



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

THE GRANGE, NUTHOLT LANE,
ELY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB7 4EE
Telephone: 01353 665555

MEETING: **FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE**

TIME: 4:30pm

DATE: Thursday, 23rd July 2020

VENUE: **PLEASE NOTE:** Due to the introduction of restrictions on gatherings of people by the Government due to the Covid-19 outbreak, this meeting will be conducted remotely facilitated using the Zoom video conferencing system. There will be no access to the meeting at the Council Offices, but there will be Public Question Time at the commencement of the meeting in accordance with the Council's Public Question Time Scheme, as modified for remote meetings. Details of the public viewing arrangements for this meeting are detailed in the Notes box at the end of the Agenda.

ENQUIRIES REGARDING THIS AGENDA: Janis Murfet

DIRECT DIAL: (01353) 665555 EMAIL: Janis.murfet@eastcambs.gov.uk

Membership:

Conservative Members

David Brown (Chairman)
David Ambrose Smith
Ian Bovingdon (Vice Chair)
Bill Hunt
Alan Sharp

Liberal Democrat Members

Alison Whelan (Lead Member)
Charlotte Cane
Simon Harries
John Trapp

Substitutes:

Dan Schumann
Josh Schumann
Jo Webber

Substitutes:

Matt Downey
Gareth Wilson
Christine Whelan

Lead Officer:

Emma Grima, Director Commercial

Quorum: 5 Members

AGENDA

1. **Public Question Time**

The meeting will commence with up to 15 minutes public question time

2. **Apologies and Substitutions** **[oral]**
3. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive declarations of interest from Members for any items on the Agenda in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct. **[oral]**
4. **Minutes**
To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18th June 2020
5. **Chairman's Announcements**

AUDIT ITEMS

6. **Internal Audit Annual Report & Opinion**
7. **Draft Annual Governance Statement**

ITEMS FOR DECISION

8. **ECDC Environment & Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan – Consideration of Resources Required**
9. **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy 2020 – 2023**
10. **Little Thetford Community Land Trust (CLT) Grant Application**
11. **2019/20 Treasury Operations Annual Performance Review**
12. **Finance Report: Quarter 1 2020/21**

ITEMS FOR NOTING

13. **Financial Outturn Report 2019/20**
14. **Bus Services and Cycling and Walking Routes Consultation Update**
15. **Assets Update**
16. **Forward Agenda Plan**

17. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRESS

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining item 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 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

18. Appointments, Transfers & Resignations

19. Asset Matter in the Parish of Ely

NOTES:

1. Since the introduction of restrictions on gatherings of people by the Government in March 2020, it has not been possible to hold standard face to face public meetings at the Council Offices. This led to a temporary suspension of meetings. The Coronavirus Act 2020 now has been implemented, however, and in Regulations made under Section 78 it gives local authorities the power to hold meetings without it being necessary for any of the participants or audience to be present together in the same room.

The Council has a scheme to allow Public Question Time at the start of the meeting using the Zoom video conferencing system. If you wish to ask a question or make a statement, please contact Janis Murfet, Democratic Services Officer (Committees) janis.murfet@eastcambs.gov.uk by 5pm on Monday, 20th July 2020. If you are not able to access the meeting remotely, or do not wish to speak via a remote link, your question/statement can be read out on your behalf at the Committee meeting.

2. A live stream of the meeting will be available on YouTube at <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/finance-assets-committee-23072020>
3. Reports are attached for each agenda item unless marked “oral”.
4. If required all items on the agenda can be provided in different formats (e.g. 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
5. 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 items no. 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 there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Categories X 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 facilitated via the Zoom Video Conferencing System at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on Thursday, 18th June 2020, at 4.31pm.

PRESENT

Cllr David Brown (Chairman)
Cllr David Ambrose Smith
Cllr Ian Bovingdon
Cllr Charlotte Cane
Cllr Simon Harries
Cllr Bill Hunt
Cllr Alan Sharp
Cllr John Trapp
Cllr Alison Whelan

OFFICERS

Emma Grima – Director Commercial
Sally Bonnett – Infrastructure & Strategy Manager
Maggie Camp – Legal Services Manager
Ian Smith – Finance Manager
Janis Murfet – Democratic Services Officer (Committees)

IN ATTENDANCE

Rachel Ashley-Caunt – Head of Internal Audit
Jacob McHugh – Audit Manager, External Audit, Ernst &
Young
Suresh Patel – Associate Partner, External Audit, Ernst &
Young

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Councillor Charles Warner, Chairman of Soham Town Council, submitted the following representation, which was read out on his behalf by the Director Commercial:

‘A Market town Plan for Soham

The report in general is most welcome as a general document but has many short comings.

In the interest of all concerned and to satisfy the democratic process it should have been shown at draft stage to Soham Town Council so that those

inaccurate assumptions could have been corrected which would have resulted in a more robust document.

According to the report it was commissioned to help the market towns climb out of Lockdown, meaning the report was generated in the last 12 weeks and the reason the town council was not informed or consulted on its contents - however, I refute this as it could have been quite easy for this document to come forward under normal due process. What happened to Localism?

From reading the contents it would appear the report has been compiled from desktop research and remains doubtful whether anyone involved in writing it has ever had any involvement with the local community as many of the ideas have been raised in the past and indeed, been dismissed for valid logistic and practical, notwithstanding financial reasons.

I, as Chairman have no dispute with the statistics provided in the report but believe that some of the forecasts or predictions included are, to say the least, unrealistic to the point of being far-fetched. Take for example the train usage in Ely. I am sure the figures for the use of Ely station are accurate but as we are told there will be only one train every two hours in each direction, stopping at Soham station, it seems unlikely that the use of trains at Soham will escalate to the level as suggested.

The report clearly identifies that Soham has more young and older people than the surrounding district. It doesn't make clear that many of the older people have moved to Soham to occupy places already in place to cater specifically for older people with another care home in the pipeline.

Much of the report focusses on connectivity within the town majoring on an efficient walking and cycle routes so people can easily access the town centre without the use of a car. This is fine so long as you are able to walk or cycle and carry shopping but fails to recognise that with such developments as the Eastern Gateway it will be beyond the ability of older people to cover this distance without the use of a car. It should be noted that the town council continues to engage with the Developers of the Eastern Gateway who have to date resisted not only High St access for this proposed 500 houses but also no provision for communal car parking to enable foot traffic to the High St-both fundamental in enabling footfall to the High St and increasing potential GVA for which this report was commissioned.

The same applies to the access to the new rail station. The report states that Stagecoach will be approached to make sure that buses connect with the trains stopping at the station. A really good idea! But how are the buses to access the station. The roads around the station are unsuitable with poor access to the high street. Clarification is also needed as to the location of the land set aside for a business park close to the station.

The report identifies Soham as a possible Agritek hotspot. We already have an internationally renowned vegetable producer, also a well-known grower of trees who are the largest local employers. Have these two very important stakeholders been consulted at any time on their future needs as to research and the impact of Brexit on their businesses and employment? The report does make mention of the existing Innovation Hub which is well outside the town whilst this is appreciated it is not exactly a big employer as there are rarely more than 10 cars in the carpark.

Opening up the Lode for more river traffic to encourage tourism has been raised before. However, it seems that the only way to do this would be to widen the Lode from where it joins the main river at Barway. This is practically and financially a huge mountain to climb because this part of the Lode is 'lined' to keep the water in. If the lining is disturbed the water will seep away and with low bridges across the Lode between Barway and Soham would only allow small river craft up to Soham. A marina is a great idea but is neither practical or financially viable. The report purports to help the town overcome the Coronavirus lockdown, Since the majority of the shops in the town centre are either eateries or hairdressers/barbers, these have been shut since late March and the town centre has been dead. The Coop, Asda and the Post office have remained open. Now the eateries are all providing take away meals to order. The very few independent shops now have the opportunity to reopen but as far as we know there has been little or no help offered to any businesses in the town.

One of the biggest problems for our High Street is the lack of parking. There is a small car park opposite the Fountain Inn and along Clay Street but these are totally inadequate for the numbers of cars which want to access the town centre. The town really needs a suitable place close to the centre to create a car park and then to make the main street a traffic free zone, diverting the through traffic down a one-way system along Clay Street or Fountain Lane and Paddock Street. This aspect is woefully lacking in this high level document.

The report highlights the need for more footfall in the high street and suggests this will be met by building more housing. Soham is already a commuter town as illustrated in the report with the majority of consumer economic activity and spend taking place out of town. Much more consideration must be given to attracting more sustainable high-quality jobs to the local area along with tourism.

The report correctly identifies that the town's sports facilities are in need of updating but my question is do we need more sports fields? It remains a pity that the Village College facilities both for sports fields and for the performing arts are not more available to the community whilst the privately owned common land is being neglected, overused and degraded.

The report is based on facts, figures and statistics and for that reason it is an excellent report providing a lot of important information for Soham. However, many of its suggestions to improve Soham's offer while also excellent ideas, are really just aspirational which will require not only the will, drive and energy to bring them about but the cooperation of many businesses, people and government departments and substantial funding.'

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked Councillor Warner for his contribution. The Director Commercial added her thanks and reminded Members to consider Councillor Warner's comments when discussing the Soham Masterplan later in the agenda. She reiterated that Soham Town Council would have the opportunity, through the implementation plan, to get their comments across .

7. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

No apologies were offered and no substitutions were made.

8. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made.

9. **MINUTES**

Further to Minute No. 1 (Election of Chairman, 21st May 2020), it was noted that despite Councillor David Brown being the only nominee, the Minute incorrectly showed Councillor David Ambrose Smith as having been elected as Chairman of the Finance & Assets Committee. Councillor Brown requested that this error be corrected. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

That subject to the agreed amendment, the Minutes of the meetings held on 6th February and 21st May 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

10. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- He wished to start by thanking all officers of the Council for all they had done during the Covid-19 pandemic. Officers had all risen to the challenges to keep the work of the Council operating effectively. On behalf of the Committee, he asked that his thanks and congratulations be passed on;
- The consultation period for the Bus/Walk/Cycleway has now ended. Officers are working their way through the consultation responses. An update will come to Committee in July 2020;
- Members may have expected to see a report on Finance for both the Council and ECTC. There will be a full report going to Council in July. I notice there is nothing in the Forward Plan relating to ECTC and I ask that the Director Commercial reviews this to include the items that this Committee has requested;
- For the Council, at this time of year we would normally get a report following close down. Due to Covid-19 this has been delayed a month so this will be at the July meeting;

- Members may have also expected to see reports about 2 SPD's, Service Delivery Plans, Debt Write Offs, the Equality & Diversity policy, the Risk Register, Health and Safety Reporting, and Joiners and Leavers at this committee. The SPDs for adoption were always scheduled to come in July. In light of COVID the Service Delivery Plans that were scheduled for March need to be reviewed to reflect changes and priorities during COVID-19. Members received an update at May Council on the current status of each service. Debt Write-offs, Joiners and Leavers, and the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion draft policy for consultation will come to the July meeting. The Risk Register, SPDs for consultation and Health and Safety Reporting will come to the September meeting;
- Members can raise other items for future meetings at Item 16 – Forward Agenda Plan.

11. **EXTERNAL AUDIT – ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2018/19**

Suresh Patel, Associate Partner, Ernst & Young, the Council's External Auditors, presented the Annual Audit Letter and introduced his colleague Jacob McHugh, the Council's Audit Manager for this year.

Mr Patel stated that both papers were dated February and March and were meant to have come to the March Committee meeting which was subsequently cancelled. As Members were aware, the 2018/19 Letter had been discussed in great detail and was signed off after the February meeting. He did not intend talking through the Letter, but was happy to take any questions.

A Member commented that she did not think it great that the Committee was receiving this Letter which was dated 13th February, nearly a full year after the year which was being audited. The next agenda item would not be reported until November 2020 and her point was that surely part of the value of an audit report was that it was timely.

Mr Patel said he took her point but there was not much he could add. The reasons had been discussed and the 2019/20 dates had been moved by DCLG because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Another Member made reference to the fee of £2,005 for a correspondence matter. He believed it would have been courteous to share the open letter with Members so they could question it and see the answers given.

There being no further comments, the Chairman said he welcomed the Letter being positive.

It was resolved:

That the Annual Audit Letter 2018/19 be received and noted.

12. **EXTERNAL AUDIT – OUTLINE AUDIT PLAN 2019/20**

The Committee received the External Audit Plan for 2019/20. Suresh Patel, for the Council's External Auditors, Ernst and Young, explained that the Plan had been drafted in early March and he would give an update regarding the impact of the Covid outbreak.

With regard to a Member's comment about the timing of the report, in the light of Covid, DCLG had changed the reporting dates for local authorities. They now had until the end of August to publish their draft accounts and until the end of November to publish the audited accounts.

A timetable had been agreed and they were working to the end of June which was a testament to the abilities of the Finance team to work effectively. Remote working seemed to be working quite well. There had been successful audits although some things were slower. Mr Patel said he was quite impressed with how the Finance teams were coping. A phasing approach would be taken to audit fieldwork, but all audit opinions would be given at the same time, by the end of November. It would ensure that audits were done effectively and in time.

He suggested that there would be more emphasis on going concerns in the audit. He then handed over to Mr McHugh, who made the following points:

- Page 5 – misstatements due to fraud or error were recognised but there was no change in the risk or focus. With regard to property, plant and equipment (PPE) valuations, as of March would be reviewed, this was due to the size of the portfolio, because of the impact of Covid, there was a large level of uncertainty;
- Page 6 – The Authority's current pension fund deficit was an area of focus and because of the increased uncertainty, it would be monitored. A new area of focus was the implementation of new auditing and accounting standards. ECSS was largely unaffected but ECTC had been more affected by Covid due to the halt of operations. There was additional work to be done but the risks had already been identified.

Mr Patel then continued, saying that a new accounting standard had come into effect from 1st April 2020 in respect of leases. No new significant risks had been identified but the Authority would be required to make certain disclosures in respect of its preparations for implementation within the 2019/20 statements.

With regard to Value for Money, no new significant risks had been identified on the basis that the Authority had recently set a budget and updated medium term financial strategy showing fully funded revenue budgets for 2020/21 and 2021/22. The assessment of risks would be updated throughout the audit and Members would be advised if any additional risks were identified. A number of recommendations had been made in connection with the prior year, and these were set out on page 17 of the Audit Plan.

Members' attention was drawn to page 36 of the document, which set out the planned fee for 2019/20 and the final fee for 2018/19.

Page 37 gave a summary of the key factors relating to fees. It was noted that the PSAA would determine the fees, but it was not believed that the existing scale provided a clear link with both the Authority's risk and complexity; an increase in to the fee scale would therefore be proposed. The Chairman said he had received an email from the PSAA in which they stated that they were looking at things on a national level to see how fee levels might be mitigated.

The Finance Manager said that the fee for 2019/20 was just over £50k and the Authority had paid just over £47k in 2018/19. Taking this in context, it was not a significant increase.

There being no further comments, the Chairman thanked Messrs Patel and McHugh for their contribution to the meeting, and

It was resolved:

That the External Audit Outline Plan be received and noted.

13. **INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2020/21**

The Committee considered a report (reference V18, previously circulated) which presented the draft Internal Audit Plan for 2020/21 and the Internal Audit Charter for review and formal approval.

Rachel Ashley-Caunt, Head of Internal Audit, stated that the Plan had been due to come to Committee in March but that meeting had been cancelled due to the Covid pandemic.

Members were reminded that LGSS Internal Audit was required to provide 200 days of audit and assurance work in 2020/21. A two year Plan had been prepared to illustrate how assurance could be provided in the longer term and it was last reviewed in March 2019.

The proposed amendments to the 2020/21 Audit Plan were shown in Table 1 on page 4 of Appendix 1. Pages 6 – 8 detailed the draft Internal Audit plan for 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Ms Ashley-Caunt said that as the Plan had been prepared prior to the Covid pandemic, the risk environment would have to be reviewed and changed. Perhaps a more flexible approach could be taken, but it would come back to Committee for a further review. She also informed Members that the draft Annual Governance Statement would come to Committee in July and the Chairman added that the Risk Register would come to September's meeting.

A Member said that having looking at the time allocated to the Local Authority's trading companies, he proposed that further time should be allocated in 2021/22. Ms Ashley-Caunt replied that it was proposed to spend 10 days on this in 2020/21. It had not been included for 2021/22, but as it was a key area the

work undertaken in 2020/21 might inform audit planning going forward and would be up for review.

Another Member asked what work had been done in the year to date. She proposed that time be spent on governance rather than the inter-company accounts and said that she would have expected Internal Audit to carry out some work this year to ensure proper processes were in place and being followed. She continued, observing that Brexit and the Covid pandemic were not mentioned in the Plan and said she would have expected to see them in there.

The Member then turned to the Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP), noting that there had been work on whether customer needs were being met in respect of reducing the risk of fraud. She considered that the delivery of customer service should be reviewed, as the payment of business grants was often slow. The Chairman responded by saying that Councillor David Ambrose Smith was the Council's representative on the ARP Board; he was aware of the risks and was following up on them.

Ms Ashley-Caunt provided the following responses to the questions posed:

- The Annual Governance Statement had been drafted but she recognised that it must be up to date when produced;
- Advice was being given regarding business grants taking into account intelligence in respect of fraud. Work on the financial systems testing would be reported at the next meeting;
- With regard to Brexit and Covid, her report had been produced pre-Covid. Brexit was a cross cutting risk and they had to be mindful of the risks;
- Members should highlight any areas they wanted to be included in the audit;
- Fraud would be considered in every report;
- She asked that Members inform her of any areas they wanted for a dedicated audit;
- The trading company inter-company accounts would be included in the risk work;
- In connection with the comments regarding the ARP, some of the audit work focussed on performance standards. Because of the third party nature of their relationship, there was some support from the ARP's auditors and she would take this back and maybe look to widen the scope.

A Member remarked that robust plans should be in place for Brexit and Ms Ashley-Caunt replied that she would discuss this with management. The controls would be reviewed as part of the process.

Another Member requested that a realistic amount of time be set aside, over the next couple of meetings, to thoroughly review the Risk Register. He felt it would be helpful to ensure enough time to carry out a line by line review and Members to have input. This could improve confidence and joint working.

Ms Ashley-Caunt said the full Register did come to Committee and she agreed that it would be useful to revisit the framework as it needed a full review. She had already been in touch with other Risk Management groups and was getting the ball rolling to consider impacts. Registers were in place specific to Covid and there was joined up risk management; it was a case of looking at the 'new normal' of risks.

The Chairman informed Members that a report would be coming to Committee in September and he asked the Finance Manager to include details of who would be sitting on the Risk Management Working Party and the scope of its work.

A further Member noted that there were no days in the Plan for procurement compliance. He made the point that fraud or error could creep in and therefore this should be kept on the radar. Ms Ashley-Caunt fully agreed with him, saying that there used to be an audit on an annual basis, but it was now dealt with in a more specific way. Based on the outcome of this year's audit she would take a view regarding testing again next year but she would like to see an audit carried out on a regular basis.

It was resolved:

- 1) To approve the proposed Internal Audit Plan for 2020/21 and the Internal Audit Charter;
- 2) To approve the delegation of authority to the Council's S151 Officer to approve in year amendments to the Audit Plan between Committee meetings, this in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee.

14. **COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY FUNDING REQUEST**

The Committee received a report (reference V19, previously circulated) from which Members were asked to consider the allocation of £150, 000 to the A142/Witchford Roundabout Project.

The Infrastructure & Strategy Manager reminded Members of the background to the request, saying that improvements at the roundabout would unlock maximum benefits, including further growth on the Lancaster Way Business Park.

Matched funding had been secured from the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority and there were sufficient funds in ECDC's CIL account to meet the request for funding.

Consultation would take place over the summer, allowing local residents and stakeholders to comment.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Bailey, County Council Member for Ely South, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- She felt there had been quite a lot of misinformation and misunderstanding about the project, and so she wished to explain the background and wider picture;
- This was part of a wider scheme to upgrade the BP and Lancaster Way roundabouts and she had worked on it for over four years;
- The BP roundabout was one of the busiest and part of the strategic road network. The improvements were critical because there had been a 56% increase in traffic, equating to 26,000 vehicles each day;
- The route was on 'purple' capacity at peak times;
- It had been hard to get the funding, but the project was being funded by Grovemere, the old Local Enterprise Company and the Combined Authority;
- Lancaster Way Business Park was on the ECDC 123 List and Grovemere had a S106 Obligation to improve the BP roundabout. This was now fully funded and work would commence in July;
- The Business Park would expand bringing with it some 3,000 jobs, but without the upgrade there would be very little improvement in the flow of traffic;
- The benefit cost ratio of the scheme was 80 and anyone who understood such things would appreciate how important this was;
- It would be important to set some limits because this project was only an interim solution. There had been some disingenuous behaviour at the County Council but exhaustive efforts had been made during the design stages to find a solution for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders;
- The County Council Committee had been given a full briefing and had concluded that a dedicated separate crossing was required. There was a firm commitment to provide this as part of the A10 Upgrade Project;
- The project was backed by Government funding and would include Active Travel;
- There would be no benefits without changes to the BP roundabout;
- She thanked everyone who had backed this project, especially Councillors Lewis Herbert (Leader of Cambridge City Council) and

Bridget Smith (Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council), and urged Members to support the officer's recommendation.

Councillor Bailey then responded to comments and questions from the Committee. She confirmed that this request for funding was the final 'piece of the jigsaw' and then both schemes could go ahead. The BP roundabout was already fully funded and the work would be carried out July – December 2020; Lancaster Way would commence in the New Year. She confirmed that Councillor Bridget Smith supported the scheme

A Member said she found it difficult to comment. Although the project had been put on the CIL List some time ago, she felt there was an urgent need for a strategic transport review. The whole matter should be considered in a strategic way as to how they were going to manage people moving around the District, taking into account walking, cycling and horse riding. She asked the Chairman to write to the Combined Authority to ask for a full report with plans, timetables and costs, as she wanted more than aspirations.

The Chairman replied that the next agenda item was the Covid-19 Working Party, and Council had asked it to look at many of the issues she had raised. He was sure that the Infrastructure & Strategy Manager had taken on board her comments.

Another Member said he had one basic concern regarding multiple policies that did not join up: climate emergency, emissions targets, and aspirations for active travel. At grass roots level, the policies sometimes seemed to conflict, but a way had to be found to bring them together without being so 'tribal'. He said that if he was working in his capacity as a management consultant, he would want to know the specifics of a scheme, to see the justification. He thought there should be a more pragmatic approach towards targets and figures as this would be good for public confidence.

A Member enquired about the number of people currently working at the Business Park and asked how it was known that 3,000 people would be employed there or was this just an aspiration. The Chairman advised that it was not possible to give a response at this meeting, but Members would be provided with the information.

A Member interjected to say that between 1,500 and 2,000 people were currently employed at the Business Park and while these were uncertain times he knew that the scheme would lead to extra employment. There were a number of ways in which people could get to Lancaster Way and since last year there had been a regular hourly bus service going in and out and there was even a special season ticket permitting people to use public transport to come to work.

At this point, the Chairman invited Councillor Bailey to make further comment. She explained that as Leader of the Council, she sat on the Enterprise Zone Board, and the figures were based on the planning application. There was no doubt that the Business Park was very successful and significant investment had been made into it. However, it was not legally permitted to expand until the BP roundabout was delivered and there were new businesses waiting to come

onto the Park. The hourly bus service was very good and reliable, and the money would be there for the next 10 years.

It was resolved:

To approve the expenditure of £150,000 to the A142/Witchford Roundabout Project.

15. **COVID-19 WORKING PARTY**

The Committee considered a report (reference V20, previously circulated) from which Members were asked to establish a COVID-19 Member Working Party to work with businesses, community groups and other authorities from parishes through to central government to help drive an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable recovery for East Cambs.

The Director Commercial reminded Members that following a motion at Annual Council on 21st May 2020, it was resolved to set up the Working Party. The Terms of Reference were set out in Appendix 1 to the report, and it was proposed that membership should comprise 6 elected Members: 3 Conservatives, 2 Liberal Democrats, and 1 Independent. The Chairman would be an elected Member from the Conservative Group.

Members welcomed the proposal, saying that it would be a really good opportunity to work together and they expressed the hope that the first meeting would be arranged as soon as possible.

