill Gas	0
Plant Biomass (eg straw burning plant)	254,516
All other possible sources (eg hydro)	0
Total	507,550

Please note that the table above identifies a zero contribution from Landfill Gas. Landfill Gas is excluded from the BEIS data because according to BEIS “there was some generation [of Landfill Gas in East Cambridgeshire] but it has been suppressed to prevent the output of individual plants being revealed” i.e. if the data was released, it would be commercially sensitive. Nevertheless, using historical data we have, the figure is likely to be less than 5,000MWh and would consequently be less than a 1% addition to the total district renewable energy production.

- 6.2. On a per household basis, it means an average of just under 14MWh of renewable energy is produced per household in East Cambridgeshire. On the basis that a typical medium household (2-3 bedroom house; 2 to 3 people) uses around 4MWh per year of electricity per year (though this of course varies considerably from home to home, and assumes electricity is not used for heating), the amount of renewable energy generated in the district would power more than three times the number of homes we have. Of course, this statistic excludes other major electricity users in the district, such as businesses and public buildings. Nevertheless, the district is a significant generator of renewable energy.
- 6.3. Indeed, **more renewable energy is produced in East Cambridgeshire than any other district in Cambridgeshire**, and the district is one of the top 10% renewable energy producing districts in the UK.
- 6.4. That said, the use of electricity in the district of East Cambridgeshire only contributes a small fraction (approx. 6% in 2021) towards our total CO₂ emissions. Thus, whilst having a high level of renewable energy produced in the district is, in principle, a good thing, even if we generated enough electricity to power the electricity currently used in every home, business and other building in the district, it would only reduce our district wide carbon footprint by around 6%.
- 6.5. What we need to do is reduce our other c94% of emissions (from petrol, diesel, oil and the way we manage our land) and switch more and more of our power use towards renewable-generated electricity.

Appendix 1 – Carbon Footprint Calculations Method

Introduction

In section 5, we set out the headline emissions or ‘carbon footprint’ of East Cambridgeshire District Council, as an organisation. In this appendix, we set out further details on the method employed and the assumptions used, together with acknowledgment of the limitations in the method.

Over time, the Council is committed to making its carbon footprint calculations as comprehensive and robust as possible.

Method

The starting point for carbon management is to accurately establish the emissions baseline. The scope of the baseline includes the required types and sources of emissions over a defined timescale. The baseline is a fixed point against which a reduction target can be set and future performance monitored. Our baseline was set as emissions arising in 2018/19.

To calculate CO₂e emissions arising, it is necessary to convert the ‘raw’ data (such as kWh of electricity used) into CO₂e emissions. This process is relatively straightforward, using what are known as ‘conversion factors’. The carbon conversion factors used for this Environment Plan are the UK Government published carbon conversion factors for 2022 available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/greenhouse-gas-reporting-conversion-factors-2022> .

The Council is reporting on emissions within its operational control boundary, following the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol reporting standards available at <https://ghgprotocol.org/corporate-standard>.

‘In Scope’

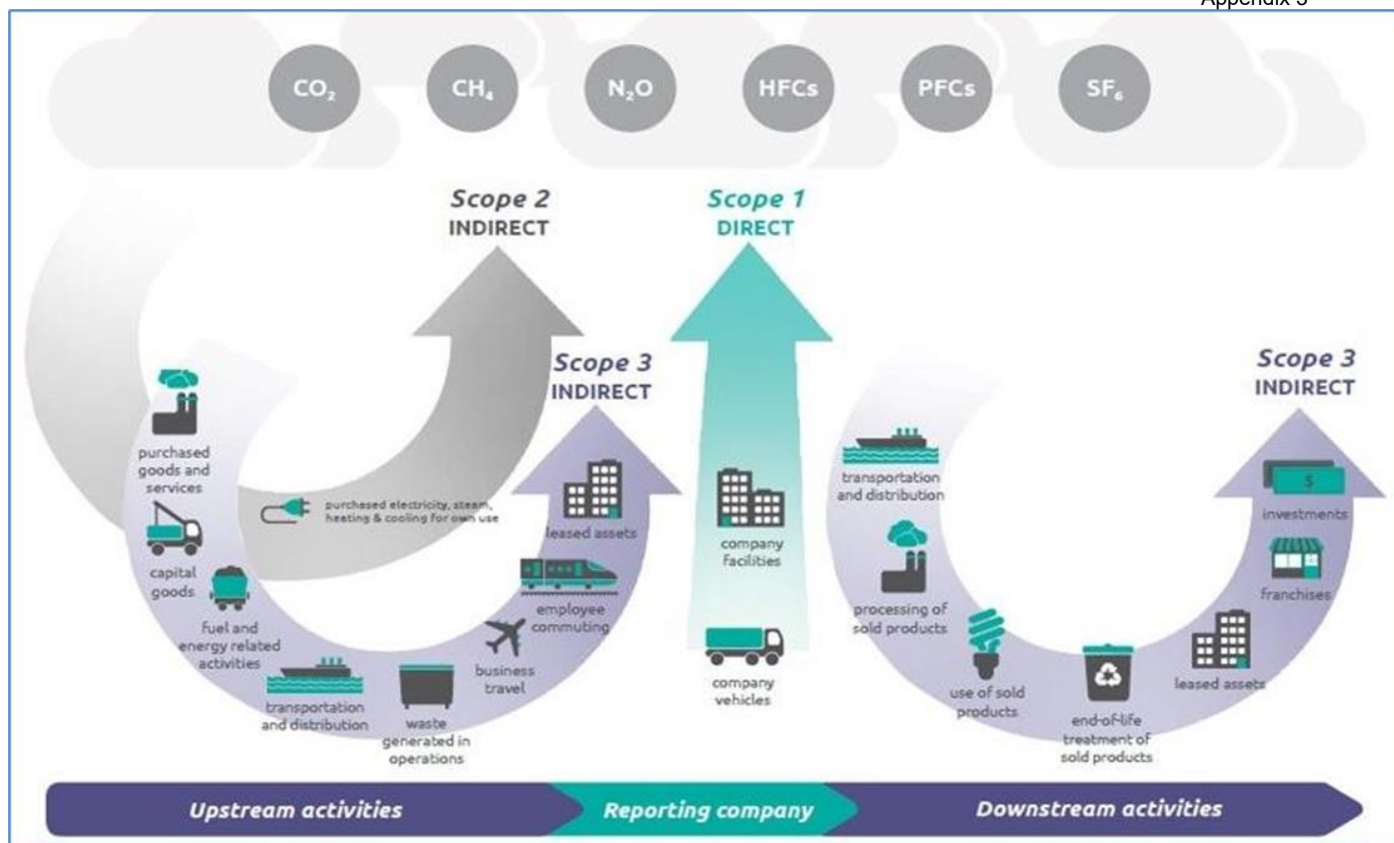
Defining the organisational boundary involves establishing which activities and functions are counted (or ‘in scope’) for the purpose of determining the Council’s overall emissions, and by default what activities and functions are not counted (‘out of scope’). This stage of the process involves reviewing the Council’s operations to determine activities that give rise to carbon emissions.