It was proposed that Councillors Bovingdon, Every and Webber (Conservative Group) and Councillors Cane and Downey (Liberal Democrats) should sit on the Group; the Independent Member would be confirmed in due course. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

- 1) That the following Members be appointed to the COVID-19 Working Party:
Conservative
Councillors Ian Bovingdon, Lis Every & Jo Webber;

Liberal Democrat:
Councillors Charlotte Cane & Matthew Downey;

Independent:
To be advised.
- 2) That the draft Terms of Reference, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

16. **ELY AND SOHAM MASTERPLANS**

The Committee considered a report (reference V21, previously circulated) from which Members were asked to approve the draft Ely and Soham Masterplan documents for submission to the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) for adoption.

The Infrastructure & Strategy Manager stated that the Combined Authority had an ambition to double the Gross Value Added (GVA) of market towns across the whole Combined Authority area. £50k had been set aside per market town to work up the plans that would set out some high level asks to facilitate this.

Whilst they had been labelled 'masterplans' by the CPCA, they were not masterplans in the traditional sense and did not seek to replace, override or contradict what was in the adopted Local Plan. They should be considered as a first step to unlocking funding that would be available through the Combined Authority.

The draft masterplans would act as a prospectus for Ely and Soham to secure both support and funding for the schemes identified both within the masterplan and the implantation plan. The Combined Authority had allocated a total of £10 million to support delivery and implementation of the approved Market Town Masterplans, excluding St Neots.

Both masterplans had been written purposely broad to enable the Council to unlock the funding needed to take forward the next stage of work. The Council would engage and consult with all relevant stakeholders, including the City of Ely and Soham Town Council, during the implementation phase.

There were themes developed for each masterplan, and each was accompanied by an implementation plan; it was in the implementation phase that consultation would become necessary.

If the Committee was minded to approve the documents for submission to the Combined Authority, they would be considered for approval and if approved by the CPCA Board, this Council could then make bids to unlock the funds needed to progress to the next stage.

The Infrastructure & Strategy Manager concluded by reiterating that this should be seen as the beginning of the journey, not the end.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Lis Every, a Ward Member for Ely East and a County Council Member for Ely North, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

- This was a high level strategic plan that would unlock the opportunity to bid for a share of £13 million;
- Ely and Soham would be going to the CPCA Board in July, and if successful, the funds would be spent by March 2022;

- It was important to remember that this was the first stage in a process that targeted growth and regeneration;
- It could attract more funding from Government and the private sector;
- It could bring more jobs and growth and boost the regional economy, but timing was key;
- The three areas of the Station Gateway, City centre and connectivity had long been discussed, and everyone wanted Ely to thrive;
- The Covid pandemic had shown that people wanted to shop locally;
- The next stage would be vital, based on local engagement and a wide consultation process;
- This was a shared vision, and an opportunity to come together and work in a positive, collaborative way;
- Established partnerships were still in place and the masterplan documents would provide the framework;
- She had lived in Ely for 45 years, her children were educated here and she had had a business here. She had engaged with local people;
- She thanked officers for their work on the initial plans to unlock funds and said she was sure people would want to work with them.

During the course of discussion, a number of points of view were expressed.

One Member questioned why the documents were called masterplans when they were not, and he was advised that the Combined Authority had said that the term was to be used. The Member continued, saying that nobody was going to vote against something that would bring investment, but there was absolutely nothing that gave him comfort apart from more discussions. The plans contained assumptions and he felt that there should have been a great deal more due diligence. He would rather the approach was less prescriptive and had more open discussion. He had seen this approach before and asked Members to take a vow that as they worked together, to make sure they cast the net broadly and went back to first principles.

He continued, saying that process was everything and would define outcomes. His concern was that here was a very messy process. There was money to be spent, but Members had taken no strategic decisions and this proposal had been imposed on them. It was an amateurish way of doing things and he wished his concerns about the process to be very clearly noted.

Another Member thought it regrettable that the City and Town Councils had not been consulted on the documents and she hoped that efforts would be

made to address this. She felt it would have been better to ask them first and she hoped that this would not come back to haunt the Council. Proper Equality and Carbon Impact Assessments needed to be taken into consideration; there had been no discussion about how to address the pockets of deprivation in Ely and education included private schools which were not available to most.

She acknowledged that the plans had to be accepted, but felt that an opportunity had been missed. It should be ensured that there should be a real benefit to the community before any money was spent.

The Infrastructure & Strategy Manager assured Members that Equality and Carbon Assessments would be carried out during the implementation stage.

A further Member considered the plans to have been the result of an armchair exercise. The opportunities for Ely Railway Station were very limited, as car parking spaces were full by early morning and people coming to shop in Tesco would travel by car; Central Ely was constrained by a lack of land.

In response to a number of questions, the Director Commercial replied that the documents would be submitted to the CPCA Board for approval. There would be meaningful consultation during the implementation phase and the outcome could be £1 million for each market town. Members wished to know whether the priorities were set in stone or could be changed, and if the financial aspects could be debated. The Director Commercial said that studies (and projects) would be commissioned; the Council was about delivering something tangible and of meaningful benefit to the area.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Dan Schumann, a Ward Member for Soham South addressed the Committee regarding the Soham document and he made the following comments:

- He was very excited by the plan for Soham and believed it to have some good content;
- At last there was a focus on investment in the market towns. It had been a struggle, but the plan now made a case for Soham;
- The term 'Masterplan' was questionable and the value of external views should not be forgotten;
- When working with funders, it had to be respected that they would want to fund what they wanted. To get the best out of that focus, remember the funder and seize the day;
- He believed that consultation would come, but at the right time;
- In the past, in Soham, things got lost in the process. However, this would be a measured process and provide hooks on which could be hung what the town decided it needed;

- It would give the hooks needed to bring investment to the town. It would 'have teeth' and be meaningful;
- He heard what colleagues were saying, and maybe this was not a traditional route, but they should seize the day;
- There was first a need to satisfy the funder of the case for investment and then carry out consultation;
- He did not believe there was anything within the document that said they could not do something.

The other Ward Member for Soham South said he had been in two minds when he first saw the document, but soon realised this was the first time that Soham would get some real money. Some of the items would be difficult to reach, but the process could be started and there was a need to be strongly vocal to get the money and get things moving.

A Member said she liked Councillor Schumann's comment that the plans would provide a hook on which to hang whatever the town decided it needed, and if this was the case, she was really pleased with that statement. The Combined Authority had decided to work in partnership with us and it had to be ensured that the money was well spent and delivered what was wanted. The Council had to make sure that Mayor Palmer listened to what was being said.

A Member, picking up on the point that the funder could spend the money on what it wanted, expressed concern that this was a top down process. It was essentially a democratic process and he would like to see less top down pressure, as it should come from the will of the people.

Another Member reminded the Committee that the Mayor of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough had been democratically elected; he had worked towards a station for Soham and he believed that Soham had a golden future.

A further Member declared his support for the schemes and asked the Infrastructure & Strategy Manager if she could tell Members about the process once the documents had been submitted to the Combined Authority. She said that the Combined Authority would be putting forward a prospectus, and the Director Commercial interjected to say that she would provide Members with an update after the meeting.

It was resolved:

- 1) That the draft Ely Masterplan, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be approved for submission to the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority for adoption;
- 2) That the draft Soham Masterplan, as set out in Appendix 2 of the report, be approved for submission to the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority for adoption;

- 3) That authority be delegated to the Infrastructure & Strategy Manager, in consultation with the Chairman of the Finance & Assets Committee, to make minor amendments to the Ely and Soham Masterplans.

There followed a comfort break between 6.54pm and 7.05pm.

17. **ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ON THE GROUNDS OF URGENCY**

The Committee received a report (reference V22, previously circulated) which set out details of two actions taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of urgency.

The first related to Business Rate Reliefs, and the second to Council Tax Hardships Relief.

With regard to the latter, a Member asked how much had been spent and had the Council give any other reliefs. The Chairman asked the Finance Manager to respond and the Committee was advised that the hardship money amounted to just over £400k. Of this, just over half had been allocated but because of the Covid pandemic, the balance was being held back in anticipation of further requests in the next six months.

The Member asked if it would be possible to have an update at meetings on how much had been spent. It would allow the Committee at some point in the year to review what money was left and how it should be used.

The Chairman concluded by saying that if Members were aware of anyone expressing concerns about paying their Council tax, to advise them to speak to the ARP.

There being no further comments or questions,

It was resolved:

That the reports be noted.

18. **ANNUAL REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Committee received a report (reference V23, previously circulated) from which Members were asked to receive the Annual Reports from appointed Council representatives on the activities and manner in which funding was spent by the outside bodies within the responsibility of the Finance & assets Committee.

The Democratic Services Officer said that although representatives were appointed for a period of up to four years, a report was brought to Committee

each year so that Members could review the representatives' submitted reports. She had not been advised of any representatives wishing to resign and there remained a number of vacancies on the Cawdle Fen Internal Drainage Board (IDB).

She asked Members to note that Councillor Gareth Wilson had submitted a report in respect of Haddenham Level IDB, but it had not been included as it had not reached her until after the agenda had gone to print.

The Chairman noted that comments regarding accessibility had been made in connection with the IDB meetings, and he asked the Democratic Services Officer to ensure that the Clerk to the Drainage Boards was made aware of this. He also thought that the Members serving on IDB's should raise the matter when attending Board meetings.

A Member queried how the matter was supposed to be raised when one could not actually get to that meeting. The Chairman said he assumed that Members would email their apologies, and they could therefore ask Mrs Heading to put it on the agenda.

The Member responded, saying that it was a serious issue and showed that there were serious problems. The Council had a single equality scheme in which it was supposed to work with partners. She therefore proposed that the Council be instructed to deal with those partners and ask them to provide their version of an equality scheme that was suitable for use by the Council and mirrored what was going on. She asked that officers progress this with external bodies so as to ensure that access was no longer an issue. The Chairman said he would ask the Director Commercial to write to them to this effect.

Another Member requested that the responses from the outside bodies be brought to the next meeting of Committee so that Members could be assured that access issues had been sorted and meetings would be accessible to all. The Chairman replied that he could not guarantee to have a reply by the July meeting, but they would come to Committee as soon as was possible.

With regard to the vacancies on the Cawdle Fen IDB, a Member volunteered, and was duly appointed to serve as a representative on the Board.

It was resolved

- 1) That the Annual Reports from appointed Council representatives on the activities and manner in which funding is spent by the outside bodies within the responsibility of the Finance & Assets Committee, be noted;
- 2) That Councillor Simon Harries be appointed to serve as an ECDC representative on the Cawdle Fen Internal Drainage Board.

19. **ASSETS UPDATE**

The Committee received a report (reference V24, previously circulated) which provided Members with an update on Council owned assets.

The Director Commercial advised Members that the City of Ely Council had carried out a survey on the Maltings Cottage under the instruction of the District Council. The Open Spaces & Facilities Manager was now working with the City Council to address the short, medium and long term issues arising from the survey.

With regard to 70 Market Street, Ely, the Director Commercial corrected an error in paragraph 3.3 of her report saying that it should refer to *Citizens Advice Rural Cambridgeshire (CARC)*. The organisation was moving out of the premises this week after which a valuation would be carried out with a view to advertising the premises on the open market.

A Member said she wished to comment on the Mepal Outdoor Centre, which was not included in the report. She acknowledged the difficulties that had arisen with the Centre, but felt that the time had now come for decisions to be taken about going forward. It was not good that the Centre was 'sitting in limbo' and she duly requested that a full report be brought to Committee detailing the state of the Centre, the structural issues and also ideas about the possibilities to address them.

The Director Commercial responded, saying that surveys were being undertaken to ascertain the issues and once they had been received, they would hopefully inform an option appraisal. She hoped Members would appreciate that over the last few months her work and priorities had been focussed on Covid-19. Because of this she could not commit to bringing a report to the July meeting, but she did understand the urgency.

Another Member reiterated that the Outdoor Centre was a cause for concern and he was of the view that with it being one of the larger Council assets, it could have implications for the audit going forward. It would be good to have a report before the audit work was completed and the problems were not being underestimated.

Turning to 70 Market Street, he continued, saying he was glad to hear that the premises would be going out to the open market with no commitment to any particular body. It was to be hoped that for the reputation of the Council, the building would find a good tenant.

A further Member said that from her perspective as a City of Ely Councillor, the City Council was now facing remarkably difficult times because of the impact of Covid on its operations. Few of the City Councillors had been involved with the Maltings Cottage and she wondered if there were any circumstances in which the District Council would take back the lease. The Chairman replied that a report would come to the next meeting.

The Member who had spoken of the Mepal Outdoor Centre expressed concern regarding the response she had received. She understood the significant pressures on staff, but this was a major asset of the District Council. It was costing ECDC month by month and presumably becoming less fit for purpose, thereby reducing the value of the asset. The Centre should be a high priority and the September Committee meeting was a long way off. She felt it

appeared it was being said there were not sufficient staff in the District Council to manage assets properly if a report could not be brought in September.

The Director Commercial replied that she had said she did not have capacity in the immediate future to bring a report to July's meeting, as it was only weeks away. However, she would discuss the matter with officers and the Chairman.

It was resolved:

That the update on Council owned assets be noted.

20. **EAST CAMBS BUS SERVICES REVIEW WORKING PARTY MINUTES.**

The Committee received the Minutes of the meeting of the East Cambs Bus Services Review Working Party held on 17th December 2019.

The Chairman of the Working Party informed Members that the Infrastructure & Strategy Manager was working through the consultation responses and then the Working Party would reconvene to discuss outcomes.

A Member asked if there were Minutes for the meeting held on 4th February 2019; the Democratic Services Officer said there were draft Minutes and once they had been approved by the Working Party, they would come to the Finance & Assets Committee. Whereupon,

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the East Cambs Bus Services Review Working Party held on 17th December 2019 be noted.

21. **FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

The Committee received the Forward Agenda Plan and the Chairman reiterated that he had already referred to quite a few additions in his announcements. The Democratic Services Officer said that she had already started noting amendments to the Plan and would discuss them with officers.

A Member requested that the following be added:

- East Cambs Trading Company;
- The Medium Term Financial Strategy, as some of the assumptions had changed;
- The Committee's finances should come on a regular basis;
- A report on the pressures on staff, in the light of the Covid outbreak.

She also highlighted the huge number of items listed for the meeting in July and said that with Council falling in the same period, she believed it would be too much.

The Finance Manager commented that the Management Accounts were due to come to the July meeting, but he would discuss sending them to a later date.

Another Member agreed that the Committee meetings were very long, and he suggested a way forward might be to bring the time forward and start the meetings earlier. The response was made that moving forward the timing of the meetings might not work for those Members who still worked.

The Chairman said he would discuss the matter with officers.

It was resolved:

That the Forward Agenda Plan be noted.

22. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRESS**

It was resolved:

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 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

23. **EXEMPT MINUTES**

The Committee received the Exempt Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Assets Committee held on 6th February 2020.

It was resolved:

That the Exempt Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Assets Committee held on 6th February 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 7.34pm.

Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion

To: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 23rd July 2020

From: Chief Internal Auditor, LGSS

[V37]

1. ISSUE

- 1.1. To report on the work of Internal Audit and the annual opinion for 2019/20.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. That the Committee considers and approves the Internal Audit report and opinion for 2019/20.

3. BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

- 3.1. The role of Internal Audit is to provide the Finance and Assets Committee, and management, with independent assurance on the effectiveness of the internal control environment. Internal audit coverage is planned so that the focus is upon those areas and risks which will most impact upon the Council's ability to achieve its objectives.
- 3.2. The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards require that the Chief Internal Auditor presents an annual report to the Finance and Assets Committee. This is reflected in the 'Responsibility of Functions' of the Committee.
- 3.3. The purpose of the report is for the Finance and Assets Committee to consider the Annual Internal Audit Report for 2019/20 and be made aware of the Chief Internal Auditor's opinion on the state of the Internal Control Framework within East Cambridgeshire District Council.

4. ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1. The attached report (Appendix 1) summarises the opinion of the Chief Internal Auditor for 2019/20 and the basis for this opinion.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report. An Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

6. APPENDICES

- 6.1. Appendix 1 – Internal Audit Annual Report 2019/20.

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
None	LGSS, Room 207 The Grange Ely	Duncan Wilkinson, Chief Internal Auditor duncan.wilkinson@milton-keynes.gov.uk Rachel Ashley-Caunt Head of Internal Audit RAshley-Caunt@rutland.gov.uk



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT
2019/20



1. Background

1.1 The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) require the Head of Internal Audit to provide an annual Internal Audit opinion and report that can be used by the organisation to inform its governance statement. The Standards specify that the report must contain:

- an Internal Audit opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's governance, risk and control framework (i.e. the control environment);
- a summary of the audit work from which the opinion is derived and any work by other assurance providers upon which reliance is placed; and
- a statement on the extent of conformance with the Standards.

2. Head of Internal Audit Opinion 2019/20

2.1 This report provides a summary of the work carried out by the Internal Audit service during the financial year 2019/20 and the results of these assignments. Based upon the work undertaken by Internal Audit during the year, the Head of Internal Audit's overall opinion on the Council's system of internal control is that:

It is my opinion that **Satisfactory Assurance** can be given over the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's control environment for 2019/20. This control environment comprises of the system of internal control, governance arrangements and risk management. This remains consistent with the opinions given in recent years.

Governance

During 2019/20, the Council's governance arrangements have remained broadly consistent with previous years. There are no significant governance issues that I wish to draw to the attention of the Council for inclusion in its Annual Governance Statement, based on the findings of Internal Audit work in 2019/20.

Financial control

Controls relating to the key financial systems which were reviewed during the year were concluded to be generally operating effectively. A key area highlighted in the Creditors system audit related to a need to strengthen preventative controls against bank mandate fraud – an action plan has been agreed to address this.

Risk management

Established structures and processes for identifying, assessing and managing risk remained consistent during 2019/20. The risk register was reviewed by the Finance and Assets Committee on a six monthly basis, considering the outcomes of quarterly reviews conducted by the Council's risk management group.

As at January 2020 there were no risks on the strategic risk register scored as 'red' – it should be noted that an extensive review of the risk register in 2020 will reflect the changing risk environment following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Internal Audit work is targeted upon the Council’s key areas of risk and work completed in 2019/20 has assessed assurances in relation to controls in some these key areas.

Internal control

For the audits completed in 2019/20, 92% of the opinions given in relation to the control environment and compliance have been of at least Satisfactory Assurance. The proportion of audits resulting in opinions of Substantial Assurance has been higher than in previous years.

Of these audits, none have resulted in an opinion of ‘major’ organisational risk, which would impact upon the annual assurance opinion. An opinion of ‘limited’ assurance has been given in relation to compliance with controls on contract extensions and actions have already progressed to address this.

Of the recommended actions agreed, and due for implementation, 88% had been completed in a timely manner during the year.

Internal Audit has not been made aware of any further governance, risk or internal control issues which would reduce the above opinion. No systems of controls can provide absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss, nor can Internal Audit give that assurance.

2.2 The basis for this opinion is derived from an assessment of the individual opinions arising from assignments from the risk-based Internal Audit plan that have been undertaken throughout the year. This assessment has taken account of the relative materiality of these areas and management’s progress in addressing any control weaknesses. A summary of audit opinions is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Summary of audit opinions 2019/20:

Area	Substantial	Good	Satisfactory	Limited	No
Financial systems	2	6	1	1	-
Key policy compliance	2	4	1	1	-
Risk based audits	-	4	3	-	-
Total	4	14	5	2	0
Summary	16%	56%	20%	8%	-
2018/19 summary – for information	6%	44%	40%	10%	-

3. Review of audit coverage

Audit opinion on individual audits

3.1 The Committee is reminded that the following assurance opinions can be assigned:

Table 2 – Assurance categories:

Level of Assurance	Definition
Substantial	There are minimal control weaknesses that present very low risk to the control environment. The control environment has substantially operated and either no, or some minor, errors have been detected.
Good	There are minor control weaknesses that present low risk to the control environment. The control environment has largely operated as intended although some errors have been detected.
Satisfactory	There are some control weaknesses that present a medium risk to the control environment. The control environment has mainly operated as intended although errors have been detected.
Limited	There are significant control weaknesses that present a high risk to the control environment. The control environment has not operated as intended. Significant errors have been detected.
No	There are fundamental control weaknesses that present an unacceptable level of risk to the control environment. The control environment has fundamentally broken down and is open to significant error or abuse.

3.2 All individual reports represented in this Annual Report are final reports and, as such, the findings have been agreed with management, together with the accompanying action plans.

Summary of audit work

3.3 Table 3 details the assurance levels resulting from all audits undertaken in 2019/20 and the date of the Committee meeting at which the outcome of the audit was presented.

3.4 All completed assignments have been delivered in accordance with the agreed terms of reference and provide assurance in relation to the areas included in the specified scope.

Table 3 – Summary of audit opinions 2019/20:

Audit Area	Design of Control Environment	Compliance	Organisational Impact	Committee Date
Anglia Revenues Partnership				
Council Tax	Satisfactory assurance (Adequate/Reasonable)			July 2020
NNDR	Satisfactory assurance (Adequate/Reasonable)			July 2020
Housing Benefit	Satisfactory assurance (Adequate/Reasonable)			July 2020
Enforcement	Good assurance (Good/Substantial)			July 2020
Financial				
Bank Reconciliations	Good assurance	Good assurance	Minor	July 2020
Budgetary Control	Good assurance	Good assurance	Minor	July 2020
Creditors	Satisfactory assurance	Limited assurance	Moderate	July 2020
Debtors	Good assurance	Good assurance	Minor	July 2020
Treasury management	Substantial assurance	Substantial assurance	Minor	February 2020
Key policy compliance				
Grants to voluntary organisations	Substantial assurance	Substantial assurance	Minor	February 2020
Absence management	Good assurance	Good assurance	Minor	September 2019
Use of government procurement cards (GPCs)	Good assurance	Satisfactory assurance	Minor	September 2019
Contract extensions	Good assurance	Limited assurance	Moderate	July 2020

Audit Area	Design of Control Environment	Compliance	Organisational Impact	Committee Date
Risk based audits				
Homelessness Reduction Act compliance	Satisfactory assurance	Satisfactory assurance	Minor	July 2020
Leisure centre income	Good assurance	N/A	Minor	July 2019
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	Good assurance	Good assurance	Minor	September 2019
Health and safety	Good assurance	Satisfactory assurance	Minor	February 2020

3.5 In addition to the audit assignments above, Internal Audit has also drafted the Annual Governance Statement for the Council for 2019/20 and overseen the collation of assurances to support this.

3.6 A number of these audit outcomes have been reported to the Finance and Assets Committee during the 2019/20 financial year. Summaries of those which have been finalised since the last progress report was presented are provided in Appendix A to this report.

Implementation of Internal Audit recommendations

3.7 Internal Audit follow up on progress made against all recommendations arising from completed assignments to ensure that they have been fully and promptly implemented. Internal Audit trace follow up action on a monthly basis and provide a summary to the Finance and Assets Committee.

3.8 A total of 20 audit recommendations have been made during 2019/20.

3.9 Details of the implementation rate for audit recommendations made during 2019/20 are provided in Table 4.

Table 4 - Implementation of audit recommendations from 2019/20 reports:

	Category 'Essential' recommendations	Category 'Important' recommendations	Category 'Standard' recommendations	Total
Agreed and implemented	4	6	5	15 (75%)
Agreed and not yet due for implementation	1	1	1	3 (15%)
Agreed and due within last 3 months, but not implemented	-	1	-	1 (5%)
Agreed and due over 3 months ago, but not implemented	-	1	-	1 (5%)
TOTAL	5	9	6	20 (100%)

3.10 In addition to this year's audit recommendations, there remain one audit recommendation which is overdue from previous years' audit report. A full overview of overdue actions as at 31st March 2020 is provided in Table 5.

Table 5 - Summary of overdue recommendations as at 31st March 2020

Audit Title	Audit Year	Essential		Important		Standard	
		Over 3 months overdue	Under 3 months overdue	Over 3 months overdue	Under 3 months overdue	Over 3 months overdue	Under 3 months overdue
Absence Management	2019/20	-	-	1	-	-	-
Homelessness	2019/20	-	-	-	1	-	-
Payroll	2016/17	-	-	-	-	1	-
Totals		0	0	1	1	1	0

Other sources of assurance

- 3.11 In addition to the Internal Audit work, assurances from other sources are also taken into consideration in informing the annual Internal Audit opinion.
- 3.12 It is noted that the Council's Public Sector Network compliance certificate expired in March 2020 and has not have been re-accredited at the time of reporting. Based on advice from the Cabinet Office, the Council will seek certification following a server upgrade which is due to take place in July 2020. As such, assurance cannot currently be provided over the compliance with this security standard.

4.0 Internal Audit contribution

Added value

- 4.1 It is important that Internal Audit demonstrates its value to the organisation. The service provides assurance to management and members via its programme of work and also offers support and advice to assist the Council in new areas of work.
- 4.2 The Council commissioned 210 days from LGSS to deliver the 2019/20 Audit Plan. This involved delivery of the current year Audit Plan, client liaison, support, reporting and attendance at the Resources and Finance Committee.
- 4.3 LGSS has delivered **100%** of the assignments from the 2019/20 Audit Plan to draft report stage. There is one audit which remains to be finalised, in relation to the Payroll system, and this will be reported to the next meeting of the Finance and Assets Committee – the draft report has highlighted no significant areas of concern.

Internal Audit contribution in wider areas

- 4.4 Key additional areas of Internal Audit contribution to the Council in 2019/20 are set out in Table 6:

Table 6 – Internal Audit contribution

Area of Activity	Benefit to the Council
Facilitation of Risk Management Group and attendance at quarterly meetings.	To support effective risk management arrangements – in identifying, assessing and managing corporate risks.
Promotion of fraud awareness week in November 2019 and setting up of a new fraud reporting mailbox to enable concerns to be raised directly with Internal Audit.	Supporting the Council in its Counter Fraud strategy and reinforcing a zero tolerance culture.
Maintaining good working relationships with External Audit.	Reducing duplication and maximising value of audit resources.

Area of Activity	Benefit to the Council
Presence at East Cambridgeshire District Council offices.	Assistance with ad-hoc queries and advice. Raising the profile of Internal Audit with service leads to increase the effectiveness of the service.

Professional Standards

- 4.5 The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) were adopted by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) from April 2013. The standards are intended to promote further improvement in the professionalism, quality, consistency and effectiveness of Internal Audit across the public sector.
- 4.6 The objectives of the PSIAS are to:
- Define the nature of internal auditing within the UK public sector;
 - Set basic principles for carrying out internal audit in the UK public sector;
 - Establish a framework for providing internal audit services, which add value to the organisation, leading to improved organisational processes and operations; and
 - Establish the basis for the evaluation of internal audit performance and to drive improvement planning.
- 4.7 A detailed self-assessment against the PSIAS has been completed by the Head of Internal Audit, a copy of which can be provided on request. The outcome of the assessment was that the Internal Audit service is operating in general compliance with the Standards.
- 4.8 During 2016/17, LGSS Internal Audit was subject to an external assessment against the PSIAS, as is required on a four yearly basis. This concluded that the delivery of the audit service was generally in accordance with the Standards and any recommendations arising were implemented.

Council tax

This key system review, conducted on an annual basis, considers the key risks to achieve the objective of the ARP to deliver revenues and benefits services to five partner authorities, providing a robust and flexible service to their councils.

Assurance was gained that:

- reconciliations are being completed and authorised on a regular basis
- reviewing and amending system user permissions is likely to be a continuing work area, but improvements are apparent and a sound process to do this is emerging
- the write off process is now completed electronically
- at the end of the testing period, it was evident that there has been a reduction in the delay in processing exemptions and discounts which has been maintained
- credit balance amounts are reducing and a plan is in place to review historic credits across the partnership with an improved process to conclude the credit.

It was noted that:

- 9 actions from the 2018/19 audit report were considered to remain a work in progress, including one regarding System Access which was reported as a high risk in 2018/19.
- The systems and processes of internal control are overall deemed as Satisfactory in managing the risks associated with the Council Tax system.

National non-domestic rates (NNDR)

This key system review, conducted on an annual basis, considers the key risks to achieve the objectives of the ARP to deliver revenues and benefits services to five partner authorities, providing a robust and flexible service to their councils.

Assurance was gained that:

- Parameters and applicable limits for the NNDR multipliers, listed building exemption, mandatory charitable relief, and retail discount were correct on Academy for 2019/2020, and the parameters input had been checked for accuracy by the NNDR Team Manager and ARP Operations Manager (Revenues) before going live.
- All year end VO schedules reviewed were accurate compared to Academy, or satisfactory explanations were provided where differences were identified, and reconciliations were completed prior to annual billing.
- All sampled BACS submissions for direct debits and refund payments were accurate, had been signed appropriately and within a good time frame
- All sampled returned direct debits had been actioned promptly and appropriately
- All sampled suspense transactions had been managed promptly
- The most recent collection rate was confirmed as calculated accurately against system records, with deviations from target performance annotated
- Control account reconciliations were completed promptly, supported by evidence, and independently approved by a senior officer
- All sampled individual refunds were approved appropriately and supported by evidence
- System parameters for debt reminders and arrangements agree to the expected pathway, and are the same for all authorities.

It was, however, noted that:

- System access remains a key area for action, as limited assurance can be given that procedures are in place to confirm access to NNDR databases across Partnership and Council staff is justified
- The number of longstanding actions and ongoing areas for improvement remains high, and it is hoped that this will reduce during 2020/21.

The systems and processes of internal control are overall deemed as Satisfactory in managing the risks associated with the NNDR system.

Housing benefit

This key system review, conducted on an annual basis, considers the key risks to achieve the objective of the ARP to deliver revenues and benefits services to five partner authorities, providing a robust and flexible service to their councils.

Assurance was gained that:

- changes in legislation and system parameters continue to be correctly actioned with independent verification
- reconciliations are being completed and authorised on a regular basis
- reviewing and amending system user permissions is likely to be a continuing work area, but improvements are apparent and a sound process to do this is emerging.

It was noted that:

- No fraudulent actions, claims or payments were identified. Some errors were identified during testing which could have an impact on the claim or impact on the claimant and these were addressed by a Team Manager following testing. These are human errors which can only be addressed through monitoring, communication and training.

The systems and processes of internal control are overall deemed as Satisfactory in managing the risks associated with the Housing Benefit system.

Enforcement

This key system review, conducted on an annual basis, considers the key risks to achieve the objectives of the ARP Enforcement Agency to deliver services to five partner authorities, providing a robust and flexible service to their councils.

Assurance was gained that:

- A sound control process is in place for case histories within the One Step system, with good audit trails and records kept of all interactions, including the status and progress of the accounts.
- The system administration for One Step users is proactively checked on a quarterly basis to ensure only authorised users are active and that access levels are accurate and appropriate. New user email requests from managers are retained and actioned accordingly.
- Regular Anglia Revenues and Benefits Joint Committee meetings are held that communicate the financial performance of ARPE. Performance figures are reported and discussed in monthly Managers meetings. It has been noted that the Recovery Performance target is regularly above target.
- Supporting documentation for the reconciliation process is readily available and retained providing complete and sufficient audit trails.

- All key areas of debt are being recovered on across the partnership. The majority of cases are for Council Tax, approximately 83%.
- All methods of payments are promoted. Cash payments are the least preferred option but there are procedures in place for when cash payments are made. Receipt books are issued and recorded efficiently with a complete inventory and are retained in accordance with data retention guidelines; for 6 years plus current.

It was noted that:

- Unallocated payments continue to be an issue with a large volume of historic balances. The Enforcement Team have exhausted all avenues to allocate. These should be transferred to a relevant account and cleared from unallocated. Sufficient information will still be available should a customer come forward at a later date and the amount could be allocated to their account accordingly. Some unallocated payments date back to 2015.
- Communication channels for key information such as change of address and contact information needs to be addressed to avoid inefficient use of agent time and associated costs. There were approximately 262 cases resulting in 225 visits that were passed to the Enforcement Team with inaccurate and/or incomplete information in 2018/19.

The systems and processes of internal control are overall deemed as Good in managing the risks associated with the ARP Enforcement Agency system.

Bank reconciliation

The maintenance of accurate and complete bank reconciliations is vital to the Council's overall financial control framework. The effective operation of controls to maintain accurate records is pivotal in ensuring that the Council's financial statements are produced promptly and accurately. The bank reconciliation process ensures that transactions appearing in the Council's accounting records are compared with bank statements allowing discrepancies to be appropriately managed.

There are written operational procedure notes covering the bank reconciliation process and these provide assurance over the resilience of the process should there be a change in staffing or loss of key personnel through absence.

The audit review tested the accuracy of the completed bank reconciliations for the months of June and December 2019 and concluded that all figures included in the reconciliations could be matched to supporting records and had been accurately prepared. The monthly cash book reconciliations which is the first stage of the reconciliation process did not consistently record who had completed and checked the reconciliations. In the period April 2019 to February 2020, there were four cases (36%) there was no evidence on the reconciliation of who had completed the reconciliation and in five cases (45%) the reconciliations had not been signed off by the Senior Accountant. This should be evidenced in all cases to provide assurance that the reconciliations have been completed in a timely manner and have been independently checked. The completed bank account reconciliations are printed off and the hard copy is signed by the Senior Accountant as the preparer and the Finance Manager as the checker. It could not be confirmed that the June and December 2019 reconciliations had been signed off due to the Senior Accountant working remotely. It has been agreed that in future the electronic version of the bank reconciliations will record this.

Based on the outcome of audit testing, an opinion of Good Assurance has been given for the design and compliance with controls.

Budgetary Control

The Council must demonstrate sound financial management, and continue to look for opportunities to maximise income and deliver savings to ensure that it can maintain a balanced budget and afford future plans. Councils continue to face many challenges due to the way in which services are delivered and ongoing reductions in government funding. Therefore, it is necessary to have effective governance and budgetary control arrangements in place to ensure probity and sound financial management. The Council's financial strategy for the medium term is to set a robust financial framework for the Council's plans over the next four years which support the delivery of the Council's priorities within the context of an annual balanced budget. The audit of the budgetary control system forms part of the 2019/20 suite of annually performed key financial system reviews and is undertaken in order to inform the Head of Internal Audit's overall opinion on the control environment, which supports the Annual Governance Statement.

Sections 30-36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires the Council to set a budget and council tax by 11th March each year and for the financial year 2019/20 this was approved by Full Council on 21st February 2019. There is no formal timetable for the budget setting process that is shared with budget holders and it has not yet been established whether there is a timetable in place within the Finance Team which ensures that the Council meets the statutory requirements. There are named budget holders assigned to budget headings with monthly budget monitoring reports being provided by the Finance Team and budget managers are responsible for ensuring that the budgets for which they are responsible for are not overspent. Under Financial Regulations each Policy Committee is required to consider projections of financial performance against both revenue and capital budgets on a quarterly basis, with significant variances of actual spend compared to profiled budgeted spend being explained. Internal Audit testing has confirmed that reports have been provided to the Policy Committees at the required frequency during the financial year 2019/20.

Since the last Internal Audit review of budgetary control the Council has adopted a set of Financial Procedure Rules which among other things, includes the rules around the authorisation of virements. A number of minor adjustments to budgets have been made during the financial year 2019/20 and control of these is not recorded. The introduction of a virements log would provide an audit trail of decisions made to increase or decrease budgets linked to supporting documentation and authorisation.

Based on the outcome of audit testing, an opinion of Good Assurance has been given for the design and compliance with controls.

Creditors

The audit of the creditor payments system forms part of the 2019/20 suite of annually performed key financial system reviews and is undertaken in order to inform the Head of Internal Audit's overall opinion on the financial control environment, which supports the Annual Governance Statement. All creditor payments are processed through the Unit 4 Business World system and administered by the Finance Team. The objective of the audit was to review the design of, and compliance with, key controls within the creditor payments system, and to provide assurance over the controls to prevent and detect fraud and error. The scope of testing for 2019/20 has been in relation to policies and procedures, standing data, BACS payments and reconciliations.

A review of policies and procedure notes confirmed that these were up to date. Controls over supplier payments had been improved since the last review of this area in the financial year 2017/18 and were

operating as intended. The creditor control account reconciliation is completed annually by the Senior Accountant however assurance can be taken from the completion of monthly bank reconciliations.

Sample testing of new suppliers and changes to existing suppliers bank details the review identified a lack of consistency in the supporting documentation held. Testing of 25 new suppliers identified that in two cases (8%) there was no supporting documentation held and in 14 cases (56%) full evidence was not held to support the bank details of the new supplier. Testing of 12 changes to existing suppliers' bank details identified that in three cases (25%) there was no supporting documentation held and in seven cases (58%) evidence to support the change was not complete. This was identified as a weakness in the previous audit in the financial year 2018/19 and there is a continued risk that incorrect or fraudulent details could be input onto Unit 4 Business World system which could lead to a payment error. Bank mandate fraud poses a high risk which must not be underestimated and controls in this area must be robust – as such this weakness has resulted in a Limited Assurance opinion on compliance. A review of the current procedure is required to ensure that it enforces the requirement to ensure all relevant documentation has been received and checks made to ensure the accuracy of new and existing supplier details on Unit 4 before payments are made. This is particularly important in the present climate when such fraudulent attempts have increased across local government.

Debtors

The audit of the debtors system forms part of the 2019/20 suite of annually performed key financial system reviews and is undertaken in order to inform the Head of Internal Audit's overall opinion on the control environment, which supports the Annual Governance Statement. The Council raises over 4,000 sundry debtor invoices annually with a total value in excess of £4.5 million. All transactions are processed through the Council's finance system, Unit 4 Business World. The objective of the audit was to review the design of, and compliance with controls to prevent and detect fraud and error covering debt recovery, write offs and reconciliations.

Testing of a sample of 20 debts has confirmed that generally they are being actively pursued however in three cases recovery action taken is being queried with officers who have yet to respond. A review of 'parked' invoices identified that of the 72 invoices there was a credit balance showing in 15 cases (21%) and these should be reviewed in consultation with individual services and action taken to write them off, where necessary. In addition, a further 'parked' invoice dating back to the financial year 2016/17 should also be investigated and written off if the debt is irrecoverable. A review of a sample of five write offs identified one case (£480) where the write off had not been authorised by the Finance Manager in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.

There are monthly debtor control account reconciliations completed and testing confirmed that these were being completed in a timely and accurate manner. For the reconciliations tested, however, there was no evidence of any independent check.

Based on the outcome of audit testing, an opinion of Good Assurance has been given for the design and compliance with controls.

Contract extensions

The critical objective of this review was to ensure that the Council procures goods, services and works in accordance with Contract Procedure Rules to demonstrate efficiency, value for money, transparency and compliance with legislation. The Council's Contract Procedure Rules which were

approved by Full Council on 5th October 2017 cover the procedure to be followed when extending an existing contract.

The key risk for the area under review is that value for money may not be achieved through:-

- Existing contracts being extended for unreasonable periods with the result that opportunities to test the market are foregone;
- Repeated use of the same contractors without rotation and / or competition increases the risk of fraud, corruption and poor value for money; and,
- Potential breach of Contract Procedure Rules.

In order to form an opinion on compliance with Contract Procedure Rules, a sample of five contracts recorded in the contracts register were selected for testing where the expiry date of the contract had past but payments were still being made. Internal Audit reviewed the supporting documentation held to ensure that Contract Procedure Rules had been complied with regarding the extension of the contract. Based on the work performed during the audit on the sample of contracts, overall limited assurance can be given that controls have operated as intended. The procedures to be followed are clearly set out in Contract Procedure Rules along with further guidance notes and a standard form is available on the intranet to use for exemptions to be authorised. However there was little or no supporting documentation provided to evidence compliance and, as such, the spend is essentially off contract and, as such, the continued use of these suppliers was outside of any existing contractual agreement. In addition it was found that where contracts were extended they had not been recorded in the central Contracts Register and therefore the Council has not met the requirements of the Local Government Transparency Code which requires the Council to publish all contracts with a value equal to or exceeding £5,000. In no cases tested were EU thresholds breached as a result.

Based on the outcome of audit testing, an opinion of Good Assurance has been given for the design of the Council's controls but only Limited Assurance could be given for compliance with these in practice.

Homelessness Reduction Act compliance

The proper, effective and efficient management of homelessness applications and compliance with the Council's duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 is critical in ensuring that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to help, irrespective of their priority need, as long as they are eligible for assistance. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 came into effect on 3rd April 2018 and modified and extended existing homelessness protection in a number of ways, such as:

- Improved advice and information about homelessness and the prevention of homelessness;
- Extension of the period 'threatened with homelessness', now 56 days (previously 28 days);
- Introducing new duties to prevent and relieve homelessness for all eligible people, regardless of priority need and intentionality;
- Introducing assessments and personalised housing plans, setting out the actions housing authorities and individuals will take to secure accommodation; and
- Encouraging public bodies to work together to prevent and relieve homelessness through a duty to refer.

Testing of a sample of 25 homelessness cases confirmed that the Council had complied with the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act, however the documentation examined to support individual applications did not provide satisfactory evidence of the identity of the applicant as in two

cases (8%) only a drivers licence was provided to support identification and in a further two cases (8%) there was no identification seen. If this control is not being applied then there is a risk that a homeless duty may have been awarded to an applicant with no recourse to public funds. The Council needs to ensure that all required checks are completed and evidenced to the required standard.

The Council places a heavy emphasis, where possible, on the prevention of homelessness but recognises its duty to provide temporary accommodation until a household can be found suitable accommodation. The Council is fortunate to have a number of options available that do not necessitate the use of expensive bed and breakfast accommodation, which has not been used as temporary accommodation for a number of years.

The audit review has identified a need for the Council to update a number of key Strategies and Policies to ensure that they reflect the current homelessness legislation contained in the Homeless Reduction Act and the Government's Rough Sleeping Strategy.

Based on the outcome of audit testing, an opinion of Satisfactory Assurance has been given for the design and compliance with controls.

Draft Annual Governance Statement

To: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 23rd July 2020

From: Chief Internal Auditor, LGSS

[V38]

1. ISSUE

- 1.1. This report presents the draft Annual Governance Statement (AGS) for 2019/20 for consideration by the Finance & Assets Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to consider if the AGS is consistent with their own perspective on internal control within the Council, plus the governance issues and actions.

3. BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

- 3.1. The Audit and Account Regulations 2015 requires the Council to produce an Annual Governance Statement (AGS) to accompany the Statement of Accounts. The AGS summarises the extent to which the Council is complying with its Code of Corporate Governance and details, as appropriate, any significant actions needed to improve the governance arrangements in the year ahead. The final statement will be signed by the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council.
- 3.2. The AGS is an important statutory requirement which enhances public reporting of governance matters. It should therefore be honest and open, favouring disclosure.
- 3.3. The draft AGS is presented to the Committee in order to ensure that it reasonably reflects the Committee's knowledge and experience of the Council's governance and controls.
- 3.4. The draft AGS has been compiled using sources of evidence, including:
- A review of the extent to which the Council has complied with each element of its Code of Corporate Governance;
 - Self-assurance statements prepared by Service Leads;
 - The Chief Internal Auditor's opinion on the Council's internal control environment, which will be formally reported to the Audit Committee on 23rd July 2020.
- 3.5. The Statement is prepared in accordance with guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance (CIPFA) and the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE). The guidance states that the AGS should include:
- The Council's responsibilities for ensuring a sound system of governance;
 - An assessment of the effectiveness of key elements of the governance framework, and the role of those responsible for the development and maintenance of the governance environment;

- An opinion on the level of assurance that the governance arrangements can provide and whether these continue to be regarded as fit for purpose;
 - The identification of any significant governance issues, and an agreed action plan showing actions taken, or proposed, to deal with significant governance issues;
 - Reference to how issues raised in the previous year's Statement have been resolved;
 - A conclusion demonstrating a commitment to monitoring implementation through the next annual review.
- 3.6. 'Significant governance issues' are those that:
- seriously prejudice or prevent achievement of a principal objective of the authority;
 - have resulted in the need to seek additional funding to allow it to be resolved, or has resulted in significant diversion of resources from another aspect of the business;
 - have led to a material impact on the accounts;
 - the Audit Committee advises should be considered significant for this purpose;
 - the Chief Internal Auditor reports on as significant in the annual opinion on the internal control environment;
 - have attracted significant public interest or have seriously damaged the reputation of the organisation; or,
 - have resulted in formal action being undertaken by the Chief Financial Officer and / or the Monitoring Officer.
- 3.7. At the time of publishing the draft AGS on the Council's website no significant governance issues have been identified.
4. ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS
- 4.1. The draft AGS has been prepared, in accordance with professional guidance, and must accompany the Statement of Accounts. The process demonstrates good governance, it has been based on various sources of assurance, and the Committee is asked to consider the AGS. It will also be reviewed by the external auditors, and the final version will be signed by the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council.
5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
- 5.1. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report. An Equality Impact Assessment is not required.
6. APPENDICES
- 6.1. Appendix 1 – Draft Annual Governance Statement

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
None	LGSS, Room 207 The Grange Ely	Duncan Wilkinson, Chief Internal Auditor duncan.wilkinson@milton-keynes.gov.uk Rachel Ashley-Caunt Head of Internal Audit RAshley-Caunt@rutland.gov.uk Trevor Bowd Principal Auditor trevor.bowd@eastcambs.gov.uk

Draft Annual Governance Statement 2019-20

1. Scope of responsibility

- 1.1. East Cambridgeshire District Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively. East Cambridgeshire District Council also has a duty under the Local Government Act 1999 to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 1.2. In discharging this overall responsibility, East Cambridgeshire District Council is responsible for putting in place proper arrangements for the governance of its affairs, facilitating the effective exercise of its functions, and which includes arrangements for the management of risk.
- 1.3. East Cambridgeshire District Council has approved and adopted a Local Code of Corporate Governance which is consistent with the principles of the CIPFA/SOLACE Framework *Delivering Good Governance in Local Government*. A copy of the Code is included on our website at <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/>.
- 1.4. This statement explains how East Cambridgeshire District Council has complied with the principles of the Code and also meets the requirements of regulation 4 (3) of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 which requires all relevant bodies to prepare an Annual Governance Statement.

2. The purpose of the governance framework

- 2.1. The governance framework comprises the systems and processes, culture and values, by which the Council is directed and controlled and its activities through which it accounts to, engages with, and leads its communities. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate services and value for money.
- 2.2. The system of internal control is a significant part of that framework and is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level. It cannot eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives and can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of East Cambridgeshire District Council's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood and potential impact of those risks being realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.
- 2.3. The governance framework has been in place at East Cambridgeshire District Council for the year ended 31 March 2020 and up to the date of the approval of this statement.

3. The governance framework

The Council's Code of Governance recognises that effective governance is achieved through the following core principles:

- Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.
- Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
- Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits
- Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes
- Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it
- Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management
- Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit, to deliver effective accountability

4. Key elements of the Governance Framework

The following is a brief description of the key elements of the systems and processes that comprise the Council's governance arrangements:

1. Developing codes of conduct which define standards of behaviour for members and staff, and policies dealing with whistleblowing and conflicts of interest and that these codes and policies are communicated effectively:

- The Constitution contains a Members Code of Conduct, which is underpinned by the Principles of Public Life. Members are required to complete a declaration of interests which is published to the website for transparency.
- There is a separate Employee Code of Conduct, which is supported by HR policies and procedures. Codes, policies and procedures are shared with new employees as part of the induction process.
- The Council has a Whistleblowing Policy, which is available to employees.

2. Ensuring compliance with relevant laws and regulations, internal policies and procedures, and that expenditure is lawful:

- Corporate policies and strategies, which are regularly reviewed, are available on the Council intranet.
- The Constitution contains responsibilities for functions of the Council, Policy Committees and Regulatory Committees, and other Committees, Joint Committees and Other Partnership Bodies. It also contains Proper Officer Functions and Rules of Procedure. The Monitoring Officer advises whether

decisions are in accordance with the Constitution, and a summary list of responsibilities are included in a Monitoring Officer Protocol.

- The Council ensures compliance with established policies, procedures, laws and regulations through a number of channels. The Chief Executive is responsible and accountable to the Council for all aspects of operational management. The Finance Manager & S151 Officer is responsible for ensuring that appropriate advice is given on financial matters, for keeping proper financial records and accounts, and for maintaining an effective system of internal control. The Legal Services Manager is responsible for ensuring that agreed procedures are followed and that all applicable statutes and regulations are complied with.
- Managers within the Council are responsible for putting in place systems of control to ensure compliance with policies, procedures, laws and regulations. This is a key control and as such Service Leads are asked to conduct a self-assessment of the systems of internal control within their services and highlight actions intended to address any areas for improvement.