Emissions, and their associated activities, are reported across three different scopes as follows:

- Scope 1** Direct emissions from Council controlled or owned sources
- Scope 2** Indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy used by Council
- Scope 3** Indirect emissions associated with the value chain of the Council, both upstream into the Council and downstream out of the Council

Scope 1 and 2 emissions are generally considered to be areas that an organisation has a high degree of control over and can therefore reduce the resultant emissions significantly, if not completely. Scope 3 are considered to be indirect emissions that an organisation cannot directly control and therefore the ability to reduce emissions is far more challenging.

An overview of what falls in different scopes is set out in the diagram below (source page 5 of https://ghgprotocol.org/sites/default/files/standards/Corporate-Value-Chain-Accounting-Reporting-Standard_041613_2.pdf)



An ongoing review process has determined that, for East Cambridgeshire District Council, it is appropriate to include the following sources ('in-scope') at the present time:

Scope	Activities typical to an office-based organisation	Identified Council emission sources
1	Stationary Production of electricity, heat or steam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gas used in Council Offices e.g. The Grange Gas used in buildings operated by the Council e.g. E-Space North
1	Mobile Transportation of raw materials / waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel in cars, vans and heavy goods vehicles operated by the Council
1	Fugitive Hydrofluorocarbons (HFC) emissions during use of refrigeration and air-conditioning equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air conditioning used in Council Offices e.g. The Grange
2	Stationary Consumption of purchased electricity, heat or steam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Electricity used in Council Offices e.g. The Grange, Portley Hill Depot Electricity used in Council owned street and car park lighting which also includes road signs and illuminated bollards Electricity used in business facilities operated by the Council e.g. E-space North, E-space South Electricity used in public facilities operated by the Council e.g. Ely Market Square, Jubilee Gardens
3	Stationary & Process Production emissions from purchased materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchase materials (paper) All other purchased materials – Excluded (see below)

3	<p>Mobile Transportation of raw materials / products / waste, employee business travel, employee commuting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff business travel and accommodation • Employee commuting – Excluded (see below) • Supply and treatment of water used in Council Offices e.g. The Grange • Supply and treatment of water used in public facilities e.g. Public toilets • ‘Well to tank’ (this being emissions arising from the production, transportation, transformation and distribution of fuel before it reaches the vehicle that actually uses the fuel)
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‘Out of Scope’

In addition to the sources detailed above, there are other emission causing activities that the Council holds insufficient detail to accurately measure. Such emissions are therefore **excluded (or ‘out of scope’)** from the carbon footprint we report.

Such activities are listed below (taken from and defined in the GHG Protocol as ‘scope 3’ emissions) and are as follows:

Category 1	Purchased goods and services
Category 2	Capital goods
Category 7	Employee commuting
Category 8	Upstream leased assets
Category 9	Downstream transportation and distribution
Category 13	Downstream leased assets
Category 15	Investments

It is not unusual for an organisation to declare certain activities to be categorised as ‘out of scope’. That’s not because the organisation wants to exclude or otherwise ‘hide’ such emissions, but it is a pragmatic acceptance that it is too difficult, with resources available to that organisation, to calculate such emissions.

However, over time, the Council intends to make as many of these areas as possible ‘in scope’, therefore taking even greater responsibility for emissions arising, even where direct control is not present.

Of purchased materials, for example, we have, from reporting year 2022/23, introduced purchased paper into our calculations as being ‘in scope’, due to reliable data for the carbon impact of paper production and consumption becoming available. This has been calculated predominantly through a spend-based approach, which is a calculation method that estimates emissions by collecting data on the economic value of goods and services purchased and multiplying it by relevant secondary (e.g., industry average) emission factors (e.g., average emissions per monetary value of goods).

Employee commuting may be another early activity we could attempt to quantify scope 3 emissions arising.

Data Collection

The energy data used to calculate the carbon footprint is gathered from different sources, for example invoices received by the Council, annual energy statements from utility providers and property services. Work continues to ensure that this data is robust and systems are in place to ensure ongoing timely and accurate collection of such data. The table below provides more details:

Emissions Source Type	Data Source	Data Quality / Estimation techniques
Gas consumption	Energy invoices from different suppliers, meter readings	Where estimations have been used records are held with source data. Methods include: Annualising consumption or average data calculated using bookended data

Heating oil	Energy invoices from different suppliers	Annualising consumption where required
Refrigerants	Service invoices for air conditioning units	Annualising consumption where required
Fleet vehicles	Fuel purchased and vehicle log books	Annualising consumption where required
Electricity	Energy invoices from different suppliers, meter readings	Where estimations have been used records are held with source data. Methods include: Annualising consumption or average data calculated using bookended periods
Water supply & disposal	Energy invoices from different suppliers	Annualising consumption where required
Waste	Waste collection reports	Annualising consumption where required
Staff business travel	Staff mileage claims, fuel purchased and vehicle log books.	Annualising consumption where required
Hotel Stays	Staff claim forms	N/A

The carbon footprint of East Cambridgeshire District Council (as an organisation) has been calculated in line with the UK Government's Environmental Reporting Guidelines for Voluntary Greenhouse Gas Reporting, which are internationally-recognised standards from the World Resources Institute and World Business Council for Sustainable Development: the GHG Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard, and the GHG Protocol Scope 3 standard.

Market-based and location-based reporting

As set out in the tables in section 5, around 7% of the Council's CO₂e emission come from 'scope 2' activities. In simple terms, in our case, these are emissions arising from the electricity the Council uses, mostly in its offices. When calculating the Council's headline carbon footprint, we are reporting these scope 2 emissions on a *location-based method* basis, which means those emissions are calculated using the average emissions intensity of the national grid. We think this is the fairest and most honest way of reporting our true emissions.

Indeed, the UK Government (in its 2019 'Environmental Reporting Guidelines', including Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting requirements) make it clear that, whilst not compulsory, "*organisations are encouraged to use location-based grid average emission factors to report the emissions from electricity, including those consumed from the grid.*"

However, an alternative way of reporting our electricity activities is on a *market-based method* basis. Such a method takes account of the contractual basis of where we buy electricity from. The Council's electricity tariffs are almost entirely on a 100% renewable energy contract basis (a few of our isolated street lighting contracts are not, for example), and therefore under the *market-based method*, our scope 2 emissions would be almost eliminated entirely. This would reduce our total emissions (and our carbon footprint) by around 6%.

Some Councils and other organisations that are on 100% renewable energy tariffs are choosing to use this *market-based method* to report their emissions, and consequently are claiming a lower carbon footprint than they would do so if they reported under the *location-based method*. East Cambridgeshire District Council has chosen not to do so, for one simple reason. By reporting on a *market-based method*, that organisation does not actually reduce the net emissions of itself or the country as a whole; it simply means another organisation uses a greater share of 'dirtier' electricity than otherwise would be the case, because the organisation using the *market-based method* is in effect making the rest of the national grid, which is shared with everyone else, more carbon intensive. In fact, if an organisation which is on a 100% renewable energy tariff reports only on a *market-based method* basis, there is no incentive for that organisation to reduce its electricity use at all, because it would already be set at 0 tonnes CO₂e emissions.

Again, government gives advice in the aforementioned guidelines, as follows:

"Where organisations have entered into contractual arrangements for renewable electricity and wish to reflect a reduced emission figure based on its purchase, this can be presented in the relevant report using

a “*market-based*” reporting approach. It is recommended that this is presented alongside the “*location-based*” grid-average figures.”

Put another way, *market-based* reporting alone is arguably a misleading way of trying to claim a lower carbon footprint than would otherwise be the case under the *location-based* method. If *market-based* reporting is to be reported at all, it should, according to government, be alongside *location-based* reporting. We have reported it only as *location-based* reporting.

Overall, whilst it is important that East Cambridgeshire District Council does operate a renewable energy tariff for its electricity supply, because that will generate investment in renewables across the country, the Council is not headlining its carbon footprint calculations on that basis. Instead, it prefers, in line with government guidance, to headline its reporting of emissions using the *location-based reporting method*. However, the above commentary helps explain how we present our data in the most transparent and accurate way possible.

TITLE: ANNUAL REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 27 June 2024

Author: Interim Senior Democratic Services Officer

Report number: Z24

Contact officer:

Leah Mickleborough, Interim Senior Democratic Services Officer

Leah.mickleborough@eastcambs.gov.uk, 01353 616298, Room No. 214, The Grange, Ely

1.0 Issues

1.1. This report receives the annual reports on outside bodies from the representatives

2.0 Recommendations

2.1. That the 2023-24 annual reports from the Council representatives on Outside Bodies within the remit of the Finance & Assets Committee, as detailed in Appendix 1, be noted.

3.0 Background

3.1 The Council's Constitution specifies in the Terms of Reference for the Finance & Assets Committee that it should appoint representatives to Outside Bodies within its remit, from the wider membership of Council, for a period of up to 4 years. In practice, appointments are made at the first meeting after the elections and are then only reviewed between elections if there is a change of circumstances. A full list of appointments was made last year, following the May 2023 elections. The Council has not been informed of any proposed changes to appointments to be made at this stage.

3.2 All representatives on outside bodies are requested to provide an annual report, detailing the activities of the organisation and the continued relevance of appointing a Council representative. These have been collated and are included at appendix 1 to this report.

4.0 Conclusions

4.1. At this stage, no appointments to outside bodies are required to be made by the Committee. Receipt of annual report demonstrates the work of its organisation and its relevance to the work of the Council.

5.0 Additional Implications Assessment

Financial Implications None	Legal Implications None	Human Resources (HR) Implications None
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Not required	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) Not required	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) Not required

6.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: Representation on outside bodies within the remit of the finance and assets committee, 2024-25 (including reports from representatives for 2023-24)

7.0 Background documents

None

EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES WITHIN THE REMIT OF THE FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE

2024-25

(Including reports from representatives for 2023-24)

Contents

Organisations (including 2023-24 reports, if applicable)

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PRIORITY CATEGORY OF OFFICER SUPPORT

1. Nominated officers to provide Members with regular support on a proactive basis, and attend meetings where appropriate (including those outside bodies where officers attend at present).
2. Nominated officers to provide ad hoc support on specific agenda issues and act as a contact for feedback and implementation of action points. The onus will be on the Member to contact the nominated officer to facilitate these arrangements.
3. Members should liaise directly with Democratic Services.

A10 ELY TO A14 IMPROVEMENTS SCHEME

AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

- Member Working Group established by resolution of Cambridgeshire County Council Highways and Transport Committee (12/7/22);
- Members will receive information regarding the scheme as it develops;
- Members can discuss and express their views but it is not a decision-making body.

Representation:	Two Members
Status of Member:	Representatives of ECDC
No. meetings per year:	To be decided at the first meeting
Expenses paid by organisation:	No
Insurance provision:	No
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	1
Contact Officer:	Director Community, Sally Bonnett

Representatives for 2024/25:	Cllr Ian Bovingdon Cllr Bill Hunt
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REPORT FROM 2023/24 REPRESENTATIVE

Cllr Bill Hunt (attended all 3 meetings)

The Member Working Group was established by resolution of Cambridgeshire County Council Highways and Transport Committee (12/7/22). The Group continues to carry out very well worthwhile important work. Members will receive information regarding the scheme as it develops. Members can discuss and express their views, but it is not a decision-making body.

Cllr Ian Bovingdon.

(not received)

EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

East Cambs Community Land Trust is incorporated to enable affordable homes to be owned and managed by an independent locally-run body that enables people to live and work locally. It is an “umbrella” Community Land Trust (CLT) and therefore covers a wider area or region than a local CLT and takes a complementary, supportive, role to any local CLTs.

Its purpose is to carry on, for the benefit of people in need (whether by virtue of poverty, financial hardship, age, physical or mental disability or ill health), in East Cambridgeshire:

- The business of providing and managing housing (including social housing) and facilitating the provision and management of such housing;
- The provision of, and facilitating the provision of, information, advice, assistance, training, support, facilities, amenities and services incidental to the provision and promotion of housing;
- The promotion of regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation in such ways as may be thought fit by the Trustees;
- Any other charitable object that can be carried out from time to time by a community land trust and which the Trustees consider would further the social, economic and environmental interest of the community in the area of benefit.

Representation:	Up to three Members (total of one vote irrespective of number of Members.)
Status of Member:	Custodian Nominee Trustee
No. meetings per year:	3-4
Expenses paid by organisation:	No
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 1):	3
Contact Officer:	Director Community, Sally Bonnett
Representative for 2024/25:	Cllr Anna Bailey

REPORT FROM 2023/24 REPRESENTATIVE

Cllr Anna Bailey (attended all 4 meetings)

ECCLT is a not-for-profit Community Benefit Society, run by volunteers. The Trust was established in November 2017 as an umbrella Community Land Trust (CLT) for the whole of East Cambridgeshire. ECCLT supports the work of the Council in promoting Community Land Trust development in the district and in securing affordable homes that help to enable people with ties to the area to live and work locally.

ECCLT owns and manages two affordable homes within Montgomery House that were part of the East Cambs Trading Company's Kings Row development in Barton Road, Ely which are occupied by local people. ECCLT also manages the Montgomery House building.