3. Documenting a commitment to openness and acting in the public interest:

- There is public access to all Committee meetings except where items for discussion are of a confidential nature. The Council continues to be committed to ensuring that members of the public are involved in the decision making process.
- There are specific schemes in place to allow members of the public to speak at both Planning and Licensing Committee meetings, and the Council has also issued general guidance on public question time at other meetings.
- In order to demonstrate its openness the Council also publishes on the website the Constitution, Council and Committee agendas, reports, minutes and decision lists.
- In terms of transparency, the Council publishes on its website the recommended datasets in accordance with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government in February 2015.

4. Establishing clear channels of communication with all sections of the community and other stakeholders, ensuring accountability and encouraging open consultation:

- Residents are regularly informed about the Council's activities through the Council website, work with the local media, social media and other channels. The Council also sends an End of Year Report to all households in the District.
- The Council has adopted a Constitution which sets out how the Council operates, how decisions are taken and the procedures which should be followed. All meetings are open to the public except where there are confidential matters to discuss.
- The Council has developed a Community Engagement Strategy covering the period 2018 to 2023 to ensure that all residents have the opportunity to engage with the Council and have their say regarding the services and resources that they need.

- The Council undertakes regular consultation exercises, ranging from small focus groups of customers to large scale questionnaires and face-to-face surveys. A Register of Consultees is held which gives individuals, community groups and associations the opportunity to consider new or revised policies, strategies or functions and to express their opinions, concerns and make suggestions. To encourage as wide a participation as possible, an invitation for further individuals to join the register is included in the Consultation section of the Council's website.
- Regular media releases are used as a means of keeping residents of the District informed of current and upcoming issues and Council decisions. The Council endeavours to ensure that all communications with the public are accessible to all by providing a translation service, large print and braille.
- The Council hosts Parish Conferences to engage with the parish councils and communities and provide an important platform between the parishes and other public services. One conference was held during the financial year. Further examples of community engagement include Landlord Forums, Agents Forums, Taxi Driver Forums and the East Cambs Business Boost.

5. Developing and communicating a vision which specifies intended outcomes for citizens and service users and is used as a basis for planning:

- The Council has approved two Corporate Objectives;-
 - To be financially self-sufficient and provide services driven by and built around the needs of our customers; and,
 - To enable and deliver commercial and economic growth to ensure that East Cambridgeshire continues to be a place where people want to live, work, invest and visit.
- A new Corporate Plan for the period 2019-2023 was approved by Council in October 2019. It contains five priorities which set out the main areas where the Council will concentrate work over the period:
 - Sound financial management
 - Improving transport
 - Housing
 - Cleaner, greener East Cambridgeshire
 - Social and community infrastructure
- Within these priorities the Council has made a number of promises which set out the projects by which the priorities will be achieved. The Council believes that having high aspiration levels will secure a strong future for the District and provide a clear vision for the organisation and its customers.
- Details of all the above, together with any committee reports referred to in this statement, can be found on the Council website at www.eastcambs.gov.uk
- The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is presented to Council on an annual basis to support the budget papers and the Corporate Plan. The MTFS sets out the level of savings that need to be achieved over the medium term. Savings plans and income generation targets are developed to achieve the budget requirement set out in the MTFS.

6. Translating the vision into courses of action for the authority, its partnerships and collaborations:

- The Corporate Plan is underpinned by Service Delivery Plans, which set out in more detail how the Council's priorities will be delivered. These Plans contain more specific targets, which are allocated to teams, contractors, partners and employees to deliver.
- Service Delivery Plans are reviewed every year in line with any changes to the Corporate Priorities and in accordance with the development of the budget to ensure the necessary resources are in place for their delivery. Performance is formally reported to the relevant Policy Committee every six months.

7. Reviewing the effectiveness of the authority's decision-making framework, including delegation arrangements, decision making in partnerships and robustness of data quality:

- The Council's decision making framework is set out in the Council's Constitution including an effective scheme of delegation. The Council's Constitution is kept under continuous review in line with best practice.
- The Constitution includes the decision making arrangements for the East Cambridgeshire Trading Company (ECTC) and East Cambridgeshire Street Scene (ECSS) Shareholder Committee and the Anglia Revenues Partnership Joint Committee.

8. Measuring the performance of services and related projects and ensuring that they are delivered in accordance with defined outcomes and that they represent the best use of resources and value for money:

- Performance management in the Council is based on Corporate Plan priorities supported by Service Delivery Plans. The Council had two Policy Committees, during 2019/20 (Operational Services and Finance and Assets) that approve and monitor performance against Service Delivery Plans.
- A summary of the overall performance of the Council is published on the website.
- The Council continues to improve services wherever possible and has used the Lean Six Sigma methodology to undertake such reviews.
- The Council has established a robust financial planning process which includes a Medium Term Financial Strategy, monthly budget monitoring reports to officers and quarterly budget monitoring reports to Policy Committees.

9. Defining and documenting the roles and responsibilities of members and management, with clear protocols for effective communication in respect of the authority and partnership arrangements:

- The Council's Constitution sets out how the Council operates, and contains separate articles and key documents covering Members Code of Conduct, Proper Officer functions, and protocols for the Monitoring Officer.
- As the Head of Paid Service, the Chief Executive leads the officers and chairs the Council's Corporate Management Team. The other two statutory officers, the

Monitoring Officer and S151 Officer report directly to the Chief Executive, and are both members of the Corporate Management Team.

- Regular meetings are held between the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive in order to maintain a shared understanding of roles and objectives.

10. Ensuring that financial management arrangements conform with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2015):

- The Council establishment includes a Chief Finance Officer (CFO), ensuring the financial management arrangements conform with the requirements within the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Chief Financial Officer in Local Government (2015). This responsibility is discharged by the Finance Manager.

11. Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the discharge of the Monitoring Officer function:

- The Monitoring Officer is a statutory appointment under section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. These responsibilities are delivered by the Legal Services Manager. The Monitoring Officer undertakes to discharge their statutory responsibilities with a positive determination and in a manner that enhances the overall reputation of the Council. In doing so they will also safeguard, so far as is possible, members and officers whilst acting in their official capacities, from legal difficulties and/or criminal sanctions.
- It is important that members and officers work together to promote good governance within the Council. The Monitoring Officer plays a key role in this and it is vital therefore, that members and officers work with the Monitoring Officer to enable them to discharge their statutory responsibilities and other duties.
- There are working arrangements and understandings in place between the Monitoring Officer, members and the Corporate Management Team which are designed to ensure the effective discharge of the Council's business and functions. These arrangements are detailed in the Monitoring Officer Protocol, which is a key document in the Council's Constitution.

12. Ensuring effective arrangements are in place for the discharge of the Head of Paid Service function:

- The role of Head of Paid Service is defined in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. In East Cambridgeshire District Council it is assigned to the Chief Executive as set out in the constitution and all necessary powers are delegated to fulfil the statutory role.
- The Council is also required to provide the Head of Paid Service with staff, accommodation and other resources sufficient to enable the performance of the function. The annual budget proposed to Council, prepared by officers, seeks to align the provision of Council resources with the delivery of the Corporate Plan. In this manner, the Head of Paid Service is ensuring that the Council is fulfilling its duty.

13. Providing induction and identifying the development needs of members and senior officers in relation to their strategic roles, supported by appropriate training.

- There is a member induction and training programme in place. Members are also required to undertake specific training before performing certain duties such as planning and licensing. Additional member seminars are also arranged throughout the year to deal with specific issues as they arise.
- There is an induction programme for all new employees, which consists of a mix of one-to-one meetings covering specific aspects of employment and group meetings that deal with more common areas.
- All officer posts within the Council have a detailed job description and person specification. The development needs of officers are determined through an annual performance appraisal, a key outcome of which is a Personal Development and Training Plan. This Plan provides a link between service and corporate priorities and career development. Requests for professional/vocational training are presented to Management Team for final consideration.

14. Reviewing the effectiveness of the framework for identifying and managing risks and for performance and demonstrating clear accountability:

- The Council has a Risk Management Policy and framework to detail the approach to managing risks. The latest Policy was approved by Full Council in October 2017.
- The Council's Corporate Risk Register is the result of continuous review by a Risk Management Group, the Corporate Management Team and the Finance and Assets Committee, of the key risks that may have an impact on achieving the Council's objectives. Each risk shows the owner and the key controls in place to minimise any impact on the Council and its provision of services to stakeholders. Individual projects and partnerships are also subject to risk assessments.
- The Council has incorporated risk management into the performance management system, which is monitored by management. Service Delivery Plans are approved and reviewed by the relevant Policy Committee. The end of year performance reports are published on the website.
- The Strategic Business Continuity Plan ensures that the Council is able to plan for, and respond to, a disruptive incident in order to continue service delivery and business operations at an acceptable predefined level.

15. Ensuring effective counter fraud and anti-corruption arrangements are developed and maintained in accordance with the Code of Practice on Managing the Risk of Fraud and Corruption (CIPFA, 2014).

- The Council has in place an Anti-Fraud & Corruption Strategy, the latest version being approved by Full Council in October 2019, which specifies the process by which allegations will be investigated and reported. The Council also acknowledges its responsibility to embed effective standards for countering fraud and corruption that supports good governance and demonstrates effective financial stewardship and strong financial management.
- The Council's Whistle-Blowing Policy covers the arrangements for staff to report concerns anonymously. The Council's Complaints Scheme, and how to complain

to the Ombudsman, are documented on the website. The Council has a dedicated resource in place to manage the complaints process.

- For the public there is also a procedure in place to report suspected cases of fraud via a dedicated fraud reporting mailbox reportfraud@eastcamb.gov.uk.
- The Council fully participates in the Cabinet Office's regular National Fraud Initiatives (NFI) and reports the results to Finance and Assets Committee.

16. Ensuring an effective scrutiny function is in place.

- The Council has a Call-In and Referral Up Procedure which is part of the Constitution. This enables Councillors to call in decisions made through the Policy Committees. Council can then consider the matter afresh and make a final decision which could be to uphold, amend or reject the previous decision of the Policy Committee.
- The Council provides Members to other Scrutiny Committees, where required, to review the performance and effectiveness of other public service providers as well as the Council. Examples include the Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Panel, Health & Wellbeing Board and the Community Safety Partnership.

17. Ensuring that assurance arrangements conform with the governance requirements of the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit (2010) and, where they do not, explain why and how they deliver the same impact:

- Internal Audit is provided by LGSS Internal Audit & Risk Management which is led by a professionally qualified Chief Internal Auditor in accordance with the CIPFA Statement on the Role of the Head of Internal Audit in Public Service Organisations, Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and the Local Government Application Note.

18. Undertaking the core functions of an audit committee, as identified in Audit Committees: Practical Guidance for Local Authorities and Police (CIPFA, 2013):

- The Council has a Finance and Assets Committee that fulfils the role of the Audit Committee, with a terms of reference and supporting procedure rules covering internal and external audit, risk management, annual statement of accounts, corporate governance and internal control arrangements, and anti-fraud and corruption arrangements.

19. Ensuring that the authority provides timely support, information and responses to external auditors and properly considers audit findings and recommendations.

- The Council provides support and information to the externally appointed auditors (Ernst & Young LLP). Audit findings and recommendations are reported through the Finance and Assets Committee.

20. Incorporating good governance arrangements in respect of partnerships and other joint working and ensuring that they are reflected across the authority's overall governance structures.

- The Council demonstrates a strong commitment to working in partnership with other agencies to deliver priority outcomes and ensure that this partnership activity provides value for money and added value.
- The governance arrangements for key partnerships are kept under review. Governance arrangements for significant partnerships, such as the East Cambridgeshire Trading Company, East Cambridgeshire Street Scene and the Anglia Revenues Partnership, are documented in the Constitution.

5. Review of effectiveness

- 5.1. East Cambridgeshire District Council has responsibility for conducting, at least annually, a review of the effectiveness of its governance framework including the system of internal control. The review of effectiveness is informed by the work of the directors within the Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the governance environment, the LGSS Chief Internal Auditors annual report, and also by comments made by the external auditors and other review agencies and inspectorates.
- 5.2. The following is a brief description of the roles and processes that have been applied in evaluating the effectiveness of the governance framework:

1. The Council

- In October 2019 the Council approved the Corporate Plan for 2019-2023 which forms the basis of the performance management framework. Council review progress against the plan, ensuring it remains committed to the priorities whilst delivering a balanced budget.
- Council approved financial documents including the Medium Term Financial Strategy, Capital programme, General Fund Revenue Budget, Treasury Management Strategy, and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The Medium Term Financial Strategy provides the financial structure for the policy and budget framework, corporate planning, annual service planning and budget setting.
- Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires that every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall ensure that one of their officers has responsibility for administration of those affairs. This role is discharged by the Council's Finance Manager.
- The Council has considered the appointment of Independent Persons for the Council in accordance with the standards framework to be compliant with the Localism Act 2011. The appointment was made by Full Council in May 2019 and be for a period of four years, subject to ratification at the Council's Annual Meeting in May each year.
- Council approved key strategies and policies such as the revised Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy and the Corporate Plan 2019-2023

2. The Finance and Assets Committee

- The Finance and Assets Committee performs the role of the Audit Committee which covers internal and external audit matters, risk management arrangements, corporate governance including internal control arrangements and the annual governance statement, anti-fraud and corruption arrangements, and the statement of accounts.
- The Committee received reports on corporate risks, the work of internal audit, including the annual report, and external audit reports, letters and briefings. It also reviewed and approved the Annual Governance Statement.
- The Committee reviewed and noted quarterly budget monitoring reports, and received performance reports for the first six months of the financial year for Financial Services, Democratic Services, Infrastructure and Strategic Housing, Strategic Planning, Legal Services, Reprographics, Human Resources and Open Spaces and Facilities. The end of year performance reporting and approval of the 2020/21 service delivery plans did not take place at the March 2020 meeting of the Committee as planned due to the cancellation of the meeting due to the coronavirus outbreak.
- The Committee approved financial reports, such as the Treasury Management Strategy, Treasury Management Annual Performance Review, the Annual Investment Strategy, Revenue Budgets, Capital Programme, Council Tax, overall Council Budget reports, and reviewed the minutes of the ARP Joint Committee, as the partnership which delivers revenues and benefits for the Council. The Committee also approved a revised Corporate Health and Safety Policy.

3. The Operational Services Committee

- The Committee received quarterly performance reports for the delivery of the waste and street cleansing services by East Cambs Street Scene Ltd.
- The Committee received and noted quarterly budget monitoring reports, and received performance reports for the first six months of the financial year for Planning, Building Control, Environmental Services, Licensing, Housing and Community Safety, Waste Services, Communities and Partnerships, Customer Services, Information Communication Technology, Performance Management and Food and Health & Safety. The end of year performance reporting and approval of the 2020/21 service delivery plans did not take place at the March 2020 meeting of the Committee as planned due to the cancellation of the meeting due to the coronavirus outbreak.

4. The Shareholder Committee

- In February 2019 Council approved a revised Committee Structure for implementation from May 2019 to reflect the reduction in the number of Councillors at the District Council Elections in May 2019. Under these changes the functions of the existing Shareholder Committee would be transferred to the Finance and Assets Committee. Revised Terms of Reference for the Finance and Assets Committee and amended Shareholder Agreements for the Council's Trading Companies and the Memorandum of Understanding were approved by Council on 11th April 2019. The Finance and Assets Committee would discharge the functions

of the Shareholder Committee, with in addition there being two all-Member Shareholder meetings per annum.

- In September 2019 the Committee approved the ECTC Business Plan for 2019/20 and noted the ECTC Management Accounts for the period April 2019 to July 2019. In November 2019 the Committee received and noted the results of the audit of the ECTC Accounts for the financial year 2018/19, carried out by their appointed auditors, Price Bailey. There were no matters that necessitated reporting as requiring attention. In February 2020 the Committee approved the ECTC Business Plan for 2020/21, and noted the ECTC Management Accounts for the period April 2019 to November 2019. An all-Member Shareholder meeting took place in October 2019.
- As the Lead Officer for the Finance & Assets Committee and a Director of the Trading Company, the Director Commercial stands down as Lead Officer when matters relating to the Trading Company are discussed.

5. Internal audit

- The Council takes assurance about the effectiveness of the governance environment from the work of Internal Audit, which provides independent and objective assurance across the whole range of the Council's activities. It is the duty of the Chief Internal Auditor to give an opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of internal control within the Council. This opinion has been used to inform the Annual Governance Statement.
- The Chief Internal Auditor's annual report was presented to the Finance and Assets Committee in June 2020. This report outlined the key findings of the audit work undertaken during 2019/20, including areas of significant weakness in the internal control environment.
- The Chief Internal Auditor's annual opinion is that:
'It is my opinion that **Satisfactory Assurance** can be given over the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's control environment for 2019/20. This control environment comprises of the system of internal control, governance arrangements and risk management. This remains consistent with the opinions given in recent years.

During 2019/20, the Council's governance arrangements have remained broadly consistent with previous years. There are no significant governance issues that I wish to draw to the attention of the Council for inclusion in its Annual Governance Statement, based on the findings of Internal Audit work in 2019/20.

Financial control

Controls relating to the key financial systems which were reviewed during the year were concluded to be generally operating effectively. A key area highlighted in the Creditors system audit related to a need to strengthen preventative controls against bank mandate fraud – an action plan has been agreed to address this.

Risk management

Established structures and processes for identifying, assessing and managing risk remained consistent during 2019/20. The risk register was reviewed by the Finance and Assets Committee on a six monthly basis, considering the outcomes of quarterly reviews conducted by the Council's risk management group.

As at January 2020 there were no risks on the strategic risk register scored as 'red' – it should be noted that an extensive review of the risk register in 2020 will reflect the changing risk environment following the Covid-19 pandemic.

Internal Audit work is targeted upon the Council's key areas of risk and work completed in 2019/20 has assessed assurances in relation to controls in some of these key areas.

Internal control

For the audits completed in 2019/20, 92% of the opinions given in relation to the control environment and compliance have been of at least Satisfactory Assurance. The proportion of audits resulting in opinions of Substantial Assurance has been higher than in previous years.

Of these audits, none have resulted in an opinion of 'major' organisational risk, which would impact upon the annual assurance opinion. An opinion of 'limited' assurance has been given in relation to compliance with controls on contract extensions and actions have already progressed to address this.

Of the recommended actions agreed, and due for implementation, 88% had been completed in a timely manner during the year.

Internal Audit has not been made aware of any further governance, risk or internal control issues which would reduce the above opinion. No systems of internal controls can provide absolute assurance against material misstatement or loss, nor can Internal Audit give that assurance'.

6. External audit

- Under the government's local public audit regime the Audit Commission awarded contracts for work previously carried out by the Commission's own audit practice. As a result Ernst & Young (now EY) became the appointed external auditor from 1 September 2012.
- EY's audit results report (ISA260) for the financial year 2018/19 was presented to Finance and Assets Committee on 6 February 2020. The annual audit letter 2018/19 was presented to the Committee on 28 November 2019.
- For the financial year 2018/19 EY issued unqualified audit opinions on the Council's financial statements and value for money conclusion.

6. Significant Governance issues and actions

The review of the effectiveness of the Governance Framework has provided a satisfactory level of assurance. The review process has highlighted no significant issues.

Towards the end of the 2019/20 financial year, like all other public bodies, the Council faced unprecedented circumstances as a result of the response to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Council acted promptly and effectively to respond to the crisis by adopting new ways of working, reorganising the Council to focus on a number of new objectives and making necessary governance and financial decisions consistent with its constitutional obligations. The Council's response has been as follows:

Business Continuity – The Chief Executive leads a Business Continuity COVID-19 Group consisting of all Service Leads, including those from the Council's Trading Companies, and the Corporate Management Team. The primary aim of the Group is to oversee the continuation, adaption and if appropriate cessation of Council services during the crisis, in light of Government Public Health Guidance. It also oversees the implementation of the 'working from home' arrangements and the necessary IT infrastructure to achieve remote and agile working. The Group maintains a decision log of variations to prescribed levels of service, which is reported to all Members by email, and informs the Council's communication response to COVID-19. The Group will also lead the Council's COVID-19 Recovery Plan.

Community – The Council set up a Community Group which is led by the Director Commercial. The key aim of this group is to ensure that everyone in the community has access to the support they need. Officers have worked extensively with partner agencies, parish council, community groups and the third sector to ensure that every settlement in the District has access to help and advice.

Business – The Council received an initial £15,808,000 from Government to distribute to approximately 1,360 businesses in the District eligible for a Small Business Grant or a Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant. The Council set up a Business Group which is led by the Infrastructure & Strategy Manager to ensure the timely payment of grants. The Group is also working with the Combined Authority and other partners to develop a strategy for business recovery to help the local economy as the lockdown restrictions are eased.

Governance – Due to the restrictions on gatherings of people by the Government, s78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 provided that regulations could be made relating to the requirements for local authorities in relation to holding meetings. The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 came into force on 4th April 2020 and apply to meetings taking place before 7th May 2021. The Council set up a Remote Meetings Group led by the Monitoring Officer to implement the Regulations and the first remote meeting was held on 20th April 2020. The Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer produced a supplementary Council Procedure Rule 30 to cover Remote Meetings.

Strategic Role and Liaison – The Council has statutory duties under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 as a Category One responder to the crisis. In order to fulfil this obligation, the Council works with partners in statutory and non-statutory forums, represented by key officers.

Budget Impact – The Council is monitoring the financial impact of the pandemic, and whilst it is having some impact on the costs of the Council, it is having a major impact on the income the Council collects. The Council has received a total of £948,258 from the Government to assist through the pandemic. With regards to cash flow, Council Tax and Business Rate collection rates have dropped and the ECTC has stopped building on two of its sites, which is having an impact on when the Company will be able to repay the loans it has received from the Council, which were originally due to be fully repaid by March 2021. The Finance and Assets Committee will monitor the ongoing financial impact of the crisis and make recommendations to Council, where appropriate.

Recovery and Evaluation – There has been a shift from the Government and other statutory arrangements, which enables the nation to move to the recovery stage. In anticipation of further Government guidance the Council, and its officers, are already preparing and considering what the next steps may be.

7. Conclusion

Based on the work that has been completed, assurance can be taken that the governance arrangements at East Cambridgeshire District Council are fit for purpose.

8. Statement by Leader of the Council and Chief Executive

The Council has in place strong governance arrangements which we are confident protect its interests and provide necessary assurances to its citizens and stakeholders.

We propose over the coming year to continually address any issues arising that need addressing in order to further enhance its governance arrangements.

Signed:

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Anna Bailey
Leader of the Council

John Hill
Chief Executive

Date:

Date:

AGENDA ITEM NO 8

TITLE: ECDC ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN – CONSIDERATION OF RESOURCES REQUIRED

Committee: Finance and Assets Committee

Date: 23 July 2020

Authors: Jo Brooks, Director, Operations
Richard Kay, Strategic Planning Manager

[V39]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 On 17 October 2019, Full Council passed a 'climate change motion', which declared a climate emergency and agreed a number of actions to take place. On 8 June 2020, Operational Services Committee approved the Council's first 'Environment Plan', which provides a strategy and action plan to deliver on the commitments of the Motion. In approving the Environment Plan, Operational Services Committee resolved that Finance and Assets Committee consider how the actions outlined in the Plan be suitably resourced.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 That the Committee:

- (A) Notes and welcomes the recent adoption of the Council's first Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (June 2020);
- (B) Supports all efforts to embed a strong 'think climate, think environment' culture in all the Council's activities and decision making; and
- (C) Approves the creation of a new annual budget to deliver on the Actions set out in the Plan, to the sum of £100,000 per annum.(reviewable each year, as part of the normal budget setting process), with such spend in 2020/21 to be broadly in line with the proposed spend set out in this Report. The finance to support the strategy will come from an annual in-year draw from the Surplus Savings Reserve.

3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

3.1 On 16 October 2019, Full Council approved a wide-ranging Motion relating to climate change matters including the need to boost our local natural environment and declared a climate change emergency.

3.2 The Motion agreed a number of specific actions which should take place, including a commitment to the preparation of an Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan ('Environment Plan'). That Environment Plan was subsequently adopted by the Operational Services Committee on 8 June 2020, and published on the Council's website shortly thereafter:

<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/agendas/5%20-%20080620%20V12%20ApA.pdf>

3.3 Whilst the Committee has responsibility for overseeing progress on the delivery of the Environment Plan it recognised that resources are necessary in order to make it a success and deliver the 20 actions/commitments, and hence asked Finance and Assets Committee to consider this point.