ECCLT has been working with East Cambs Trading Company to take on the ownership and management of 15 shared ownership affordable homes on the ex MOD housing site in Ely; to date 13 homes have been purchased by ECCLT, with the final 2 to complete very soon. Tenants living in the 13 properties were selected using the Trust's local allocations policy, meaning those eligible people with the strongest ties to the community are benefiting.

The Trustees have met formally 4 times since May 2023.

Continued representation on this outside body is very important – the District Council has Custodian Member status and has responsibilities to the Trust in that regard. Membership also helps to pursue the stated Corporate Plan housing objectives of the Council.

This organisation facilitates the delivery of affordable homes and supports the outcomes of the Council's Corporate Plan.

EAST OF ENGLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

- To represent the interests of local authorities in the region;
- To formulate sound policies for the development of local government in the region;
- To promote the policies of the East of England LGA and provide information/advice on local government issues to the public and partner organisations;
- To enable Councillors to exercise their democratic accountability and leadership effectively;
- To support innovation and excellence that enables local authorities and their partnerships to meet the needs of their communities and meet future challenges.

Representation:	Leader of Council
Status of Member:	Representative of ECDC
No. meetings per year:	1
Expenses paid by organisation:	No
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 1):	1
Contact Officer:	Chief Executive, John Hill

Representative for 2024/25: Cllr Anna Bailey

REPORT FROM 2023/24 REPRESENTATIVE

Cllr Anna Bailey (attended 2 of 2 meetings)

This is a member led organisation whose core services are funded by member subscriptions from the East of England.

Core Services are a universal offer available to all subscribing members and provided free at the point of access. They include programmes of activity in priority areas, support for regional member and officer networks, a range of free events and briefings, specific helpdesk and advice services, as well as activity undertaken jointly with Trade Unions in its role as the Regional Employers Organisation.

The organisation provides support and advice to the Council, particularly adding value when in house services are not available.

Continued representation on this Outside Body is worthwhile; the organisation is useful to the Council in providing briefings, information, support and expertise and in representing local Government with central Government.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

To support, promote and improve local government in England and Wales.

To support Councillors in their role as democratically elected local representatives.

Representation:	One Member
Status of Member:	Representative of ECDC (voting Member)
No. meetings per year:	1
Expenses paid by organisation:	Yes (attendance only, not travel)
Insurance provision:	No
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	1
Contact Officer:	Chief Executive, John Hill

Representative for 2024/25: Cllr Julia Huffer

REPORTS FROM 2023/24 REPRESENTATIVE

Cllr Julia Huffer (attended 0 of 1 meetings)

I believe this is a worthwhile organisation and we should continue to attend. I have no diary clash this year.

LGA – DISTRICT COUNCILS NETWORK

AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

- To lobby and negotiate directly with senior members of national political parties on district-specific needs and issues – the “localism” agenda;
- To inform and influence national agencies, government departments and other local authority agencies on things that matter, such as resources and allocation;
- To get the Network’s unique message across to the audiences that matter – people, Government, partners, regulators;
- Help each other to remain effective and share learning/good practice.

Representation:	Leader of Council
Status of Member:	ECDC representative
No. meetings per year:	4
Expenses paid by organisation:	No
Insurance provision:	No
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	1
Contact Officer:	Chief Executive, John Hill

Representative for 2024/25: Cllr Anna Bailey

REPORT FROM 2023/24 REPRESENTATIVE

Cllr Anna Bailey (attended 2 of 4 meetings).

The District Councils’ Network (DCN) is a cross-party member led network of 180 district councils. It is a Special Interest Group of the Local Government Association (LGA), and provides a single voice for all district councils within the Local Government Association.

Being a member of the network supports the work of the organisation, provides valuable information and data to the Council and facilitates networking, helping the Council to lobby Government and fulfil its statutory and non-statutory activities.

Over the years during Covid the DCN has been particularly pro-active. Topics vary and cover most aspects of the functions of District Councils.

This organisation has been an incredibly effective conduit for District Councils and central Government, particularly in relation to dealings with the DLUCH; it has meant that District Councils have had a strong and united voice.

RURAL SERVICES NETWORK.

AIMS AND ACTIVITIES

- A membership organisation championing rural services. It campaigns for fair funding for rural areas and aims to share best practice across the membership.

Representation:	Two Members
Status of Member:	
No. meetings per year:	12
Expenses paid by organisation:	No
Insurance provision:	No
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Director Community, Sally Bonnett

Representatives for 2024/25: Keith Horgan
James Lay

REPORTS FROM 2023/24 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr Keith Horgan (attended 10 of 10 meetings)

The key link to our objectives is through the Rural Services Networks work on sustainable communities. Yes [continued representation on this outside body is worthwhile] because the topics discussed directly impact our residents.

The Rural Services Network encompasses a wide range of partners and organisations who all work together to help provide a voice for rural communities. Over 20,000 members belong to the network. ECDC is categorised as a member in the Sparse category which is for the most sparsely populated local authorities and is the most comprehensive of their membership levels. The RSN campaigns on behalf of authorities for fairer funding for public services in rural areas. This membership package provides a wide range of targeted analysis of rural data and statistics and the work of the RSN dedicated fair funding campaign, along with topics such as the transition of the telephone system to digital fibre, the housing crisis and immigration issues for rural communities. The RSN is party to several Parliamentary APPGs that meet to discuss matters directly affecting rural communities such as East Cambridgeshire and a list of topics can be found here: <https://www.rsonline.org.uk/category/news>

James Lay

(Not Received.)

INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARDS

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Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) are public bodies that manage water levels in areas where there is a special need for drainage. They reduce flood risk to people and property and they manage water levels for agricultural and environmental needs. IDBs are funded by a combination of drainage rates levied on the owners of farmland, and special levies on District and Unitary Councils. District Councils appoint representatives to IDBs, the number of representatives being determined by the IDBs by consideration of the percentage of the Board's income being paid by each Council.

Haddenham Level IDB is part of the Middle Level Commissioners, all other IDBs on which ECDC is represented are part of the Ely Group of Internal Drainage Boards.

Appointment of ECDC representatives to Internal Drainage Boards has been discussed at various Council and Committee meetings¹ and the following process has been agreed:

1. Nominations should be invited from the Members of Council.
2. If vacancies cannot all be filled from within the District Council then;
 - a. former District Councillors who are willing to continue in their IDB role could be nominated as a layperson, and;
 - b. the relevant Parish Council(s) should be invited to submit nominations.

If there are more nominations than vacancies then consideration should be given to the candidates' prior knowledge and experience of both the geographical area and the issues relevant to IDBs. In all cases, the final decision on each appointment rests with the Finance & Assets Committee.

¹ Resources & Finance Committee: 29 March 2018 (Agenda Item 11, Minute 94); 26 July 2018 (Agenda Item 12, Minute 35).
Council: 19 April 2018 (Agenda Item 10, Minute 89).
Finance & Assets Committee: 20 June 2019 (Agenda Item 13, Minute 17); 26 September 2019 (Agenda Item 18, Minute 56).

BURNT FEN INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Ely North Littleport
Parish Councils covered:	City of Ely Council Littleport Parish Council
Representation:	Two Members
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by the Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith
Representatives for 2024/25:	Cllr Martin Goodearl Derrick Beckett

REPORTS FROM 2023/24 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr Martin Goodearl (attended 1 of 3 meetings)

The Burnt Fen IDB has an important part to play in our climate and environmental objectives.

Continued representation on this IDB is essential as we as a council are levied for a sum of money each year for the service this board offers in keeping the water levels safe and manageable for all residents and farms in the Burnt Fen area. It is important that we as a Council keep an eye on how our money is being used and is of value to the public.

This body has an important role in the planning procedures and advise on water and wastewater control to the planning Officers on all new builds.

The Levy and planning are discussed by the IDB and they use us as a conduit to matter concerning the Couty Council such as Highways and culvert replacements.

Please note I only joined this IDB in February

Derrick Beckett (lay member)

(Not received.)

CAWDLE FEN INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Ely West
Parish Councils covered:	City of Ely Council
Representation:	Seven Members
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith

Representatives for 2024/25:	Cllr Christine Colbert
	Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann
	Cllr Caroline Shepard
	Cllr Christine Whelan
	Rupert Moss-Eccardt
	Rebecca Denness

REPORTS FROM 2023/24 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr Christine Colbert (Attended 2 of 3 meetings)

The effective operation of the IDBs is vital to the welfare of our district, and beyond. I therefore feel it essential that ECDC continues to be represented on these bodies.

Cllr Christine Whelan (attended 2 of 3 meetings)

The whole area of East Cambridgeshire is at risk of flooding so therefore this relates to the ECDC's objectives.

Representation on the board is worthwhile as the areas discussed are in the interest of ECDC however there is little opportunity to report back at the relevant committee meetings. This should be addressed.

There is still an engineering problem with a culvert that runs along The Dock. Estimates are being sought but remediation could cost as much as £400k.

The area down by the dock was discussed as the whole drainage pipe is at risk of collapse which will cost a considerable amount of money to repair. Various options were looked into to try and make the best decision about the cost of this.

Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann (attended 2 of 3 meetings)

IDBs are indispensable ensure appropriate water management for the Fens and as such integral to creating a safe environment for residents and thus continued representation on IDBs is worthwhile and valuable.

The meetings I have attended were well run, concise and informative. The IDB's current concerns are twofold – firstly the increasing electricity costs due the substantial increase in pumping hours that was needed to cope with the very wet winter and secondly how to cost-effectively repair to the culvert next to Tesco's in Ely. The estimated cost of this is £550,000. The board is currently approaching the District Council for funding, otherwise the majority of the cost will have to be financed the Public Works Loan Board, which would result in a large increase in the Special Levy and thus council tax.

Rupert Moss-Eccardt (attended all 3 meetings)

Things haven't change much from last year:

Water management continues to be essential to support food production, protect property and underpin the local economy:-

The CPIER report alludes to significant GVA benefit from flood protection schemes. A fairly recent modelling exercise for the Great Ouse fens predicts 7-10 £bn of damage in the event of a significant flood control failure.

Many planning applications are only successful because, even though they are in Flood Zone 3, the site is protected by flood defences.

SUDSs only work if there is somewhere for the final outflow to go. IDBs move that water from catchwater drains through to the main river.

Finally, if the IDBs didn't provide a path for water to be abstracted, the local agricultural economy would fail.

So the work of the IDB is essential for the continued existence of East Cambs.

As this is a body that raises a levy against ECDC it is incumbent on ECDC to utilise its scrutiny and management power to meet its obligations to ensure the money is spent properly.

The Special Levy has been increased this year.

The engineering issue with the culvert that runs along The Dock continues. Estimates place the expected costs as over £550k for remediation. Alternatives are being sought. If the suggested remediation is the only answer and there is no Grant-In-Aid available then the Special Levy could increase by £36k/annum.

Cllr Caroline Shepard

(Not received.)

Rebecca Denness

(Not received.)

HADDENHAM LEVEL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Haddenham Stretham Sutton
Parish Councils covered:	Haddenham Parish Council Stretham Parish Council Sutton Parish Council Wentworth Parish Council Wilburton Parish Council
Representation:	Two Members
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith
Representatives for 2024/25:	Cllr Gareth Wilson Parish Cllr Steve Cheetham

REPORTS FROM 2023/24 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr Gareth Wilson (attended 2 of 2 meetings)

Drainage Boards provide a vital function in the district They are a precepting body and imposes drainage rates on all the local farmers in the Haddenham Drainage area based on their acreage. This is particularly important in the low-lying fens.

We have been discussing the managing of the exceptional wet weather we have been having and in particular the consequent result of extremely high electricity bills.

In November we decided that our District Engineer need a substantial pay rise to bring him into line with equivalent employees of other drainage boards.

We continued to monitor the effects of the large reservoir / gravel extraction near Hillrow by Mick George. Trying to ensure that it does not adversely affect the water table for nearby farms.

All board members have been asked to take a course of five online training courses and I am halfway through the course.

Parish Cllr Steve Cheetham (attended 2 of 2 meetings)

ECDC are committed to ensuring that East Cambridgeshire continues to be a district where people want to live, work and visit and ensuring flood defences are maintained is a critical element of this commitment.

Continued work on the monitoring of the construction of irrigation reservation reservoirs at Willow Hall Farm following the approval by the County Council. The HIDB has now reached an agreement with Mick George Ltd around the how the HIDB will manage, monitor and control the de-watering activities year-round.

HIDB have continued to raise concerns on the amount of seepage coming through or under the 100 ft riverbank, which this year has caused more surface water on land than we have seen before, and the refusal of the Environment Agency to acknowledge the benefit of dredging and carry it out. HIDB are also extremely concern of the proliferation of 'SUDS' on new housing developments which is not a sustainable drainage solution and is increasing run off into HIDB drainage area.

This is a precepting body with the duty of protecting the Haddenham & Aldreth area from flooding and providing irrigation for agriculture and the meetings give a real insight into issues affecting farming and agriculture. The 2023/2024 winter has seen extreme levels of rainfall and it continues to be critical that the knowledge of the issues and detail from the HIDB are understood by ECDC.