3.4 This report is intended to meet that request.

Summary of Actions Proposed and Resources Required

3.5 Attached as an appendix is a summary table setting out the top 20 'actions/commitments' for 2020/21, together with progress on each, a timeline and the resources needed.

3.6 In many instances, the resources required are already committed, or can be achieved through redirecting existing resource.

3.7 However, three broad themes arise in terms of some additional resource requirements.

3.8 First, some of the actions require expertise beyond what we have available within the Council. £20,000 is considered by officers necessary to be set aside for this package of works, to be likely spent as follows:

- To achieve actions 7 and 8, we need to commission a property surveyor skilled at teasing out what additional energy efficiency savings or renewable energy opportunities are possible at The Grange and ESpace North - £6,000.
- Action 11 (meadow and tree planting) requires expertise to establish sound sites to progress and advise what should be planted - £5,000
- Action 14 (district Environment Plan) is likely to require some external auditing to ensure robustness - £5,000
- Contingency – for additional expert support for delivering all of the actions/commitments - £4,000

3.9 Second, whilst some skills to achieve some of the actions already exist 'in house', for some of the commitments the task required is too significant to be able to 'add on' to an existing officer's workload, without their substantive work and service to the customer suffering. As such, it is recommended that some of the additional expenditure (approx. £45,000) is used to secure additional officer support to undertake some of the tasks and coordinate all the activity. Example tasks are Actions 5, 14, 15, 16 and 19. The most efficient way of doing this is through an extension to the existing SLA arrangement with Peterborough City Council (PCC), which presently covers 'strategic planning' but could be expanded to cover coordination and delivery of the Environment Plan, plus delivery of some of the commitments themselves. PCC already has this staffing expertise, and were

utilised temporarily to help prepare the Environment Plan over winter/spring. In principle, agreement has been reached with PCC in line with above, subject to the outcome of this agenda item. As a reminder, the SLA is, in effect, a sharing of staff between the two authorities, with PCC charging ECDC on a cost-recovery day rate basis, up to an agreed cap.

3.10 The third area of spend is delivering some of the projects 'on the ground', over 2020/21, enabling visible or real evidence of progress to be seen. Again, existing (or redirecting existing) resource will be utilised for this purpose, but officers recommend an additional sum of £30,000 be created for this purpose. This will be likely targeted at delivering:

- Action 1 (energy supply and offsetting) - £1,500
- Action 4 (EV charging points) (depending on outcome and timing of research) - £not known, and might be 2021/22
- Action 7 and 8 (energy efficiency measures at Grange/E-Space N) – set aside £20,000 (spend depends on outcome of survey)
- Action 11 (tree and meadow planting) - £5,000 for purchasing and planting
- Contingency, for spend on delivering on other actions/commitments (for example, new water bottle refilling stations in public places) - £3,500

3.11 In addition to above, the Local Nature Partnership (LNP) for Cambridgeshire, has ambitious plans for the county, including an overarching aim of 'doubling land for nature'. ECDC is a partner of the LNP, and signed up to such an ambition last year. The LNP is also undergoing a transformational process, and is likely to become a charitable interest organisation, with a more robust governance process. This is necessary in order to deliver on its ambitions. However, presently, the LNP has no meaningful funds available to it, and no staff. It is entirely run by volunteers from a wide variety of organisations. In order to put it on a firmer footing and enable it to campaign and influence more widely, and bid for funds from a variety of sources, it is seeking a £5,000 annual contribution from all member organisations. It is recommended ECDC makes such a contribution, and continues to influence the direction of the LNPs vision and projects.

3.12 All of the above requires an investment of approx. £100,000. Following engagement across service leads, it is confirmed that existing budgets do not presently cover this amount. Of course, the net cost may be lower – we may not need all that spend and some of the actions should result in financial saving (such as less business miles; less fuel use; more conscious decision making by officers to 'think climate, think environment' and use resources more efficiently by cutting out waste). Financial savings and carbon savings are often aligned. Also, the figures quoted for specific actions should be regarded as indicative rather than fixed or precise, an actual spend on individual actions may be flexed accordingly, within the £100,000 ceiling.

3.13 Whilst the funding required for this year (2020/21) is relatively clear, as set out above, what is less clear is the precise funding requirements for subsequent years. However, it is certain that funding will be required in future years, for projects as set by Operational Services Committee in its annual early summer Environment Plan review. It is therefore proposed that the £100,000 request is a recurring annual request, albeit one which is regularly monitored each year for its effectiveness.

4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The Council has already approved its Environment Plan. Many of its actions can be delivered without additional resource. However, some cannot. Accordingly, £100,000 is recommended to deliver on all the actions.

4.2 Without the funding, officers will still progress some of the actions but will likely postpone a number of them to future years.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/ ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 As set out in the report, there is a £100,000 revenue financial implication arising from the recommendations, on an annual recurring basis. Making decisions on individual projects will, where appropriate, require their own further individual decision, including consideration of financial implications.

5.2 There is no existing budget for the Environment & Climate Change Strategy. Therefore the money will need to come from an in-year draw from the Surplus Savings Reserve.

5.2 Equality Impact Assessment has found no direct positive or negative impacts.

5.3 An Environmental Impact Assessment has found no direct benefits arising from approving the recommendations, but the individual projects which will proceed as a consequence of the funding will, it is forecast, have significant direct or indirect benefits.

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix A: Summary Table of Actions, Resources and Timetable

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
	Room 12, The Grange, Ely	Richard Kay Strategic Planning Manager (01353) 616458 E-mail: richard.kay@eastcambes.gov.uk

Appendix A – summary of actions and progress (table up to date as at 30.6.20, but remains a ‘live’ document)

	20 Commitments for 2020/21:	Lead Officer	Comments	Resources / Budget	Overall Progress	Completed Dates
						Target dates
1	Review its entire electricity and gas contracts, and, where practical to do so, will seek to amend to 100% renewable electricity tariffs and 100% carbon off-set gas tariffs as soon as possible.	Spencer Clark	<p>Work underway.</p> <p>Electricity: Critical deadline of 30 June 2020 to make a decision for Oct 2020 supply.</p> <p>Gas: current contract does not have a tariff option for offsetting gas emissions. Alternative offsetting to be explored. Preliminary options below:</p> <p>CUPSE, LNP and partners exploring potential of setting up a local carbon offset fund and delivery programme.</p> <p>National and international offset mechanism already exist.</p>	<p>100% renewable elec is 0.075pkwh ‘premium’. Total est annual premium cost = aprox £500.</p> <p>Contract does not allow a gas offset option, so alternative offset options needs exploring, and cost/vfm determined. Estimated at £1,000.</p>	Underway	<p>18/6/20– Green tariff for electricity confirmed, for 1 Oct 2020 start.</p> <p>25/6/20 - preliminary meeting with CUPSE.</p> <p>Autumn – options for offsetting gas put to Ctte</p>
2	Appraise the impact of its streetlights and consider the options	Spencer Clark	Existing database of street lights exists, and	Likely an ‘invest to save’ option i.e.	Not started	30/9/20 - establish up to

	to move to LED lighting, if feasible, taking account of the carbon savings, financial savings and public opinion of doing so, including consideration as whether dimming of lights is practicable and safe during certain low-use hours (note: most street lights are not under the control of ECDC).		only in need of check to bring up to date. Some lights already use LEDs.	upfront capital, future revenue saving. Costs / savings unknown, but likely very limited in 2020/21, and from existing resources.		date database of ECDC owned lighting, and degree of LEDs already in place. 30/9/20 - establish lessons learnt from PCC/CCC 31/12/20 - establish options, with costings 31/3/21 - determine whether / how to proceed
3	Embed a greater culture of home working (to reduce commuting) and less business travel (eg for site visits), taking advantage of lessons learnt during the Covid-19 lockdown, with the aim of encouraging staff to undertake less, and more coordinated, site visits and meeting attendance.	HR/ CMT	Chief Executive-led survey of service leads undertaken in early June, to help establish lessons learnt from COVID working practice.	Likely nil or limited additional costs, above what has already been spent for COVID. Potential to save revenue costs (business mileage claims). Overall, cost neutral.	Not started (other than for COVID)	Summer 2020 – evaluation of benefits arising from COVID enforced working practice Autumn – to coincide with greater return to office work, ensure this action is taken forward
4	Undertake a thorough appraisal of the potential to expand electric car charge points.	Sally Bonnett	CP Combined Authority (CA) undertaking research on this, which we should feed into and get results from.	Nil, other than staff time for the appraisal. Will need funding for implementation.		CA research underway TBC – CA report finalised TBC – options for progressing in ECDC
5	Roll out further guidance and training for staff in relation to the recently introduced ‘Carbon Impact Assessment’ procedure – a new assessment which requires all Council decisions to be assessed for	Richard Kay	CIA process in place, but very limited guidance. Also relies on a single point of supervision and sign off (RK)	Nil, other than additional staff time.	Not started	Late 2019 – CIA process commenced 31/8/20 - survey of service leads on CIA process to date 30/9/20 - Greater CIA

	the carbon implications of the decision being made.					guidance issued to service leads, following appraisal of CIA process to date.
6	Work with ECTC and ECSS, the Council's wholly owned companies responsible for matters such as waste collection, street cleansing and maintaining public open spaces, conclude a review into alternative options for its vehicle fleet, and set out a programme of how its vehicle fleet will become less carbon intensive, plus review our waste collection methods to determine whether more efficient route collections can be secured, thereby reducing vehicle fuel consumption (and consequently reduced CO2 emissions).	James Khan	ECSS is already committed to review options, as and when fleet needs replacing, but there is no guarantee suitable vehicles are available to cover the full range and specification of current vehicles at this time.	Capital costs will be significant to cover the additional cost of carbon neutral vehicles. Additional cost will be needed to implement sufficient charging infrastructure. But, some revenue (fuel) savings could materialise in the short term. Nil additional resource for 2020/21	Early stages	The aim is to change the waste collection vehicles, in line with the Governments Waste and Resource Strategy, to ensure vehicles are not changed unnecessarily early. Next level of consultation for the strategy is due winter 2020. Smaller vehicles, which electric versions are more widely available, are not due for replacement until 2027/28.
7	Complete an energy opportunity assessment for The Grange to identify measures that can be taken to reduce consumption and/or generate renewable energy and deliver at least one of the measures identified within a year.	Spencer Clark	Other local authorities in the local area have done similar work, which can be used as a template.	Survey cost = est £3,000 Implementation of recommendations = TBC, but establish budget of £20,000 for 2020/21, to be shared with action 8 below.	Not started	Autumn 2020 (provided ability to do so) - instruct surveyors 31/12/20 - survey results 31/3/21 - implement at least one recommendation
8	Complete an energy opportunity assessment for E-Space North to identify measures that can be taken	Spencer Clark	Other local authorities in the local area have done similar work,	Survey cost = est £3,000 Implementation of	Not started	Autumn 2020 (provided ability to do so) - instruct surveyors

	to reduce consumption and/or generate renewable energy and deliver at least one of these.		which can be used as a template.	recommendations = TBC, but establish budget of £20,000 for 2020/21, to be shared with action 7 above.		31/12/20 - survey results 31/3/21 - implement at least one recommendation
9	Develop a Customer Access Strategy, which at its heart will enable customers to undertake activities with the Council without the need for physical attendance at Council Offices.	Annette Wade	COVID lessons learnt can help develop this strategy	Costs/savings unknown. Hopefully net neutral cost, with some upfront costs (e.g. website /online capability) offset by reduced 1-2-1 customer contact costs.	Not started	31/10/20 Draft Customer Access Strategy circulated to Corporate Management Team.
10	Finalise the Council's bus, cycling and walking review (which commenced over winter 2019/20), and work with a wide variety of partners to try to implement its findings, taking advantage of new Government funds, linked to Covid-19 recovery, to boost cycling and walking infrastructure.	Sally Bonnett	Public consultation ended on 31 st May, feedback is currently being analysed. The aim is to identify priority routes and seek funding to deliver these.	Likely other funds utilised rather than ECDC.	Review ongoing. Implementation thereafter.	TBC by Working Party
11	Undertake a thorough appraisal of the Council's land assets, and determine whether a programme of tree planting and/or meadow planting can take place on any of it. If so, commence that programme during the 2020/21 winter and spring planting season.		Significant public pressure on this action. Some willingness for community groups to deliver and manage sites themselves (though that has issues of safety and insurance	Commission expertise to advise on most appropriate sites and what could be planted = £5,000. Budget to implement findings = TBC, but establish budget of		30/7/20 - prepare map of land assets 30/11/20 - finalised programme of candidate sites and actions 31/3/21 - deliver of some/all sites

			etc).	£5,000 for 2020/21, and review for future years.		
12	Prepare, consult and adopt two Supplementary Planning Documents, one on the Natural Environment and the second on Climate Change.	Richard Kay	Natural Env SPD aiming for adoption in Sept (earlier is not possible due to legal restrictions relating to hard copy inspection not being possible at present). Climate change SPD not commenced – draft due at ctte in Sept	Nil, other than staff time, from existing budgets.	Part underway.	31/3/20 - Draft Nature SPD consulted upon 30/9/20 - Nature SPD to ctte for adoption 30/9/20 - Draft climate change SPD to ctte Oct/Nov - consult 31/3/21 - Climate change SPD adopted
13	Identify / develop a training course for all staff and Members on climate change issues, minimisation, mitigation, adaptive measures, and key environmental policies (possibly Open University's Environment: treading lightly on the Earth). Aim for all staff and Members to have completed training by 2021. All new starters from 2021 to complete training within 2 months of start date.	HR	OU course being trialled on a few staff at PCC – positive feedback to date. Need to nominate a HR lead for climate change / environment matters	Nil, other than staff time. (OU course is free, and takes 1-2 days to complete)	Not started	30/10/20 – training course agreed. 31/12/20 – half of staff and Members completed training. 31/3/21 – 95% of staff and Members completed training.
14	Put in place arrangements, by April 2021 (including a district wide partnership forum), to facilitate the preparation of a district wide Action Plan ('District-EnvPlan'). This Action Plan, which is prepared in partnership with a wide range of	Richard Kay		This will require 0.5fte staff resource, not presently available. In addition, may require, for robustness, external	Not started	Timetable TBC

	stakeholders, will set out how we can cut our carbon emissions and boost the natural environment collectively across the East Cambridgeshire area.			expertise to audit results (eg Carbon Trust). Assume £5,000.		
15	Work with a willing Parish Council, to prepare a template parish-based Action Plan ('Parish-EnvPlan'), and subsequently encourage all Parish Councils to come up with their own targets and projects.	Richard Kay	Burwell and Sutton PC already approached us.	Nil, apart from additional staff time of around 0.05fte	Very early stages	June 2020 – preliminary discussions with 2x PCs underway 31/3/21 - publish a template action plan for PCs to use.
16	Prepare a second Council-EnvPlan by June 2021 (ie a review of this document), setting out progress over 2020/21, and proposals and targets for 2021/22.	Richard Kay		Nil, apart from staff time. First version required 0.4fte for 3 months, plus wider staff input. Estimate similar resource, for 2 months in 2021.	Not started	30/11/20 - update energy use data for 2019/20 31/12/20 - review of all 2020/21 targets; drafting of 21/22 targets 31/1/21 - cut off for Ideas Forum 31/3/21 - reflect on recommendations arising from (17) below.
17	Work proactively with the Combined Authority, as part of its recently launched Climate Change Independent Commission		Commission launched in early June	Nil, other than staff time from existing resource.	Not started	30/11/20 - CA draft report due 28/2/21 - CA final report due
18	Support Cambridgeshire County Council in its delivery of its recently adopted Action Plan.	All	Final version adopted June 2020	Resources depends on degree we are able to assist. May require limited additional staff resource.		Ongoing
19	The Council also acknowledges that	Richard	PCC and County doing	The Plan itself should	Not started	

	in recognising there is a climate emergency, the actions needed to be taken are not all about mitigating the impacts, but also adapting to the inevitable changes of climate change. As such, the Council also commits to commence preparation of a Climate Adaptation Plan over the next 12 months.	Kay	similar work, which we can use as a template.	be nil cost other than additional staff time. In the medium term, it could lead to costs depending on actions it proposes		30/12/20 - draft Adaptation Plan 30/4/21 - final adaptation plan
20	Work with Palace Green Homes (PGH), the Council's commercial property and development company, to establish a new sustainability policy for the company; this will then inform how it can progress its development schemes in the most sustainable, yet viable, way.	Richard Kay / Rebecca Saunt (plus Phil Rose from PGH)	Most development companies have these, so templates available	Policy drafting itself should be nil, and probably from existing staff resource. Implementing what it says could have viability issues for PGH (positive or negative) in future years.	Not started.	May 2020 – preliminary conversations with PGH 31/10/20 - final sustainability policy

Appendix 2 - EQIA

TITLE: EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY 2020-2023

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 23rd July 2020

Author: Nicole Pema, HR Manager

[V40]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To consider the Council's Draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2020-2023 for consultation.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 Members are requested to:

- i) Approve the draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2020-2023, as set out in Appendix 1, for consultation in accordance with 3.5 and 3.6 below, and
- ii) Delegate authority to the HR Manager, in consultation with the Chairman of Finance & Assets Committee, to make minor amendments prior to consultation.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy has been developed in reference to the Home Office Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2018–2025. It aims to expand on the Single Equality Scheme that was previously in place, and sets out the Council's commitment to an inclusive and supportive environment for staff, Members, contractors and visitors that is free from discrimination.

3.2 Promoting and supporting diversity in the workplace is an important aspect of good people management. It is about valuing everyone in the organisation as an individual. However, to reap the benefits of a diverse workforce it is vital to have an inclusive environment where everyone feels able to participate and achieve their potential.

3.3 **Inclusion** is where people's differences are valued and used to enable everyone to thrive at work. An inclusive working environment is one in which everyone feels that they belong without having to conform, that their contribution matters and they are able to perform to their full potential, no matter their background, identity or circumstances. An inclusive workplace has fair policies and practices in place and enables a diverse range of people to work together effectively.

3.4 The policy includes three new objectives to help us become more inclusive. Underpinning each of these objectives is a set of actions and priorities that the Council will aim to follow to guide our work.

3.5 Subject to committee approval, further consultation will take place with Councillors, local residents, community groups, partner organisations, parish councils and other associations on the new policy.

3.6 This consultation period will commence on 1 August 2020 and shall be carried out for an eight-week period (recognising that some organisations do not meet in the month of August). Following the consultation period officers will assess the responses, incorporate these where appropriate, and bring the document back to Finance & Assets Committee for formal adoption.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

4.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is attached at Appendix 2.

5.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Draft Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy 2020-2023

Appendix 2 – Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy EIA

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
ECDC Single Equality Scheme 2016-2020	Room	Nicole Pema
Local population data:	118, The	HR Manager
(1) Cambridgeshire Insight	Grange,	(01353) 616325
(2) Office for National Statistics 2011 Census	Ely	E-mail:
(3) ONS Survey on Sexual Orientation in the UK (2017)		nicole.pema@eastcambs.gov.uk
(4) Gender Trust		
Home Office Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2025		
International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism		
Equality Act 2010 guidance:		
www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance		
www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/equality-act-2010		

Staff statistics and recruitment monitoring forms

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY 2020 - 2023



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY 2020 - 2023

CONTENTS

1	FOREWORD	3
2	INTRODUCTION	4
2.1	The Legal Context	4
2.2	Purpose	5-6
3	ABOUT EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND THE COUNCIL	7
3.1	Our Community	7-8
3.2	The Council as a Community Leader	9
3.3	The Council as a Service Provider	9
3.3.1	Housing and Community Safety	9-10
3.3.2	Facilities and Open Spaces	10
3.3.3	Sports and Leisure	10-11
3.3.4	Community Services	11
3.3.5	Regulatory Services	11
3.4	The Council as an Employer	12
3.4.1	Our Staff	12
3.4.2	Promoting Equality as an Employer	12-13
4	DEVELOPMENT OF THE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY	14
4.1	Gathering Data and Using Information	14
4.2	Consultation and Engagement	14
4.3	Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)	14-15
5	OUR EQUALITY & INCLUSION OBJECTIVES FOR 2020-2023	16
APPENDICES		
1	Equality & Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2023	17-20
2	Equality Impact Assessment: A Checklist for Officers	21-22
3	Equality Impact Assessment: Initial Screening Template	23-24
4	Equality Impact Assessment Template	25-27

1. **FOREWORD**

East Cambridgeshire District Council recognises the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion. We operate in an increasingly diverse community, and we understand that the people who provide and use our services have diverse characteristics and different experiences, needs and aspirations.

Understanding, valuing and effectively managing these differences ensures that our communities are places where people get on well together and prosper.

The Council acknowledges with concern the published data on increases in hate crimes and crimes towards people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010 (see 2.1). The Council condemns all forms of discrimination against all protected characteristics, and commits to ensuring that every resident of the District is treated with respect, dignity and in an equal manner.

Councillor Anna Bailey
Leader of the Council

John Hill
Chief Executive

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Legal Context

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.

It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand and strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone.

It is against the law to discriminate against anyone because of:

- Age
- Disability
- Race
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Re-assignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Religion or Belief
- Pregnancy and Maternity

These are called 'protected characteristics'.

The Equality Act introduced a Public Sector Equality Duty. This Duty requires all public bodies to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

The general duty has three main aims. It requires public bodies to have 'due regard' to:

- 1) eliminate discrimination;
- 2) advance equality of opportunity; and
- 3) foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

Having 'due regard' means consciously thinking about the three aims of the equality duty as part of the process of decision making. This means that consideration of equality issues must influence the decisions reached by the Council such as how it acts as an employer, how it develops, evaluates and reviews policy or how it designs services. Undertaking equality impact assessments is an excellent tool for demonstrating due regard.

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations came into force in September 2011 designed to help public bodies meet the general duty. The specific duties require public bodies to publish relevant, proportionate information showing compliance with the Equality Duty, and to set equality objectives.

2.2 **Purpose**

East Cambridgeshire District Council acknowledges with concern the published data on increases in hate crimes and crimes towards people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010 (see 2.1). The Council condemns all forms of discrimination against all protected characteristics, and commits to ensuring that every resident of the District is treated with respect, dignity and in an equal manner.

The Council also wishes to join with the Government and other local authorities across the UK in adopting the internationally recognised International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, as follows:

“Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”

Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context, include, but are not limited to:

- Calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavour.
- Applying double standards by requiring of it a behaviour not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy has been developed in reference to the [Home Office Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2018 – 2025](#), and sets out the Council's commitment to an inclusive and supportive environment for staff, Members, contractors and visitors that is free from discrimination, where all are able to participate and where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. It promotes positive attitudes towards inclusivity and valuing diversity, and seeks to ensure that all who are subject to the Council's policies, practices and procedures are treated fairly.

3. ABOUT EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND THE COUNCIL

3.1 Our Community

The District of East Cambridgeshire has the smallest population of the five districts within Cambridgeshire, estimated at approximately 89,362¹.

The profile of the population is set out below:

Protected Characteristic		Variable	% of East Cambridgeshire Population
a)	Sex ¹	Females Males	50.9 49.1
b)	Age ¹	0-14 15-19 20-24 25-29 30-34 35-39 40-44 45-49 50-54 55-59 60-64 65-69 70-74 75-79 80-84 85+	18.6 5.3 4.2 4.9 5.9 7 6.7 7.5 7.5 6.6 5.8 5.5 5.5 3.6 2.7 2.7
c)	Ethnic Group ²	White Mixed Asian Black Other	96.2 1.4 1.5 0.6 0.3
d)	Religion ²	No religion Christian Muslim Buddhist Hindu Jewish Sikh Other Not stated	28.1 62.3 0.4 0.3 0.2 0.1 0.1 0.4 8.1

¹ Cambridgeshire Insight (www.cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk)

² ONS 2011 Census

Protected Characteristic		Variable	% of East Cambridgeshire Population
e)	Disability ²	Yes No	15.4 84.6
f)	Sexual Orientation ³	N/a	There is no data on sexual orientation in East Cambridgeshire because it was not included in the 2011 UK Census. However, an ONS Survey on Sexual Orientation in the UK (2017) , estimates that 2% of the population is gay, lesbian or bisexual.
g)	Gender Re-assignment ⁴		No local data is available on the transgender and transsexual community in East Cambridgeshire. The Gender Trust estimates that 1% of an organisation's employees and service users may be experiencing some degree of gender variance.
h)	Marriage and Civil Partnership ²		Persons aged 16+ (%)
		Single Married Civil Partnership Separated Divorced Widowed	27.1 54.9 0.3 2.4 8.7 6.6
i)	Pregnancy and Maternity ²	Dependents No Dependents	30 70

² [ONS 2011 Census](#)

³ [ONS Survey on Sexual Orientation in the UK \(2017\)](#)

⁴ [Gender Trust](#)

3.2 The Council as a Community Leader

This is how the Council is actively promoting equality and inclusion in its role as a community leader, seeking to influence positive behaviour across the district and engaging with other organisations.

- Taking the lead and working in Partnership with the Police Action Against Hate Coordinator to run workshops county wide to explore hate jointly, while remaining a key member of the Hate Crime Strategic Group.
- Supporting and encouraging increased reporting of hate crime within the community at locations where victims of hate crime incidents feel safe and comfortable and specifically to extend the ways for victims of hate crime to access services through the development of 3rd party reporting centres. Currently in East Cambs there are two Hate reporting centres, one in Ely the other in Littleport. Our aim is to increase this to at least one Hate Reporting Centre in each Parish.
- Improving information sharing between partner agencies and fostering joint working to increase community safety.
- Developing training packages for schools and businesses to prevent and deter hate crime/incidents by raising awareness of the impact of hate crime, consequences of perpetrating and building community cohesion across all communities. This will increase confidence in being able to report hate crime via the different methods available and raise awareness of local services that exist to protect and support victims and witnesses and challenge perpetrators.

3.3 The Council as a Service Provider

This is how the Council is actively promoting equality and inclusion in the access to, and delivery of, its services.

3.3.1 Housing and Community Safety

- Providing home visits and welfare checks offering advice and assistance to vulnerable people or people who are unable to visit the Council, this often includes hard-to-reach groups such as disabled residents, Travellers and migrant workers.
- Providing advice and support for men and women affected by domestic violence (DV), including domestic abuse outreach sessions and a Domestic Violence Directory that lists contact details of organisations that can help individuals affected by this or those supporting people who are affected: [Domestic Violence](#). The Council's DV web pages include 'hide my visit' icons to immediately redirect viewers to another website if they are interrupted and worried about their safety.
- Offering emergency refuge accommodation to women escaping abusive relationships through the Cambridge Women's Aid Refuge (CWA) and providing 'move-on' accommodation in the community for those leaving refuge.

- Providing dedicated officers within the Council's Housing team to work closely with migrant workers and people suffering from domestic violence.
- Providing weekly support through the Community Hubs sited in various villages around East Cambridgeshire.
- Providing drop-in sessions for victims of DV.
- Delivering Community Safety Partnership work through the Community Eyes and Ears Scheme to the workplace and schools, delivering training and awareness in relation to: Radicalisation, Hate Crimes, Modern Slavery, Cyber Crime and Scams, Neglect and Abuse, Exploitation, Abuse, Dementia and Loneliness.
- Providing Third Party reporting centres as a confidential way to report everything from hate crime to domestic abuse.
- Providing market stall events for raising awareness on key issues affecting both adults and young people including drug and alcohol awareness, anti-social behaviour and signposting them to services and support.
- Producing a Live Safe leaflet for migrant workers in Polish, Portuguese, Lithuanian and English because the district is attracting people as a place to live and work from across the world and in particular from Eastern Europe. This is becoming an established pattern, which is supporting the local economy (particularly in agriculture) and meaning that East Cambridgeshire is becoming a more culturally diverse district. Migrants can experience a number of different issues when working and living in the district and this leaflet informs them of their rights and responsibilities.
- Providing three caravan sites for travellers: Burwell (8 pitches) (this site is currently closed), Earith Bridge (13) and Wentworth (8).

3.3.2 Facilities and Open Spaces

- Providing accessible buildings and sites through dedicated disabled parking bays, ramps at entrances and exits, power assisted doors, accessible toilets, a hearing loop for people who are hearing impaired, and an accessible lift.
- Providing electrically powered scooters and manual wheelchairs to help people who have limited mobility to shop and use the other facilities in Ely, through the Ely Shopmobility Scheme. There is no charge for using the mobility aids but the service must be pre-booked.

3.3.3 Sports & Leisure

- The Council works alongside Living Sport to support sport opportunities for people with disabilities and special needs, so that everybody, regardless of disability or additional needs, can access sport or physical activity that suits them and their aspirations in sport. One of the main networks is the Ability PLUS Group, the County Disability Sports Forum for Cambridgeshire and

Peterborough. Anyone interested in disability sport can join the network.

- Providing disabled facilities at the Hive (the Council owned gym and swimming pool), including accessible parking, a poolside hoist to help people in and out of the pool, and accessible changing facilities.
- Providing a range of leisure activities for the over 50s through the Council's [Mature and Active Programme](#) to keep active and to maintain and improve their health and wellbeing.
- Offering [Heart Beat Health Walks](#) across the district for people who may be less active but who would like a healthier lifestyle. Walks are for up to 1 hour on routes accessible for wheelchairs and prams and are open to everyone of all abilities.
- Providing free bus travel across East Cambridgeshire through the Concessionary bus fare scheme (administered by Cambridgeshire County Council): [Concessionary Fares](#)

3.3.4 Community Services

- Promoting consultation and community engagement through the Council's [Consultee Register](#).
- Developing and promoting the [Community Engagement Toolkit](#).
- Providing the services of a professional translator if a translation is required into another language or an alternative format, i.e. large print, Braille, audio cassette/CD: [Translation Service](#)
- Providing online language translation on the [Council's website](#) into over 100 languages using the free page by page website translation service provided by the web browser. To activate, visit the browser's translation service and select the preferred language.
- Supporting the [Cambridgeshire Equality Pledge](#) with our local partners.

3.3.5 Regulatory Services

- Providing assisted collections to residents that are unable to put out their waste and recycling because of a serious long-term illness or disability.
- Providing a free of charge Clinical Waste collection service to collect and dispose of clinical waste which poses a threat of infection to humans.
- Offering assistance for Mandatory Disabled adaptations up to a maximum of £30,000 (subject to a test of resources). For those that are eligible, some are able to receive a grant to pay for the full cost of the adaptation, others may have to make a contribution towards the cost of the work (based on income and savings): [Disabled Adaptations](#)
- Delivering inclusive environments through the Council's planning processes. An 'inclusive' environment is one that can be properly accessed and used by everyone, **seeking to remove barriers and open up access.**

3.4 The Council as an Employer

We have a duty to make sure that the policies and practices that affect our staff are fair and promote equality **and inclusion**. We want to protect our staff from unfair treatment, uphold our obligations to provide job profiles, SMART performance indicators and appraisals, and give them support, development opportunities and training.

3.4.1 Our Staff

The Council employs 188 staff (as at 31 December 2019), and the profile of the workforce can be summarised as follows:

- 127 (68%) are female and 61 (32%) are male.
- 3.2% consider themselves to have a disability.
- 94% are white, 3% are black and 3% are of mixed ethnic origin.
- 45% are Christian, 0.5% are Buddhist and the remainder have declined to state or are of no religion.
- 6.4% are aged 20-24, 13.3% are aged 25-34, 19.7% are aged 35-44, 32.9% are aged 45-54, 22.9% are aged 55-64, and 4.8% are 65 and over. The average age is 46.
- 7 females (70%) and 3 males (30%) make up the top 5% of earners.
- There are no Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) staff or disabled employees at senior grades.
- As at 31 March 2019, the women's mean hourly rate was £14.27 per hour, 6.1% lower than the male's mean hourly rate of £15.20 per hour. In other words when comparing mean hourly rates, women earn £0.94 for every £1 that men earn.
- As at 31 March 2019, the women's median hourly rate was £12.58 per hour, 4.7% lower than the male's median hourly rate of £13.20 per hour. In other words when comparing median hourly rates, women earn £0.95 for every £1 that men earn.

3.4.2 Promoting Equality and Inclusion as an Employer

This is how the Council is actively promoting equality and inclusion as an employer:

- Offering learning and development opportunities to all staff, and working in a targeted way to ensure that all staff can access the training required for their career progression.
- Extending the right to request flexible working to all employees.
- Offering employees over the age of 55 the right to request flexible retirement.
- Offering a Childcare Scheme where eligible employees (male or female) can apply for a contribution towards the cost of childcare of ninety pence per hour, which can be claimed for each whole hour of childcare paid for by staff up to a maximum of £155 per month.

- Ensuring that processes are in place to effectively manage reasonable adjustments and redeployment requests through the Council's Managing Attendance and Stress at Work Policy and Procedure.
- Liaising with Access to Work to provide specialist equipment for disabled staff where required.
- Ensuring that effective HR policies are in place, e.g. Disciplinary, Grievance and Dignity at Work, for dealing with any complaints made under the Equality Act 2010.
- Ensuring that systems are in place within HR to monitor cases of discipline and grievance against equalities data.

4. DEVELOPMENT OF THE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

4.1 Gathering Data and Using Information

One of the duties that must be carried out by any public sector authority is the gathering of information. This includes information on the profile of the workforce, information on the profile of the resident population, and how people are affected by the Council's policies and practices both in employment and service delivery.

The Council has gathered and will continue to gather this information in the following ways:

- Local population data, e.g. **Cambridgeshire Insight**, Census statistics etc
- Staff statistics and recruitment monitoring forms
- Gender pay gap data
- Flexible working applications
- Applications for training and development
- HR monitoring data, e.g. grievance, disciplinary etc.
- Staff surveys
- Staff engagement workshops
- Customer satisfaction surveys
- Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs)

4.2 Consultation and Engagement

The Council recognises the importance of consultation in the development and implementation of this Scheme. Involvement and consultation helps to give everyone, including minority groups, an opportunity to provide input about the provision of services.

Consultation will take place with Council staff, Councillors, local residents, community groups, partner organisations, parish councils and other associations between **1 August and 30 September 2020** on this new scheme.

4.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EIAs)

As part of any effective policy development process, it is important to consider any potential risks to those who will be affected by the policy's aims or by its implementation. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process helps us to assess the implications of our decisions on the whole community, to eliminate discrimination, tackle inequality, develop a better understanding of the community we serve, target resources efficiently, and adhere to the transparency and accountability element of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The word 'policy', in this context, includes the different things that the Council does. It includes any policy, procedure or practice - both in employment and service delivery. It also includes proposals for restructuring, redundancies and changes to service provision.

A checklist is available to guide Council officers through the impact assessment process (see Appendix 2). In the first instance, the officer would complete an Initial Screening Template (see Appendix 3) to scope the impact and decide whether a full impact assessment (EIA) is required. If this identified the need for a full impact assessment, then the officer would complete the detailed EIA template (see Appendix 4).

The Council's Committee report template makes reference to equality impact assessments. If a new/revised policy is being presented to committee, the officer should use the committee report template to indicate if an impact assessment has or has not been completed. If an impact assessment has been completed, then a copy should be attached to the committee report. If the impact assessment identifies barriers, the officer's report should make reference to the main findings and any proposed mitigation actions so this can inform decision making.

The results of our [Equality Impact Assessments](#) are published on our website. Copies can also be made available on request.

5. OUR EQUALITY & INCLUSION OBJECTIVES FOR 2020-2023

The Council has identified the following equality and inclusion objectives for the period 2020-2023.

1	As a Community Leader , we acknowledge with concern the published data on increases in hate crimes and crimes towards people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010. The Council condemns all forms of discrimination against all protected characteristics, and commits to ensuring that every resident of the District is treated with respect, dignity and in an equal manner.
2	As a Service Provider , we are committed to providing inclusive services which actively address inequality and exclusion by assessing the implications of our decisions on the whole community, to eliminate discrimination, tackle inequality, develop a better understanding of the community we serve, target resources efficiently, and adhere to the transparency and accountability element of the Public Sector Equality Duty.
3	As an Employer , we are committed to building an inclusive organisation where the workforce reflects the District we serve and where colleagues feel confident about being themselves in the workplace.

APPENDIX 1: Equality & Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2023

	Equality & Inclusion Objective	Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale
1.	As a Community Leader , we will:			
1.1	Continue to secure membership of Action Against Hate Strategic Group and other Delivery Boards for County while working in Partnership with Police, RSLs, Faith Groups and other key partners.	To ensure hate crime recommendations, national guidance and good practice is implemented within East Cambridgeshire.	Community Safety Officer	Ongoing
		To increase our number of Hate Reporting Centres to at least one in each Parish.	Community Safety Officer	March 2023
		To ensure significant focus is placed on a partnership approach through our Multi Agency Meetings to tackling hate crime and therefore increasing confidence amongst communities while identifying any particular hard to reach community groups or potential challenges.	Community Safety Officer	Ongoing
		To monitor hate crime performance & review the progress through the CSP Delivery Group.	Community Safety Officer	Ongoing
		To horizon scan for emerging issues, which may necessitate immediate action, or may be relayed to key partners through Problem Solving Meetings.	Community Safety Officer	Ongoing

1.2	Understand the profile of our resident population and service users	Continue to collect and analyse statistical data on the local population	HR Manager Communities and Partnerships Manager Community Safety Officer	Ongoing
		Monitor take up of information requested in other languages and formats	HR Manager	By 31 st March each year
1.3	Continue to work to improve access to and take-up of Council services from all residents and communities	Continue to assess the equality impacts of all decisions, policies and projects which have an impact on the public	Corporate Management Team (CMT) Service Leads Committee Report Authors	Ongoing
1.4	Commit publicly to improving the equality outcomes for the local community	Continue to support the Cambridgeshire Equality Pledge with our local partners	CMT Council Members Local Partners	Ongoing
1.5	Work together with community partners and local residents to confront racism, antisemitism and prejudice	Tackle unfair treatment and inappropriate behaviour to those with protected characteristics, experiencing discrimination, bullying and harassment	CMT Service Leads Council Members Local Partners	Ongoing
1.6	Ensure that corporate and service level structures are in place to deliver and review the equalities agenda	Ensure the Council has a compliant Equality and Inclusion Policy in place	HR Manager	By August 2020
		All Council publications to reflect a diverse community in terms of content and images	Reprographics Manager	Ongoing
		Ensure Council publications are available in accessible formats	Service Leads Customer Services Team	As required
2.	As a Service Provider , we will:			
2.1	Ensure our services are accessible	Continue to provide accessible buildings, facilities and open spaces to improve access for disabled people	Open Spaces and Facilities Manager	Ongoing

2.2	Ensure our suppliers and contractors adhere to our equality and inclusion policy	Take all possible opportunities to ensure our suppliers and contractors take an active approach to contributing to our equalities and inclusion goals, including having standard terms in contracts with external suppliers that require adherence to the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy .	CMT Service Leads Procurement Advisor	Ongoing
2.3	Consult with local residents and service users so that they feel empowered to influence decision making	Use the Council's Register of Consultees to give local residents, community groups the opportunity to get involved in local decision making	Communities & Partnerships Manager	Ongoing
2.4	Work with local communities to reduce domestic violence and abuse	Improve responses and interventions which support victims of sexual violence including DV and rape	Community Safety Officer	Ongoing
3.	As an Employer , we will:			
3.1	Understand the profile of our workforce	Analyse available data to understand how representative the Council's workforce is and identify any issues that need to be addressed	HR Manager HR Support Officer	Every 3 years with Policy update
3.2	Ensure that the Council's policies and practices are non-discriminatory and compliant with Equalities legislation	Carry out EIAs on new and revised employment policies and publish them on the Council's website	HR Manager HR Support Officer	Ongoing
		Ensure that equal opportunities and inclusion are integral to how we recruit and treat our workforce	HR Manager HR Support Officer HR Administrator	Ongoing
		Take seriously and act upon allegations of inappropriate language, situations or practices and investigate issues as soon as they arise, promptly at the root cause	CMT Service Leads Monitoring Officer	Ongoing

		Ensure that appropriate reasonable adjustments are being consistently put in place for colleagues in a timely manner and acted upon	Service Leads HR Manager HR Support Officer HR Administrator	Ongoing
3.3	Educate our workforce to improve understanding of barriers faced by particular groups so that all employees can help to remove these barriers	Ensure that all employees undertake equality training and all managers undertake training in unconscious bias	HR Manager HR Support Officer HR Administrator	By March 2021

APPENDIX 2: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (EIA) – A CHECKLIST FOR OFFICERS

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

As part of any effective policy development process, it is important to consider any potential risks to those who will be affected by the policy's aims or by its implementation. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process helps us to assess the implications of our decisions on the whole community, to eliminate discrimination, tackle inequality, develop a better understanding of the community we serve, target resources efficiently, and adhere to the transparency and accountability element of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The word ‘policy’, in this context, includes the different things that the Council does. It includes any policy, procedure or practice - both in employment and service delivery. It also includes proposals for restructuring, redundancies and changes to service provision.

Complete

1	<u>EIA - INITIAL SCREENING TEMPLATE</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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To be completed when developing a new or reviewing an existing policy. Use the Initial Screening Template (IST) to scope the impact and decide whether a full equality impact assessment (EIA) is required.

The following questions can help you to determine whether a full EIA is required:

- Does the policy affect service users or the wider community?
- Is it a major policy, with a significant effect on how functions are delivered?
- Will it have a significant effect on how other organisations operate?
- Does it involve a significant commitment of resources?
- Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities, e.g. disabled people’s access to public transport etc?

If a full EIA is required, go to Stage 2. If not, your IST will need to be countersigned by your Service Lead Officer and forwarded to the HR Manager (go to Stage 3).

2	<u>EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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a)	Establish clear aims and objectives <i>Questions (a) to (b)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is the aim/purpose of the policy? ▪ Who is the policy intended to benefit and how? ▪ What outcomes do we want to achieve from the policy? ▪ How will the policy be put into practice? 	
b)	Gather information/data <i>Question (c)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is the EIA informed by any data? i.e. consultations, complaints, applications received, allocations/take-up, satisfaction/feedback data, access audits, census data, benchmarking, workforce profile etc. 	
c)	Assess likely impact and opportunities to promote equality <i>Questions (d) to (g)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What do you already know about equality impact or need? ▪ Is there a higher or lower take-up by particular groups? ▪ Have there been any demographic changes/trends locally? ▪ Are there any barriers to accessing the policy or service? ▪ Is there a differential impact on different groups? ▪ Is the differential impact an adverse one? ▪ Is the policy directly or indirectly discriminatory? ▪ Is the policy intended to increase equality of opportunity through positive action? 	

d)	Involvement and consultation <i>Questions (h) to (j)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How have you engaged stakeholders in gathering evidence or testing the policy proposals? <i>The Consultation Register is available to assist staff in consulting with the Council's stakeholders.</i> ▪ Who was involved, how and when where they engaged? ▪ Does the evidence show potential for differential impact? ▪ How will you mitigate any negative impacts? 								
e)	Make a judgement on the policy in light of data, alternatives and consultation <i>Questions (k) to (l)</i>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Option 1:</td> <td>No major change - the evidence shows that the policy is robust and no potential for discrimination.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Option 2:</td> <td>Adjust the policy - to remove barriers or to better promote equality.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Option 3:</td> <td>Continue the policy - despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunity to promote equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not unlawfully discriminate.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Option 4:</td> <td>Stop and remove the policy – if the policy shows adverse effects that cannot be justified.</td> </tr> </table>	Option 1:	No major change - the evidence shows that the policy is robust and no potential for discrimination.	Option 2:	Adjust the policy - to remove barriers or to better promote equality.	Option 3:	Continue the policy - despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunity to promote equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not unlawfully discriminate.	Option 4:	Stop and remove the policy – if the policy shows adverse effects that cannot be justified.
Option 1:	No major change - the evidence shows that the policy is robust and no potential for discrimination.									
Option 2:	Adjust the policy - to remove barriers or to better promote equality.									
Option 3:	Continue the policy - despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunity to promote equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not unlawfully discriminate.									
Option 4:	Stop and remove the policy – if the policy shows adverse effects that cannot be justified.									

Your EIA will need to be countersigned by your Service Lead Officer and forwarded to the HR Manager.

3	COMMITTEE REPORT (IF APPLICABLE)	
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If your new/revised policy is being presented to committee, you should use the committee report template to indicate if an impact assessment has or has not been completed. Attach a copy of the completed IST/EIA to the committee report. **If the IST/EIA identifies barriers, your report should make reference to the main findings and any proposed actions so this can inform decision making.**

4	PUBLICATION OF EIA	
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The Council is committed to publishing the results of our EIAs on the Council's website. When the IST/EIA has been approved by Committee, then the final version should be forwarded to the HR Manager who will arrange for the documents to be published. You will need to send any background papers or appendices that are relevant. Copies of impact assessments can also be made available on request.

5	MONITOR & REVIEW	
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Impact assessments are an ongoing process that do not end once a document has been produced. A review that considers the actual impact of the policy should be undertaken no later than one year after its introduction. This is not repeating the IST/EIA, but going back to the original assessment and using the information and experience gained through implementation to check the findings and make any necessary adjustments.

APPENDIX 3: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – INITIAL SCREENING TEMPLATE (IST)

Initial screening needs to take place for all new/revised Council policies. The word ‘policy’, in this context, includes the different things that the Council does. It includes any policy, procedure or practice - both in employment and service delivery. It also includes proposals for restructuring, redundancies and changes to service provision. This stage must be completed at the earliest opportunity to determine whether it is necessary to undertake an EIA for this activity.

Name of Policy:	
Lead Officer (responsible for assessment):	
Department:	
Others Involved in the Assessment (i.e. peer review, external challenge):	
Date Initial Screening Completed:	

- (a) **What is the policy trying to achieve?** i.e. What is the aim/purpose of the policy? Is it affected by external drivers for change? What outcomes do we want to achieve from the policy? How will the policy be put into practice?

- (b) **Who are its main beneficiaries?** i.e. who will be affected by the policy?

- (c) **Is this assessment informed by any information or background data?** i.e. consultations, complaints, applications received, allocations/take-up, satisfaction rates, performance indicators, access audits, census data, benchmarking, workforce profile etc.

(d) Does this policy have the potential to cause a positive or negative impact on different groups in the community, on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics (please tick all that apply):

Ethnicity	<input type="checkbox"/>	Age	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Please explain any impact identified: i.e. What do you already know about equality impact or need? Is there any evidence that there is a higher or lower take-up by particular groups? Have there been any demographic changes or trends locally? Are there any barriers to accessing the policy or service?

(e) Does the policy affect service users or the wider community?	YES/NO/Na
(f) Does the policy have a significant effect on how services are delivered?	YES/NO/Na
(g) Will it have a significant effect on how other organisations operate?	YES/NO/Na
(h) Does it involve a significant commitment of resources?	YES/NO/Na
(i) Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities, e.g. disabled people's access to public transport etc?	YES/NO/Na

If you have answered **YES** to any of the questions above, then it is necessary to proceed with a full equality impact assessment (EIA). If the answer is **NO**, then this judgement and your response to the above questions will need to be countersigned by your Service Lead Officer and then forwarded to the HR Manager.

Signatures:

Completing Officer: _____ **Date:** _____

Service Lead Officer: _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX 4: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) FORM

Name of Policy:	
Lead Officer (responsible for assessment):	
Department:	
Others Involved in the Assessment (i.e. peer review, external challenge):	
Date EIA Completed:	

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

As part of any effective policy development process, it is important to consider any potential risks to those who will be affected by the policy's aims or by its implementation. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process helps us to assess the implications of our decisions on the whole community, to eliminate discrimination, tackle inequality, develop a better understanding of the community we serve, target resources efficiently, and adhere to the transparency and accountability element of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The word 'policy', in this context, includes the different things that the Council does. It includes any policy, procedure or practice - both in employment and service delivery. It also includes proposals for restructuring, redundancies and changes to service provision.

- (a) **What is the policy trying to achieve?** i.e. What is the aim/purpose of the policy? Is it affected by external drivers for change? What outcomes do we want to achieve from the policy? How will the policy be put into practice?

- (b) **Who are its main beneficiaries?** i.e. who will be affected by the policy?

- (c) **Is the EIA informed by any information or background data (quantitative or qualitative)?** i.e. consultations, complaints, applications received, allocations/take-up, satisfaction rates, performance indicators, access audits, census data, benchmarking, workforce profile etc.