LITTLEPORT & DOWNHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Downham Villages Ely North Littleport Stretham Sutton
Parish Councils covered:	Coveney Parish Council Little Downham Parish Council Little Thetford Parish Council Littleport Parish Council Stretham Parish Council Wentworth Parish Council Wilburton Parish Council Witchford Parish Council
Representation:	Six Members
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith
Representatives for 2024/25:	Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith Cllr Lorna Dupré Cllr Martin Goodearl Cllr David Miller Parish Cllr Andrew Butcher Parish Cllr Mark Taylor

REPORTS FROM 2023/24 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith (attended 3 of 3 meetings)

This important work carried out in conjunction with other similar boards, keeps areas within the District from becoming flooded, while providing the local farming industry with water for irrigation during the dryer months & drainage dykes maintained. With the considerable level of housing development within areas of East Cambs, the IDB' s are increasingly seen as important consultees by Planning Department

Yes, it is useful to understand the part played by this and other boards within our area, and to hear from the other board members (Farmers) who while playing their own part, rely on the work of the Engineer and his workforce, to maintain the drainage system in good order.

As a result of decisions taken by the board during the last couple of years regarding staffing and an improvement in employment conditions, this is now showing a marked improvement in work patterns and allowing the Engineer more time to think strategically. Staffing is still being considered to make best use of manpower and with increased training and personal development, showing results. The plant is carefully considered to ensure that the equipment is fit for purpose and effective.

IT is used confidently by the workforce to keep a close eye on pumping stations and work in hand. The increased rainfall was dealt with during some very wet months and will be a focus as the seasons develop. Across the country flooding is an issue and the local boards track conditions carefully.

Cllr Lorna Dupré (attended 2 of 3 meetings)

Cleaner, greener East Cambridgeshire. Sustainable communities. Flooding and water management are increasingly important locally and the Internal Drainage Boards are key partners. Water management and flooding.

Cllr Martin Goodearl (attended 2 of 3 meetings)

The Littleport & Downham IDB has an important part to play in our climate and environmental objectives.

Continued representation on this IDB is essential as we as a council are levied for a sum of money each year for the service this board offers in keeping the water levels safe and manageable for all residents and farms in the Littleport & Downham area. It is important that we as a Council keep an eye on how our money is being used and is of value to the public.

This body has an important role in the planning procedures and advise on water and wastewater control to the planning Officers on all new builds.

The Levy and planning are discussed by the IDB and they use us as a conduit to matter concerning the County Council such as Highways and culvert replacements.

Cllr David Miller (attended 2 of 3 meetings)

IDBs provide infrastructure critical to flood risk management and irrigation of farmland upon which residents, farmers, Council (notably Planning), the C&P Local Resilience Forum and other infrastructure providers (notably telecommunications) alike greatly depend, to which end IDBs have the power to levy a precept on both agricultural landowners and local authorities. Continued representation on the Board remains essential, both on account of those direct interests and of the value of insight into IDB operations to other areas of Council policy. Andrew Newton, Engineer to the Board, observed that proactive participation by ECDC in respect of common interests was particularly welcome.

Recent record rainfall, electricity costs and the (recently expanded) obligation to protect aquatic life (notably critically-endangered eel species) have placed extraordinary demands upon the financial resources of Littleport & Downham IDB. Pumps installed during routine maintenance and capacity upgrades must be "fish-friendly", for example, which add to the

cost of essential activities. There are grants available from EA and elsewhere for maintenance, but not for upgrades, so the Board faces a dilemma between the identified need to upgrade capacity and the need to access such funding.

Last December, I joined a Working Party to inspect sites of pressing interest to the Board. Besides plant works, it was also evident from that outing that many culverts are in a state of disrepair, lack adequate health & safety measures for IDB staff such as handrails and some are in need of modification for the safety of the general public.

By way of example, two photos of one such culvert demonstrate the need for all of those. Some of the metal walkways are insecure, neither the walkway nor the steep downward sloping access way have handrails, and the consensus was that the inner grating (second photo) poses a danger to humans, pets and wildlife:



Parish Cllr Andrew Butcher

(Not received.)

Parish Cllr Mark Taylor (attended multiple meetings)

I have meeting every other week and a lot of my time checking catch waters we have monthly meetings now with Councillor Anna Bailey and others trying to sort things what have been forgotten about and what to do with the water from new developments. I am Vice Chair now of IDB.

MIDDLE FEN & MERE INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Ely East Ely North Fordham & Isleham Soham North Soham South
Parish Councils covered:	City of Ely Council Fordham Parish Council Isleham Parish Council Soham Town Council Wicken Parish Council
Representation:	Five Members
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith
Representatives for 2023/24:	Cllr Ian Bovingdon Cllr Mark Goldsack Cllr Keith Horgan Cllr Lucius Vellacott Alec Jones

REPORTS FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr Ian Bovingdon

(Not received.)

Cllr Mark Goldsack (attended 2 of 4 meetings)

This is a well-run, chaired and supported DB with constantly good attendance by members. The Engineer Andrew Newton has kept the room updated on all needs and issues and the office have run a good financial management routine.

There is constant dialogue with Engineer and ECDC with the D working for the good of ECDC and the residents in all that it does. The precept discussion shows consideration towards ECDC objectives and was well directed by the chairman.

Cllr Keith Horgan (attended 3 of 3 meetings)

Effective drainage of East Cambridgeshire is essential to the sustainability of our local community. Without the tireless work of our drainage boards we would soon be under water.

Yes. Staying informed on the challenges faced by the IDBs and how they are coping with increased rainfall in winter, droughts in summer and maintaining the pumping infrastructure is vital to the effective management of this key service.

The greatest issues faced by this and all IDBs can be summed up as climate change, limited funding to address this important issue and soaring energy costs. The support of the Environment Agency is becoming more and more inadequate as IDB costs rise. The only other significant source of funding is the District Council (ECDC) and farmers. Costs for the latter have increased to the point where some are considering pulling out and trying to manage their own needs as they struggle to afford the escalating costs imposed by the IDBs.

Cllr Lucius N Vellacott (attended 2 of 3 meetings)

The work of the Internal Drainage Boards is of paramount importance to the District. It helps to sustain the District Council's Corporate Objective to support businesses (farms) to thrive and improve local infrastructure. Though the work of the IDB is often overlooked by residents, agriculture and local development in East Cambs could not be sustained without it. They further retain an important role in the determination of planning applications to prevent flooding in the District, which is specifically relevant to the District Council.

Funding remains a significant issue for local flood authorities. The Special Levy required by the IDB may reach an unsustainable level for the District Council to maintain whilst keeping to its Corporate Objective to raise Council Tax only as a last resort. The IDBs and the District Council must engage to ensure the medium-term financial sustainability of their role via other means in addition to the Special Levy.

I recommend that the Council continue to appoint representatives to all Internal Drainage Boards in its jurisdiction.

Alec Jones

(Not received.)

PADNAL & WATERDEN INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Ely North Littleport
Parish Councils covered:	City of Ely Council Littleport Parish Council
Representation:	Seven Members
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith

Representatives for 2023/24:	Cllr Alison Whelan Cllr Lis Every Parish Cllr Clive Webber tbc tbc tbc tbc
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REPORTS FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr Alison Whelan (attended 1 of 3 meetings)

The nature of the land that surrounds Ely is such that water management is crucial to avoid flooding. Representation on these bodies is important to further the Council's environmental and flood prevention objectives.

Pumping requirements have been significant over the last year, reflecting the higher and more concentrated periods of rainfall. This would be a significant risk to the district if pumps failed.

The Special Levy raised from East Cambridgeshire District Council was agreed at £105,795.56 (2023 £102,191.70).

Cllr Lis Every

(Not received)

Parish Cllr Clive Webber (attended 2 of 3 meetings)

I represent the Littleport Town Council on the IDB. I think it's important that we support the work of the IDB and are aware of the important work that they do.

I think it is very important that ALL levels of local government continue to be represented on the IDBs, as we need to be aware of the continuing threat of flooding, the actions we can take to mitigate the risks, and the costs involved.

Keeping drainage channels clean, supplying water for irrigation and increased risk of flooding.

It is vital that East Cambs District Council work with all of the agencies that are involved in keeping the District free from flooding.

SWAFFHAM INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Bottisham Burwell Fordham & Isleham Soham South
Parish Councils covered:	Bottisham Parish Council Burwell Parish Council Fordham Parish Council Lode Parish Council Reach Parish Council Swaffham Bulbeck Parish Council Swaffham Prior Parish Council Wicken Parish Council
Representation:	Four ² Members
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith
Representatives for 2023/24:	Cllr David Brown Cllr Lavinia Edwards Cllr Alan Sharp Cllr John Trapp

REPORTS FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr David Brown (attended 3 of 3 meetings)

The work of the IDB is of fundamental importance to residents and businesses in East Cambridgeshire in managing water and keeping people and properties safe.

As an organisation which raises a levy on ECDC, it is vital that elected members have continued representation to ensure that any levy is justifiable. This has been especially true this year, where the wet weather, meaning above average pumping being required, coupled with high energy prices, has meant the need for a significant increase in rates.

² Four Members plus one nominee jointly with South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). SCDC makes the joint appointment by reciprocal agreement of June 1990 whereby ECDC makes the joint appointment to Waterbeach Level IDB. Appointments are for 3 years.

Cllr Lavinia Edwards (attended 2 of 3 meetings)

The work of the Swaffham Drainage Board fits in with ECDC's Corporate Objective because the drainage board maintains a large area of drainage networks in the District.

I think the continued representation of the Drainage Board is worthwhile because the District has a large agricultural element with much employment in this field. The Drainage Board is also a consultee for planning applications.

Items relevant to ECDC which have been discussed by the Outside Body include setting the levy, climate change, drainage, wildlife, agricultural and flood issues.

Cllr Alan Sharp

(Not received.)

Cllr John Trapp

(Not received.)

WATERBEACH LEVEL INTERNAL DRAINAGE BOARD

District Wards covered:	Stretham Soham South
Parish Councils covered:	Little Thetford Parish Council Stretham Parish Council Wicken Parish Council
Representation:	One ³ Member
Status of Member:	Board Member
No. meetings per year:	3
Expenses paid by organisation:	No (paid by Council)
Insurance provision:	Yes
Category of Officer Support (see p. 6):	3
Contact Officer:	Finance Manager, Ian Smith
Representative for 2023/24:	David Chaplin

REPORT FROM 2022/23 REPRESENTATIVE

David Chaplin (lay member)

(Not received.)

³ One Member jointly with South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). ECDC makes the joint appointment by reciprocal agreement of June 1990 whereby SCDC makes the joint appointment to Swaffham IDB. Appointments are for 3 years.

Notes of a remote meeting of the East Cambs Bus, Cycle, Walk Working Party held on Tuesday 14 May 2024 at 6.00pm.

PRESENT

Cllr Ian Bovingdon
Cllr Lorna Dupré
Cllr Mark Goldsack – (from 18:15)
Cllr Alan Sharp (Chairman)

OFFICERS

Sally Bonnett – Director Community
Jane Webb – Senior Democratic Services Officer

135. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Christine Colbert.

136. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

137. NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Notes of the meeting held on 26 February 2024 were agreed as an accurate record.

The Director Community explained that since the previous meeting, further feedback had been received from the British Horse Society:

- one of the studies had included a 1m track alongside a drain for equestrians which was unacceptable and dangerous.
- a request had been made that other organisations be included in the stakeholder list

The Director Commercial had assured the British Horse Society that they would be contacted when further work on any of the routes was conducted. The Cambridgeshire County Council's (Public Rights of Way) PROW Officer had also requested to be included in any future work.

138. DRAFT Sustrans Feasibility Studies Presentation

The Director Community presented the three feasibility studies conducted by Sustrans.

Mepal to Witchford

There were five different options for the Mepal to Witchford route, with improvement within the settlements having been looked at, all involve the use of private land and there are no major constraints apart from the A142 crossing, which would be of a significant cost. There was no overall preferred option and each route would be expensive because of the required crossing needed. Equestrian use and farming vehicles needed to be considered.

A route map was shown to indicate the options.

- Option A – from Mepal via Witcham to Witchford, using existing roads and byways, with a preferred crossing route at Common Road.
- Option A (Ely Links) – Similar to Option A but linking into Ely.
- Option B was a variation of Option A but incorporated the Elean Business Park with a crossing point at Long Causeway.
- Option C – follows the road alignment from Mepal, Sutton to Witchford, similar to the existing A142
- Option D – similar to Option C, linking Mepal with Sutton and Witchford, picking up Wentworth

Sutton to Earith

There were five different options for the Sutton to Earith route, containing a lot of ecology issues and difficulty with crossing the washes with Options B and C requiring consent from the Environmental Agency and the RSPB as the routes travel through a protected habitat site. Option A being the most viable option but is a long and remote route. The causeway at Sutton Gault has also been looked at but all routes have a low Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) due to low potential usage and isolated area together with the cost of crossings and the high Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) costs.

A route map was shown to indicate the options.

- Option A – has fewer ecological flooding issues but is a long and isolated route.
- Option B – follows a drainage channel along the washes
- Option C – similar to Option B which uses an existing environmental agency road but crosses an RSPB protected habitat area and therefore may not be possible to deliver.
- Options D & E – follow public rights of way on the banks of the river but a location for a crossing at Earith, would be challenging due to the available space. There were also ecology conditions and difficulty in providing a 3m path.
- Option E – follows the road but has the challenge of a crossing in Earith and has gradients included

Sustrans advised ruling out Options D and E and without RSPB consent, Option C may not be deliverable either.

Wilburton – Cottenham

There were six options for the Wilburton to Cottenham route, there would be river crossing needed but the River Ouse was wide, estimating a bridge span

of 50 metres with the BNG implications due to the river banks. Option B delivered best value for money but would require the closure of Twenty Pence road. This road was closed during the flooding with a diversion route via the A10. The remaining options costs were high due to the need of a bridge, coupled with a low population they would be difficult to justify delivery.