(d) Does this policy have the potential to cause a positive or negative impact on different groups in the community, on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics? (please tick all that apply)

Ethnicity
Sex
Disability
Gender Reassignment
Pregnancy & Maternity

Age
Religion and Belief
Sexual Orientation
Marriage & Civil Partnership

Please explain any impact identified: i.e. What do you already know about equality impact or need? Is there any evidence that there is a higher or lower take-up by particular groups? Have there been any demographic changes or trends locally? Are there any barriers to accessing the policy or service?

(e) Does the policy have a differential impact on different groups?

YES/NO/Na

(f) Is the impact *adverse* (i.e. less favourable)?

YES/NO/Na

(g) Does it have the potential to disadvantage or discriminate unfairly against any of the groups in a way that is unlawful?

YES/NO/Na

(h) How have you engaged stakeholders in gathering evidence or testing the policy proposals? Who was involved, how and when where they engaged? Does the evidence show potential for differential impact? How will you mitigate any negative impacts? Where there is the potential for an adverse impact that cannot be addressed immediately, these should be highlighted in your recommendations and objectives at the end of the EIA.

* The Consultation Register is available to assist staff in consulting with the Council's stakeholders.

(i) Summarise the findings of your research and/or consultation (please use a separate sheet if necessary).

(j) What are the risks associated with the policy in relation to differential impact and unmet needs/requirements? i.e. reputation, financial, breach of legislation, service exclusion, lack of resources, lack of cooperation, insufficient budget etc.

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(k) Use the information gathered in the earlier stages of your EIA to make a judgement on whether there is the potential for the policy to result in unlawful discrimination or a less favourable impact on any group in the community, and what changes (if any) need to be made to the policy.

Option 1:	No major change - the evidence shows that the policy is robust and no potential for discrimination.	
Option 2:	Adjust the policy - to remove barriers or to better promote equality.	
Option 3:	Continue the policy - despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunity to promote equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not unlawfully discriminate.	
Option 4:	Stop and remove the policy – if the policy shows adverse effects that cannot be justified.	

(l) Where you have identified the potential for adverse impact, what action can be taken to remove or mitigate against the potential for the policy to unlawfully discriminate or impact less favourably on one or more communities in a way that cannot be justified? Include key activities that are likely to have the greatest impact (max. 6). Identified actions should be specified in detail for the first year but there may be further longer term actions which need to be considered. To ensure that your actions are more than just a list of good intentions, include for each: the person responsible for its completion, a timescale for completion, any cost implications and how these will be addressed. It is essential that you incorporate these actions into your service plans.

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This completed EIA will need to be countersigned by your Service Lead Officer and forwarded to the HR Manager. All completed EIAs will be published on the Council's website to demonstrate to local people that the Council is actively engaged in tackling potential discrimination and improving its practices in relation to equalities.

Signatures:

Completing Officer: _____ **Date:** _____

Service Lead Officer: _____ **Date:** _____

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) FORM

Name of Policy:	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy 2020-2023
Lead Officer (responsible for assessment):	Nicole Pema, HR Manager
Department:	HR
Others Involved in the Assessment (i.e. peer review, external challenge):	-
Date EIA Completed:	July 2020

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

As part of any effective policy development process, it is important to consider any potential risks to those who will be affected by the policy's aims or by its implementation. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process helps us to assess the implications of our decisions on the whole community, to eliminate discrimination, tackle inequality, develop a better understanding of the community we serve, target resources efficiently, and adhere to the transparency and accountability element of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The word 'policy', in this context, includes the different things that the Council does. It includes any policy, procedure or practice - both in employment and service delivery. It also includes proposals for restructuring, redundancies and changes to service provision.

- (a) **What is the policy trying to achieve?** i.e. What is the aim/purpose of the policy? Is it affected by external drivers for change? What outcomes do we want to achieve from the policy? How will the policy be put into practice?

East Cambridgeshire District Council recognises the importance of equality, diversity and inclusion. We operate in an increasingly diverse community, and we understand that the people who provide and use our services have diverse characteristics and different experiences, needs and aspirations.

Understanding, valuing and effectively managing these differences ensures that our communities are places where people get on well together and prosper.

The Council acknowledges with concern the published data on increases in hate crimes and crimes towards people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010. The Council condemns all forms of discrimination against all protected characteristics, and commits to ensuring that every resident of the District is treated with respect, dignity and in an equal manner.

The aims and principles underpinning our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy are to:

- Meet the responsibilities placed on us by the equalities legislation, specifically, the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Join with the Government and other local authorities across the UK in adopting the internationally recognised International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism.
- Ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion issues influence decision making.
- Identify what barriers people face and take steps to remove them.
- Develop measures and actions to tackle discrimination.
- Challenge discrimination against people who work for the Council or who use our services.
- Raise staff awareness and understanding of these issues.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy sets out the Council's commitment to an inclusive and supportive environment for staff, Members, contractors and visitors that is free from discrimination, where all are able to participate and where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. It promotes positive attitudes towards inclusivity and valuing diversity, and seeks to ensure that all who are subject to the Council's policies, practices and procedures are treated fairly.

The policy includes three objectives to help us become more inclusive. Underpinning each of these objectives is a set of actions and priorities that the Council will aim to follow to guide our work.

(b) Who are its main beneficiaries? i.e. who will be affected by the policy?

Local residents and businesses, community groups and associations, Council staff, Councillors, partner organisations and Parish Councils.

(c) Is the EIA informed by any information or background data (quantitative or qualitative)? i.e. consultations, complaints, applications received, allocations/take-up, satisfaction rates, performance indicators, access audits, census data, benchmarking, workforce profile etc.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and accompanying EIA is informed by the following:

- Local population data:
 - (1) Cambridgeshire Insight
 - (2) Office for National Statistics 2011 Census
 - (3) Office for National Statistics Survey on Sexual Orientation in the UK (2017)
 - (4) Gender Trust
- Staff statistics and recruitment monitoring forms
- Home Office Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2025
- International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism
- Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance on the Equality Act 2010
- GOV.UK guidance on the Equality Act 2010
- The Council's Community Engagement Toolkit
- The Council's Corporate Plan
- Community Eyes and Ears Campaign
- The Council's Community Safety Plan

(d) Does this policy have the potential to cause a positive or negative impact on different groups in the community, on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics? (please tick all that apply)

Ethnicity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Religion and Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

Please explain any impact identified: i.e. What do you already know about equality impact or need? Is there any evidence that there is a higher or lower take-up by particular groups? Have there been any demographic changes or trends locally? Are there any barriers to accessing the policy or service?

The Policy aims to have a **positive** impact across all of the protected characteristics, ensuring that we:

- a) Meet the responsibilities placed on us by the equalities legislation.
- b) Take equality and inclusion issues into account when making decisions.
- c) Identify what barriers people face and take steps to remove them.
- d) Develop measures and actions to tackle discrimination.
- e) Challenge discrimination against people who work for the Council or who use our services.
- f) Raise staff awareness and understanding of these issues.

The District of East Cambridgeshire has the smallest population of the five districts within Cambridgeshire, estimated at approximately 89,362.

The profile of the population is set out below:

Protected Characteristic	Variable	% of Population
a) Sex	Females	50.9
	Males	49.1
b) Age	0-14	18.6
	15-19	5.3
	20-24	4.2
	25-29	4.9
	30-34	5.9
	35-39	7
	40-44	6.7
	45-49	7.5
	50-54	7.5
	55-59	6.6
	60-64	5.8
	65-69	5.5
	70-74	5.5
c) Ethnic Group	White	96.2
	Mixed	1.4
	Asian	1.5
	Black	0.6
	Other	0.3
	d) Religion	No religion
Christian		62.3
Muslim		0.4
Buddhist		0.3
Hindu		0.2
Jewish		0.1
Sikh		0.1
Other		0.4
Not stated		8.1
e) Disability	Yes	15.4
	No	84.6
f) Sexual Orientation	N/a	There is no data on sexual orientation in East Cambridgeshire because it was not included in the 2011 UK Census. However, an ONS Survey on Sexual Orientation in the UK

			(2017), estimates that 2% of the population is gay, lesbian or bisexual.
g)	Gender Re-assignment		No local data is available on the transgender and transsexual community in East Cambridgeshire. The Gender Trust estimates that 1% of an organisation's employees and service users may be experiencing some degree of gender variance.
h)	Marriage and Civil Partnership	Single	27.1
		Married	54.9
		Civil Partnership	0.3
		Separated	2.4
		Divorced	8.7
		Widowed	6.6
i)	Pregnancy and Maternity ²	Dependents	30
		No Dependents	70

As a Community Leader, the Council is actively promoting equality and inclusion in its role as a community leader, seeking to influence positive behaviour across the district and engaging with other organisations, by:

- Taking the lead and working in Partnership with the Police Action Against Hate Coordinator to run workshops county wide to explore hate jointly, while remaining a key member of the Hate Crime Strategic Group.
- Supporting and encouraging increased reporting of hate crime within the community at locations where victims of hate crime incidents feel safe and comfortable and specifically to extend the ways for victims of hate crime to access services through the development of 3rd party reporting centres. Currently in East Cambs there are two Hate reporting centres, one in Ely the other in Littleport. Our aim is to increase this to at least one Hate Reporting Centre in each Parish.
- Improving information sharing between partner agencies and fostering joint working to increase community safety.
- Developing training packages for schools and businesses to prevent and deter hate crime/incidents by raising awareness of the impact of hate crime, consequences of perpetrating and building community cohesion across all communities. This will increase confidence in being able to report hate crime via the different methods available and raise awareness of local services that exist to protect and support victims and witnesses and challenge perpetrators.

As a service provider, the Council is actively promoting equality and inclusion in the access to, and delivery of, its services, this includes:

Housing and Community Safety

- Providing home visits and welfare checks offering advice and assistance to vulnerable people or people who are unable to visit the Council, this often includes hard-to-reach groups such as disabled residents, Travellers and migrant workers.
- Providing advice and support for men and women affected by domestic violence (DV), including domestic abuse outreach sessions and a Domestic Violence Directory that lists contact details of organisations that can help individuals affected by this or those supporting people who are affected: [Domestic Violence](#). The Council's DV web pages include 'hide my

visit' icons to immediately redirect viewers to another website if they are interrupted and worried about their safety.

- Offering emergency refuge accommodation to women escaping abusive relationships through the Cambridge Women's Aid Refuge (CWA) and providing 'move-on' accommodation in the community for those leaving refuge.
- Providing dedicated officers within the Council's Housing team to work closely with migrant workers and people suffering from domestic violence.
- Providing weekly support through the Community Hubs sited in various villages around East Cambridgeshire.
- Providing drop-in sessions for victims of DV.
- Delivering Community Safety Partnership work through the [Community Eyes and Ears Scheme](#) to the workplace and schools, delivering training and awareness in relation to: Radicalisation, Hate Crimes, Modern Slavery, Cyber Crime and Scams, Neglect and Abuse, Exploitation, Abuse, Dementia and Loneliness.
- Providing Third Party reporting centres as a confidential way to report everything from hate crime to domestic abuse.
- Providing market stall events for raising awareness on key issues affecting both adults and young people including drug and alcohol awareness, anti-social behaviour and signposting them to services and support.
- Producing a [Live Safe](#) leaflet for migrant workers in Polish, Portuguese, Lithuanian and English because the district is attracting people as a place to live and work from across the world and in particular from Eastern Europe. This is becoming an established pattern, which is supporting the local economy (particularly in agriculture) and meaning that East Cambridgeshire is becoming a more culturally diverse district. Migrants can experience a number of different issues when working and living in the district and this leaflet informs them of their rights and responsibilities.
- Providing three caravan sites for travellers: Burwell (8 pitches) (this site is currently closed), Earith Bridge (13) and Wentworth (8).

Facilities and Open Spaces

- Providing accessible buildings and sites through dedicated disabled parking bays, ramps at entrances and exits, power assisted doors, accessible toilets, a hearing loop for people who are hearing impaired, and an accessible lift.
- Providing electrically powered scooters and manual wheelchairs to help people who have limited mobility to shop and use the other facilities in Ely, through the Ely Shopmobility Scheme. There is no charge for using the mobility aids but the service must be pre-booked.

Sports & Leisure

- The Council works alongside Living Sport to support sport opportunities for people with disabilities and special needs, so that everybody, regardless of disability or additional needs, can access sport or physical activity that suits them and their aspirations in sport. One of the main networks is the [Ability PLUS Group](#), the County Disability Sports Forum for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Anyone interested in disability sport can join the network.
- Providing disabled facilities at the Hive (the Council owned gym and swimming pool), including accessible parking, a poolside hoist to help people in and out of the pool, and accessible changing facilities.
- Providing a range of leisure activities for the over 50s through the Council's [Mature and Active Programme](#) to keep active and to maintain and improve their health and wellbeing.
- Offering [Heart Beat Health Walks](#) across the district for people who may be less active but who would like a healthier lifestyle. Walks are for up to 1 hour on routes accessible for wheelchairs and prams and are open to everyone of all abilities.
- Providing free bus travel across East Cambridgeshire through the Concessionary bus fare scheme (administered by Cambridgeshire County Council): [Concessionary Fares](#)

Community Services

- Promoting consultation and community engagement through the Council's [Consultee Register](#).
- Developing and promoting the [Community Engagement Toolkit](#).
- Providing the services of a professional translator if a translation is required into another language or an alternative format, i.e. large print, Braille, audio cassette/CD: [Translation Service](#)
- Providing online language translation on the [Council's website](#) into over 100 languages using the free page by page website translation service provided by the web browser. To activate, visit the browser's translation service and select the preferred language.
- Supporting the [Cambridgeshire Equality Pledge](#) with our local partners.

Regulatory Services

- Providing assisted collections to residents that are unable to put out their waste and recycling because of a serious long-term illness or disability.
- Providing a free of charge Clinical Waste collection service to collect and dispose of clinical waste which poses a threat of infection to humans.
- Offering assistance for Mandatory Disabled adaptations up to a maximum of £30,000 (subject to a test of resources). For those that are eligible, some are able to receive a grant to pay for the full cost of the adaptation, others may have to make a contribution towards the cost of the work (based on income and savings): [Disabled Adaptations](#)
- Delivering inclusive environments through the Council's planning processes. An 'inclusive' environment is one that can be properly accessed and used by everyone, seeking to remove barriers and open up access.

(e) Does the policy have a differential impact on different groups?

YES/NO/Na

(f) Is the impact adverse (i.e. less favourable)?

YES/NO/Na

(g) Does it have the potential to disadvantage or discriminate unfairly against any of the groups in a way that is unlawful?

YES/NO/Na

(h) How have you engaged stakeholders in gathering evidence or testing the policy proposals? Who was involved, how and when where they engaged? Does the evidence show potential for differential impact? How will you mitigate any negative impacts? Where there is the potential for an adverse impact that cannot be addressed immediately, these should be highlighted in your recommendations and objectives at the end of the EIA.

Subject to committee approval, further consultation will now take place with Councillors, local residents, community groups, partner organisations, parish councils and other associations on the updated Policy.

* The Consultation Register is available to assist staff in consulting with the Council's stakeholders.

(i) Summarise the findings of your research and/or consultation (please use a separate sheet if necessary).

This EIA will be updated to include the findings of the consultation if necessary.

(j) What are the risks associated with the policy in relation to differential impact and unmet needs/requirements? i.e. reputation, financial, breach of legislation, service exclusion, lack of resources, lack of cooperation, insufficient budget etc.

Potential risks of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2020-2023:

- Failing to comply with equality duties and/or other equalities legislation.
- Compliance notices and/or enforcement action being taken by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.
- Insufficient staff and/or lack of cooperation to take forward the Policy's actions and priorities.
- Financial consequences of enforcement action/non-compliance.
- Financial consequences of discrimination/harassment claims.
- Impact on the Council's reputation if we are not perceived as an 'equal opportunities employer'.
- Risk of service exclusion if we do not know who are hard-to-reach groups are and how to engage with them.

(k) Use the information gathered in the earlier stages of your EIA to make a judgement on whether there is the potential for the policy to result in unlawful discrimination or a less favourable impact on any group in the community, and what changes (if any) need to be made to the policy.

Option 1:	No major change - the evidence shows that the policy is robust and no potential for discrimination.	✓
Option 2:	Adjust the policy - to remove barriers or to better promote equality.	
Option 3:	Continue the policy - despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunity to promote equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not unlawfully discriminate.	
Option 4:	Stop and remove the policy – if the policy shows adverse effects that cannot be justified.	

(l) Where you have identified the potential for adverse impact, what action can be taken to remove or mitigate against the potential for the policy to unlawfully discriminate or impact less favourably on one or more communities in a way that cannot be justified? Include key activities that are likely to have the greatest impact (max. 6). Identified actions should be specified in detail for the first year but there may be further longer term actions which need to be considered. To ensure that your actions are more than just a list of good intentions, include for each: the person responsible for its completion, a timescale for completion, any cost implications and how these will be addressed. It is essential that you incorporate these actions into your service plans.

Not applicable.

This completed EIA will need to be countersigned by your Service Lead/Director and forwarded to the HR Manager.

Signatures:

Completing Officer: Nicole Pema **Date:** 08/07/2020

Director: Emma Grima **Date:** 08/07/2020

TITLE: Little Thetford Community Land Trust (CLT) Grant Application

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 23 July 2020

Author: Director Commercial

[V41]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To consider a grant application from Little Thetford Community Land Trust.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 Members are requested to approve the £5,000 grant application to benefit Little Thetford Community Land Trust.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council has in place a Community Land Trust programme which provides a grant of up to £5,000 to enable communities to set up and operate a formal community land trust.

3.2 Little Thetford Community Land Trust has requested £5,000 to fund legal formation, hiring a clerk for 6 months on a part-time basis, developing a website and online presence, marketing materials and community consultation.

3.3 The full application from Little Thetford Community Land Trust is provided at Appendix 1.

4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The application has been assessed and the key information required by the applicant has been included, specifically:

- Vision for the organisation and initial views on the appropriate legal model
- Outline of the project, specifically the type and extent of community benefits to be delivered
- Key objectives
- Local expertise including support from the Parish Council and other organisations
- Details of planned expenditure

4.2 The application meets the criteria of the application process and as such it is recommended that Committee approves the application.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 The £5,000 grant can be met from existing budgets.

5.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (INRA) is not required.

5.3 A Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) is not required.

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix 1- Little Thetford Community Land Trust Application Form

Background Documents

None

Location

The Grange,
Ely

Contact Officer

Emma Grima
Director Commercial
(01353) 616960
E-mail:
emma.grima@eastcambs.gov.uk



ECDC CLT SET-UP GRANT APPLICATION FORM

About your organisation:			
Organisation name (if known):	Little Thetford Community Land Trust		
Name of contact:	Graham James	Title: Mr/ Ms/ Other	Mr
Position held:	Temporary Chair of CLT Steering Group		
Organisation address:	Correspondence address (if different):		
Little Thetford Village Hall	[REDACTED]		
The Wyches	Little Thetford		
Postcode:	CB63HD	Postcode:	[REDACTED]
Telephone:		Contact telephone:	[REDACTED]
Email address:	[REDACTED]		
Does your organisation already have a bank account (delete as applicable)?	No		
<i>Note: if there is a bank account, please supply a copy of the latest statement</i>			
If no bank account, is there another local organisation, such as a Parish or Town Council that could hold and administer the grants funds on your behalf? If so, please give details below:			
Bank account temporarily dealt with through Little Thetford Parish Council at [REDACTED] [REDACTED]			



In which area do you wish to set up your organisation?

Little Thetford Village

How many people are currently involved?

Please list the names and give brief details of your working group. so far as it is established (e.g. 'local resident', 'Parish Councillor', 'Local Authority Representative', 'Housing Officer'):

Graham James	Chair of Parish Council
Dom Negroni	Chair of Village Hall Trustees
Matt Sullivan	Vice Chair of Village Hall Trustees
Gordon McGinley	Local resident and parish church treasurer
Robert Clark	Parish Councillor
Carrie Chamberlain	Parish Councillor
Stephen Lamb	Local resident and affordable housing champion
Alison Kilby	Vice Chair Parish Council
Dave Kilby	Local resident
Sarah Martin	Local resident in Sanctuary Housing

Signature of person responsible for set-up grant application:

Graham James

Date: 10 July 2020



What is your Vision for the Organisation

The current coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated that we have a very strong community spirit and have what can be achieved by working together. However, it has also highlighted that a third of the households in the village contain at least one vulnerable person, often by reason of age being over 70. Many of the newcomers to the village do not have local ties since local people are being priced out of the housing market, and work some distance away commuting to Cambridge or London. There is therefore a distinct risk that we will become a dormitory village. This is further exacerbated by the loss in recent times of village institutions such as a shop, a pub and the village hall itself is more than 50 years old and requires attention.

Our Vision is to develop the village through a CLT that will incorporate a number of good quality, eco-friendly, affordable houses for local people or those with close community ties alongside new houses that will be built encourage younger people to join us. To that end a critical part of the Vision is to leverage the local housing to provide a new Village Hall, a local shop and a pub or similar community building.

What type of organisation do you want to set-up (e.g. Community Land Trust, Co-operative)?

Community Land Trust

Why do you think this is the most appropriate legal model for what you want to do?

Based on the experience of other CLTs in the area, we believe that this structure will ensure that the local community will have the opportunity to become actively involved in the design of the development as well as providing tangible assets of housing, village hall and other community buildings that provide for a positive future for the village.

About your project:



Please describe your project.

It would be useful to know what type of community assets you want to create (e.g. houses, workspaces, allotments etc), and the scale of your project, i.e. how many properties you hope to build in the current scheme?

Accepting that there will be a significant community consultation undertaken, the view of the Steering Group is that we will be looking at a development of about 70 households, split equitably between the CLT and the Developer, to provide the necessary asset base to build the Village Hall, shop and pub / community building. We have set ourselves a challenging timetable of 3 years for the first household to be completed, with the whole project completed within 4 years. A key element will be a requirement for transparency across all parties involved to ensure that the community obtains an appropriate level of resources and assets from the project.

Have you carried out any local needs surveys, such as a housing need survey? What were the results? If you have not carried out any surveys how do you know there is a need for your project?

The last formal housing needs assessment was undertaken 10 years ago by Cambridge ACRE. That demonstrated a clear need for affordable housing for local people. Since that time the situation has become more acute as highlighted by the work to support our community during the current pandemic. Apart from the affordable housing this is also the only viable way for the community assets to be renewed and replaced.

Other than the surveys have you directly engaged or informed your local community about your plans? If yes, how did you do this?

Formal consultation has not started but local people have been encouraged to visit the CLT in Stretham via Social Media and the subject has been briefly discussed by the Parish Council.

About the project beneficiaries:



Who will directly benefit from your project (e.g. who will use or occupy the assets / properties)?

Our focus is on supporting local people but at the same time we recognise that we also need to encourage 'new blood' into the area. New residents and visitors are encouraged by the community feel and the activities undertaken through the Village Hall, the Church and Community School. Expanding those facilities will further increase the attractiveness of Little Thetford as a destination of choice.

How will you select the occupants of any housing that you plan to build?

Part of the early work for the Founding Trustees will be to develop an Allocations Policy that will include consultation across the village with the proposals.

Will the properties you intend to build be constructed using local materials or sustainable building techniques?

The CLT are committed to a develop that is in keeping with and sympathetic to the local landscape in the village which contains a number of properties and areas of historical interest. Both the housing and associated village assets will be built using sustainable materials that will be locally sourced where possible. The CLT is focused on delivering quality buildings whilst at the same time developing the open spaces within the development to enhance wildlife and ensure a natural link between the development, the village and the surrounding countryside.

*What do you want to achieve in the **short-term** (i.e. within next 6 months)?*

Within the first 6 months we will appoint an experienced Clerk and establish a legally formed CLT and a Board of Trustees. We will also have in place a CLT web-site and FaceBook page as the first step towards an intensive community consultation programme. This will be quickly followed by a 'Call for Land' and we are aware of several landlords interested in our development. The current pandemic restrictions provide that a lot of the consultation will be conducted 'on line' and in paper surveys but we have outline ideas for an external exhibit in the Village Hall garden, weather and social distancing permitting.



What are your plans for the **medium-term** (i.e. 6 months to 3 years)?

An early deliverable will be a formal project / programme plan with the idea that within 12 months we will have completed the first stage of the community consultation to allow for the design phase and applications for outline planning permission. The second year will be formal acquisition of the land with the inherent legal documentation and processes that entails, as well as putting in place the necessary funding support.