- Option A - .Route via Haddenham to pick up another settlement.
- Option B – followed the field's edge and a solar farm, with the key issue being the safe crossing of the A1123.
- Option C – followed the B1049 with some private land being required. Two options for the river crossing: providing a new bridge or changing the traffic flows across the existing road bridge to allow walking and wheeling
- Option D – requires the closure of Twenty Pence Road and the use of A10 as a diversion.
- Option E – using the existing minor road, Long Drive.
- Option F – was an option to include more settlements and points of interest and included Cambridge Research Park, Waterbeach new town, Stretham Marina, Stretham, and Grunty Fen Road resulting in a long and expensive route.

Sustrans Additional work

Additional drawings have been conducted:

- Wilburton to Haddenham link
- Reach to Burwell – more detailed drawings.
- Witchford cycle routes options.
- Ely Leisure Village – links with Little Downham and Littleport
- Met with Natural England at Devil's Dyke (Historic England did not turn up) – now revising the Swaffham Prior to Burwell report.

Small amount of money left over, therefore looking at:

- Desktop work on CPCA CCC – BP A10 – Non-motor user crossing. Will produce a study considering the issues and opportunities for links with Witchford, Lancaster Way Business Park and Ely with simple route alignment drawings (no detailed design).
- An overview of the reports and priorities
- Presentation to Members in September

Members Questions and Comments

Mepal to Witchford

Members agreed the work had been very extensive and detailed. The following points were discussed:

- the possibility and benefit of extending the route into Lancaster Way, and onto Ely, with a crossing at Lancaster Way.
- A crossing at the A10 BP roundabout was currently being worked on by the CPCA

- joining rights of way for equestrians, cyclists, and ramblers etc at Mepal/Pymoor/BP roundabout as a leisure opportunity
- Crossing the A142 would be challenging and costly
- The possibility of using an existing Sutton route being used and made compliant/upgraded.
- The possibility of future proofing any works that would be conducted to ensure that it was upgradable at a later date
- Employment and education needed to be considered and encouraging people to walk/cycle.
- The Leisure Village was a source of employment, but it was currently not possible to reach without a vehicle.
- Routes would be high cost as unlikely to produce enough users to justify implementation.

Sutton to Earith

Members discussed the following points:

- Users would not choose to travel via Bedingham's Drove via the back route
- There was a gradient into the village from The Gault and the current roads were poor with heavy vehicle users and therefore this posed constraints.
- Users require a quick, direct route for education and employment purposes (routes D&E).

Wilburton to Cottenham

Members discussed the following points:

- Routes would be used as a waypoint to Cambridge, which would be via Twenty Pence Road.
- River crossing routes were high cost, the lowest cost route would require the closure of Twenty Pence Road to vehicles.
- Closing Twenty Pence Road would not be preferable as road users would be forced to use the busy A10; therefore, Route D was a non-starter. Parish Council were against the closure of Twenty Pence Road.

Additional work

Members discussed the following points:

- Reports together with comments to be published on the website

139. SUSTRANS MEMBER SEMINAR PROPOSALS

The Director Community proposed that a Member Seminar would be held on 18 September 2024, with Sustrans presenting. Others that would be invited were groups mentioned by the British Horse Society (BHS) and the Public Rights of Way (PROW) team.

Members suggested if any further parish councils/groups required inviting then they would inform the Director Community.

Agenda Item 13

Members were happy to go ahead with the Seminar on 18 September 2024.

140. WORK PROGRAMME MAY 2024

The Director Community explained that she had reviewed the Terms of Reference for the Working Party and all tasks had now been completed and therefore proposed this be the last meeting of the Working Party. Cambridgeshire County Council were due to commence work on a new Transport Strategy for East Cambridgeshire, therefore they would receive the Priorities report and the A10/BP NMU study for consideration. The Leader has approached the CPCA and requested that the studies and work conducted by ECDC should be presented to the CPCA Transport and Infrastructure Committee, to be developed further and to secure funding. The new reports will be shared with the Planning Team and Strategic Planning Team when a new Local Plan is worked on with the aim to secure developer contributions to the routes.

Members agreed that the Working Party now be disbanded as the work required of it had been completed.

The meeting closed at 7:05pm.

FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE
ANNUAL AGENDA PLAN

AGENDA ITEM NO 14

LEAD OFFICER: Sally Bonnett, Director Community
Democratic Services Officer: Leah Mickleborough

Thurs 26 September 2024	4:30pm
Chair's Announcements	Chair
Write-Off of Unrecoverable Debt (if any)	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Assets Update	Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
Local Council Reduction Scheme Policy Review	Director Finance and S151 Officer
MTFS Update	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Budget Monitoring Q1	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Gender Pay Report	HR Manager
Equality Policy	HR Manager
Actions Taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of Urgency (if any)	DSO
Forward Agenda Plan	DSO
EXEMPT – ECTC Management Accounts	ECTC Finance Manager
Thurs 28 November 2024	4:30pm
Chair's Announcements	Chair
Service Delivery Plans – 6-Month Performance Update	Service Leads
Write-Off of Unrecoverable Debt (if any)	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Finance Report	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Q2 Budget Monitoring	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Treasury Management Update	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Assets Update	Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement	Director Community
ECTC Half Yearly Report	Director Commercial
Actions Taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of Urgency (if any)	DSO
Forward Agenda Plan	DSO
EXEMPT – ECTC Management Accounts	ECTC Finance Manager
Thurs 30 January 2025	4:30pm
Chair's Announcements	Chair
Write-Off of Unrecoverable Debt (if any)	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Assets Update	Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
2025/26 Annual Treasury Management Strategy MRP & AIS	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Q3 Budget Monitoring	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Revenue Budget 2025/26	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Actions Taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of Urgency (if any)	DSO
Forward Agenda Plan	DSO
EXEMPT – Appointments, Transfers, Resignations	HR Manager

Notes:

- 1. Agenda items which are likely to be "urgent" and therefore not subject to call-in are marked ***
- 2. Agenda items in italics are provisional items / possible items for future meetings.**

FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE
ANNUAL AGENDA PLAN

AGENDA ITEM NO 14

LEAD OFFICER: Sally Bonnett, Director Community
Democratic Services Officer: Leah Mickleborough

Thurs 27 March 2025	4:30pm
Chair's Announcements	Chair
Service Delivery Plans 2025/26	Service Leads
Write-Off of Unrecoverable Debt (if any)	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Assets Update	Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
Assets Management Plan 2025/26	Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
Annual Review RIPA Policies	Director Legal
ECTC Annual Business Plan 2025/26	ECTC Finance Manager
ECTC Management Accounts	ECTC Finance Manager
Actions Taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of Urgency (if any)	DSO
Forward Agenda Plan	DSO

Notes:

- 1. Agenda items which are likely to be "urgent" and therefore not subject to call-in are marked ***
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