We anticipate building the houses will start towards the end of this period.

What are your plans for the **long-term** (i.e. once the current project has been completed?)

One of the advantages of a CLT structure is that it provides a mechanism for active and long-term engagement with the community to maintain and develop the village for this and future generations.

Apart from managing the CLT assets and housing stock, there is therefore an opportunity to work in tandem with the Parish Council and the other established bodies in the village (Village Hall, Church and School) to further improve the lives of its residents including expanding the sporting and recreational facilities available.

What do you hope to achieve in your community through this project? How will it contribute to your vision?

The way that the village has come together in the past few months with volunteers of all ages putting themselves forward to assist provides an exceptional base for us to build upon. Affordable houses will enable local young people to stay within the community whilst the proposed new facilities will ensure that we continue to attract new people to the village who will be inspired by those already here.

About you:



Why are you the right people to lead this project?

Everyone on the Steering Group has demonstrated commitment to the village with one or more of the institutions. We have the requisite leadership and professional skills to provide energy and strategic direction to deliver this ambitious programme and to ensure that the community are consulted at all stages.

What skills do you have?

The Steering Group is a good blend of long-term residents and newcomers with an agreed Vision and Purpose. We have professional skills of leadership, project / programme management, conveyancing, planning, finance, HR, IT, building & construction and local authority working.

What skills are you missing and how will you acquire them?

We are unaware of any skills gaps at present but these will undoubtedly arise. Where these are identified we will seek to fill those by reaching out to the village, neighbouring CLTs, the District, County and Combined Authorities. Should all of that fail we will all back on personal networks or buying in services.

Do you have the support of other individuals or organisations? If so, please outline (e.g. 'local authority', 'parish council', 'regional CLT Umbrella'):

We have early stage support from the Parish Council, the Village Hall Trustees and the Church. The concept has also been discussed with the Combined Authority and East Cambs District Council representatives who are broadly supportive of the scheme and our approach.

Our funding:



How will you spend the ECDC Fund grant?

Please provide a brief explanation of each activity for example 'to complete the set up of the organisation', 'to conduct community engagement activities', or 'to develop our business plan'. Please ensure that you provide a breakdown of the number of days/cost of each activity and who will be paid for their input.

Note: If your accounts or bank statement show a healthy balance you will be expected to explain why you are unable to pay for this work from your own funds

One of the early deliverables will be to develop a detailed financial budget for each stage of the proposal. We anticipate that in broad terms the monies will be spent as follows:

- 1. Legal formation £500*
- 2. Hiring a Clerk for 6 months on a part-time basis £2,000*
- 3. Developing website and on-line presence £250*
- 4. Marketing materials £500*
- 5. Community consultation £1,500*

How did you hear about the ECDC Set-up grant fund?

Research and introduction from the Combined Authority

TITLE: 2019/20 TREASURY OPERATIONS ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Committee: Finance and Assets Committee

Date: 23rd July 2020

Author: Finance Manager

[V41]

1.0 ISSUE

- 1.1 To report on the Council's treasury operations during the 2019/20 financial year.
- 1.2 This report reviews the Treasury Management activity during the financial year 2019/20 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 note the contents of this report on the Council's treasury operations during 2019/20, including the prudential and treasury indicators as set out in Appendix 1; and
- 2.2 Recommend to Full Council approval of the report.

3.0 BACKGROUND / INTRODUCTION

- 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 2019/20. 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 2019/20 the minimum reporting requirements were that Full Council should receive the following reports:
- an annual treasury strategy in advance of the year (received by Council on the 21st February 2019);
 - a mid-year treasury update report, (this was reviewed by Finance and Assets Committee on 28th November 2019 and approved by Full Council on the 20th February 2020);
 - an annual review following the end of the year, describing the activity compared to the strategy (this report).

4.0 RESULTS

- 4.1 Cash investments totalled £10,877 million as at 31st March 2020, an increase of £4.686 million on the previous year. The Council's cash investments were all for periods of less than one year.

- 4.2 The large increase in cash is mainly down to three events,
- the Council's overall revenue underspend for the year as reported in the financial outturn report;
 - additional CIL receipts;
 - the repayment of £1.7 million of the loan previously awarded to East Cambridgeshire Trading Company (ECTC).
- 4.3 The outstanding value of the Council's loan to ECTC was £4.22 million at the 31st March 2020.
- 4.4 Interest received during the financial year was £332,949, which was £34,949 above the budget of £298,000. This figure is made up of £97,360 from investment in money markets and other short, fixed term investments and £235,589 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 0.775%. This was above the benchmark 7 day LIBID (London Inter-bank Bid Rate) which was 0.534%.
- 5.0 CONCLUSIONS
- 5.1 The size of the Council's investment portfolio is relatively small. Meaning that investment decisions have to be made primarily to accommodate cashflow requirements as opposed to optimising investment returns. Despite these pressures, opportunities for some pro-active investment decisions were taken during the year when opportunity arose, with funds being moved to fixed term investments and away from overnight accounts.
- 5.2 During the financial year the Council operated within its approved treasury limits and prudential indicators.
- 6.0 APPENDIX
- 6.1 Annual Treasury Management Review 2019/20

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS	LOCATION	CONTACT OFFICER
Treasury Management Strategy as approved by Council on 21 st February 2019	Room 104 The Grange Ely	Ian Smith (01353) 616470 E-mail: ian.smith@eastcambs.gov.uk

Annual Treasury Management Review 2019/20

East Cambridgeshire District Council
April 2020

Annual Treasury Management Review 2019/20

1. Introduction

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 2019/20. 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 2019/20 the minimum reporting requirements were that the Full Council should receive the following reports:

- an annual treasury strategy in advance of the year (Council 21/02/2019)
- a mid-year (minimum) treasury update report (Council 20/02/2020)
- an annual review following the end of the year describing the activity compared to the strategy (this report)

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, this was done by the Finance and Assets Committee, before they were reported to the Full Council.

Member training on the function of the audit committee was undertaken on 14th October 2019 as part of the overall training suite for members, following the elections in May, this in order to support the role of members' with regard to scrutiny.

2. 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	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Budget	2019/20 Actual
Capital expenditure	3,479	11,135	2,364
Financed in year	2,417	9,255	2,896
Unfinanced capital expenditure	1,062	1,880	-532

The unusual negative unfinanced capital expenditure position is the result of CIL funding being retrospectively applied to the Leisure Centre project in 2019/20, therefore reducing the amount of borrowing needed.

3. The Council's Overall Borrowing Need

The Council's underlying need to borrow to finance capital expenditure is termed the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR).

Gross borrowing and the CFR - in order to ensure that borrowing levels are prudent over the medium term and only for a capital purpose, the Council should ensure that its gross external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of the capital financing requirement in the preceding year (2019/20) plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current (2020/21) and next two financial years. This essentially means that the Council is not borrowing to support revenue expenditure. This indicator allowed the Council some flexibility to borrow in advance of its immediate capital needs in 2019/20. The table below highlights the Council's gross borrowing position against the CFR. The Council has complied with this prudential indicator.

£000	31 March 2019 Actual	31 March 2020 Budget	31 March 2020 Actual
CFR General Fund (£m)	14,487	16,637	11,761
Gross external borrowing position	0	8,000	0
Under / over funding of CFR	14,487	8,637	11,761

The authorised limit - the authorised limit is the "affordable borrowing limit" required by s3 of the Local Government Act 2003. Once this has been set, the Council does not have the power to borrow above this level. The table below demonstrates that during 2019/20 the Council has maintained gross external 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.

	2019/20
Authorised limit	£15.0m
Maximum gross external borrowing position during the year	£0.0m
Operational boundary	£17.488m
Average gross external borrowing position	£0.0m
Financing costs as a proportion of net revenue stream	0%

4. Treasury Position as at 31 March 2020

At the beginning and the end of 2019/20 the Council's treasury position was as follows:

INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO	Actual 31.3.19 £000	Actual 31.3.19 %	Actual 31.3.20 £000	Actual 31.3.20 %
Treasury investments				
Banks	261	4.2	3,094	28.4
Local Authorities	0	0	1,000	9.2
Money Market Funds	5,930	95.8	6,783	62.4
TOTAL TREASURY INVESTMENTS	6,191	100	10,877	100

Non Treasury investments				
Loan to East Cambs Trading Company	4,620	100	4,220	100
TOTAL NON TREASURY INVESTMENTS	4,620	100	4,220	100

Treasury investments	6,191	57.3	10,877	72.0
Non Treasury investments	4,620	42.7	4,220	28.0
TOTAL OF ALL INVESTMENTS	10,811	100	15,097	100

The maturity structure of the investment portfolio was as follows:

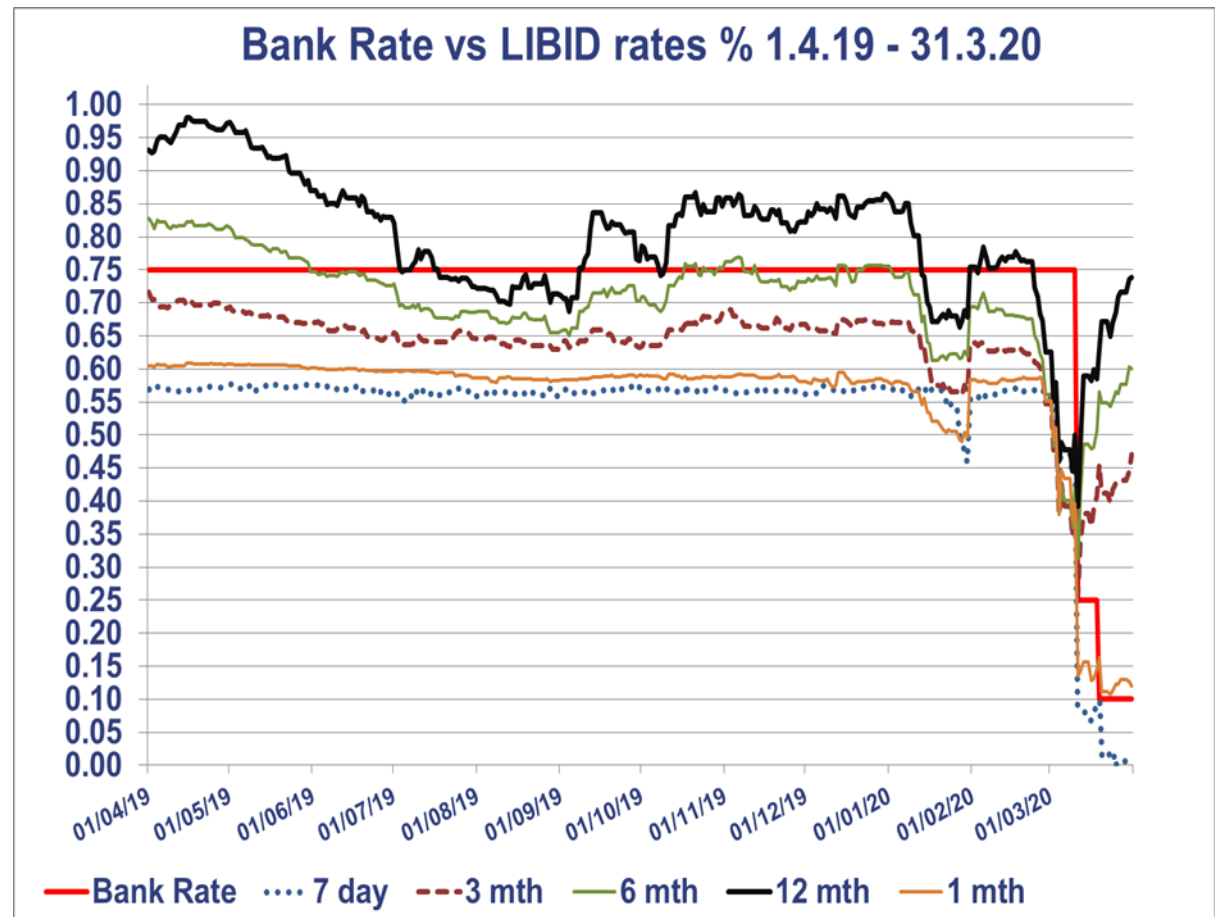
All Money Market investments are in cash and as such we have instant access to them.

The loan to Blackpool Borough Council was due back on the 26th May [this has since been received back].

The loan to East Cambridgeshire Trading Company was due to be repaid on or before 31st March 2021.

5. The strategy for 2019/20

5.1 Investment strategy and control of interest rate risk



Investment returns remained low during 2019/20. The expectation for interest rates within the treasury management strategy for 2019/20 was that Bank Rate would stay at 0.75% during the year as it was not expected that the MPC would be able to deliver on an increase in Bank Rate until the Brexit issue was finally settled. However, there was an expectation that Bank Rate would rise after that issue was settled, but would only rise to 1.0% during 2020.

Rising concerns over the possibility that the UK could leave the EU at the end of October 2019 caused longer term investment rates to be on a falling trend for most of April to September. They then rose after the end of October deadline was rejected by the Commons but fell back again in January before recovering again after the 31 January departure of the UK from the EU. When the coronavirus outbreak hit the UK in February/March, rates initially plunged but then rose sharply back up again due to a shortage of liquidity in financial markets.

While the Council has taken a cautious approach to investing, it is also fully appreciative of changes to regulatory requirements for financial institutions in terms of additional capital and liquidity that came about in the aftermath of the financial crisis. 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.

Investment balances have been kept to a minimum through the agreed strategy of using reserves and balances to support internal borrowing, rather than borrowing externally from the financial markets. External borrowing would have incurred an additional cost, due to the differential between borrowing and investment rates as illustrated in the charts shown above and below. Such an approach has also provided benefits in terms of reducing the counterparty risk exposure, by having fewer investments placed in the financial markets.

5.2 Borrowing strategy and control of interest rate risk

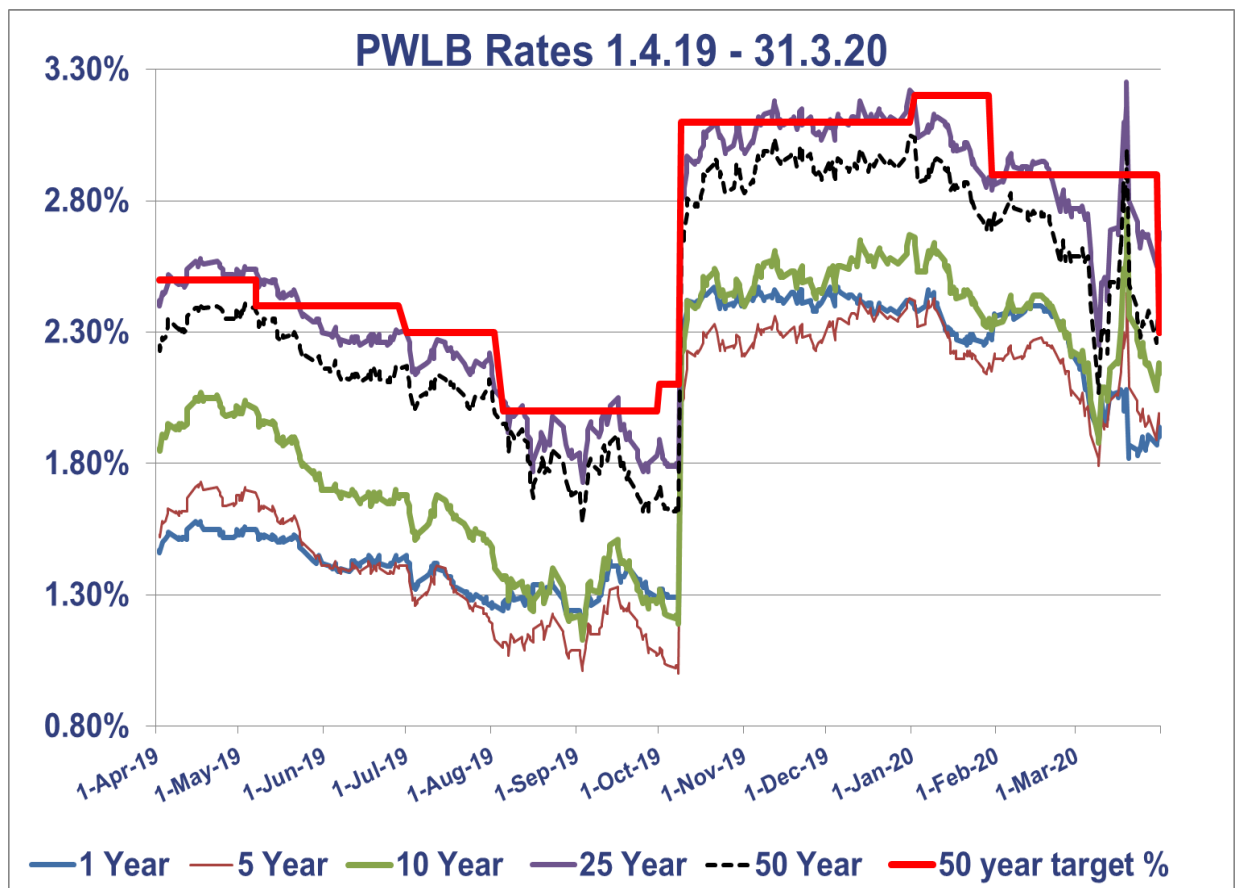
During 2019-20, the Council maintained an under-borrowed position. This meant that the capital borrowing need, (the Capital Financing Requirement), was not fully funded with loan debt, as cash supporting the Council's reserves, balances and cash flow was used as an interim measure. This strategy was prudent as investment returns were low and minimising counterparty risk on placing investments also needed to be considered.

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

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

Interest rate forecasts expected only gradual rises in medium and longer term fixed borrowing rates during 2019/20 and the two subsequent financial years. Variable, or short-term rates, were expected to be the cheaper form of borrowing over the period.

Link Asset Services Interest Rate View 31.1.20													
	Mar-20	Jun-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	Dec-21	Mar-22	Jun-21	Sep-21	Dec-21	Mar-22
Bank Rate View	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.25	1.25	1.25	1.25
3 Month LIBID	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.30	1.30	1.30
6 Month LIBID	0.80	0.80	0.90	1.00	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.40	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50
12 Month LIBID	0.90	0.90	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.30	1.40	1.50	1.60	1.70	1.70	1.70	1.70
5yr PWLB Rate	2.30	2.30	2.40	2.40	2.50	2.60	2.70	2.80	2.50	2.60	2.70	2.80	3.10
10yr PWLB Rate	2.50	2.50	2.60	2.60	2.70	2.80	2.90	3.00	2.70	2.80	2.90	3.00	3.30
25yr PWLB Rate	3.00	3.00	3.10	3.20	3.30	3.40	3.50	3.60	3.30	3.40	3.50	3.60	3.90
50yr PWLB Rate	2.90	2.90	3.00	3.10	3.20	3.30	3.40	3.50	3.20	3.30	3.40	3.50	3.80



PWLB rates are based on, and are determined by, gilt (UK Government bonds) yields through H.M. Treasury determining a specified margin to add to gilt yields. There was much speculation during the second half of 2019 that bond markets were in a bubble which was driving bond prices up and yields down to historically very low levels. The context for that was heightened expectations that the US could have been heading for a recession in 2020, and a general background of a downturn in world economic growth, especially due to fears around the impact of the trade war between the US and China, together with inflation generally at low levels in most countries and expected to remain subdued; these conditions were conducive to very low bond yields. While inflation targeting by the major central banks has been successful over the past 30 years in lowering inflation expectations, the real equilibrium rate for central rates has fallen considerably due to the high level of borrowing by consumers: this means that central banks do not need to raise rates as much now to have a major impact on consumer spending, inflation, etc. This has pulled down the overall level of interest rates and bond yields in financial markets over the past 30 years. We have therefore seen, over the past year, many bond yields up to 10 years in the Eurozone turn negative. In addition, there has, at times, been an inversion of bond yields in the US whereby 10 year yields have fallen below shorter term yields. In the past, this has been a precursor of a recession. The other side of this coin is that bond prices are elevated as investors would be expected to be moving out of riskier assets i.e. shares, in anticipation of a downturn in corporate earnings and so selling out of equities.

Gilt yields were on a generally falling trend during the past year up until the coronavirus crisis hit western economies. Since then, gilt yields have fallen sharply to unprecedented lows as investors have panicked in selling shares in anticipation of impending recessions in western economies, and moved cash into safe haven assets i.e. government bonds. However, major western central banks also started quantitative easing purchases of government bonds which will act to maintain downward pressure on government bond yields at a time when there is going to be a huge and quick expansion of government expenditure financed by issuing government bonds; (this would

normally cause bond yields to rise). At the close of the day on 31 March, all gilt yields from 1 to 5 years were between 0.12 – 0.20% while even 25-year yields were at only 0.83%.

However, HM Treasury has imposed **two changes in the margins over gilt yields for PWLB rates** in 2019-20 without any prior warning; the first on 9 October 2019, added an additional 1% margin over gilts to all PWLB rates. That increase was then partially reversed for some forms of borrowing on 11 March 2020, at the same time as the Government announced in the Budget a programme of increased spending on infrastructure expenditure. It also announced that there would be a consultation with local authorities on possibly further amending these margins; this was supposed to end on 4 June. It is clear that the Treasury intends to put a stop to local authorities borrowing money from the PWLB to purchase commercial property if the aim is solely to generate an income stream.

Following the changes on 11 March 2020 in margins over gilt yields, the current situation is as follows: -

- **PWLB Standard Rate** is gilt plus 200 basis points (G+200bps)
- **PWLB Certainty Rate** is gilt plus 180 basis points (G+180bps)
- **Local Infrastructure Rate** is gilt plus 60bps (G+60bps)

There is likely to be little upward movement in PWLB rates over the next two years as it will take national economies a prolonged period to recover all the momentum they will lose in the sharp recession that will be caused during the coronavirus shut down period. Inflation is also likely to be very low during this period and could even turn negative in some major western economies during 2020-21.

6. Investment Outturn

Investment Policy – the Council’s investment policy is governed by MHCLG investment guidance, which has been implemented in the annual investment strategy approved by the Council on 21st February 2019. 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 March 2019	31 March 2020
Earmarked reserves	9,358	9,625
CIL / Section 106	4,083	5,486
Provisions	1,362	1,385
Usable capital receipts	1,102	1,449
Cash / Debtors	4,772	4,693
Internal Borrowing	-14,486	-11,761
Total	6,191	10,877

Investments held by the Council

- The Council maintained an average balance of £12.559 million of internally managed funds.
 - Interest of £97,360 was earned on the Council's investments during 2019/20, this compares favourably to the budget of £13,000. (This excludes interest earned on the loan to ECTC.)
 - The internally managed funds earned an average rate of return of 0.775%.
 - The comparable performance indicator is the average 7-day LIBID rate, which was 0.534%.
-

TITLE: FINANCE REPORT

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 23rd July 2020

Author: Finance Manager

[V43]

1. ISSUE

1.1 This report provides Members with 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. RECOMMENDATION (S)

2.1 Members are requested to:

2.2 to approve the slippages from 2019/20 being added to the 2020/21 budget as detailed on the slippage column on appendix 3.

2.2 to note:

- This Committee has a projected yearend overspend of £553,000 when compared to its approved revenue budget of £4,655,272.
- That overall the Council has a projected yearend overspend of £496,000 when compared to its approved revenue budget of £13,278,311.
- That the overall position for the Council on Capital is a projected outturn of £5,199,116, which is an overspend of £10,000 when compared to its revised budget of £5,189,116.

3. BACKGROUND / OPTIONS

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 first report for the 2020/21 financial year and details actual expenditure incurred and income received as at 30th June 2020 and projections as to the yearend position at this time.

- 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 As detailed in the report to Full Council on the 16th July, there will be significant implications on the Council's budget from the Covid-19 pandemic. For this report the total Covid-19 related outturn forecast is shown on one line, with non-covid variances being shown on respective service lines. The Covid-19 figure is that detailed in the report to Full council on the 16th July.
- 3.5 The detailed revenue budget position for the Operational Services Committee is shown in appendix 2. There are two forecast underspends being reported at this time, these being the saving from bringing homelessness support, previously undertaken by the CAB in-house and Customer Services where there was a staff vacancy throughout the first quarter.
- 3.6 With regard to Finance & Assets Committee, the significant variances of actual spend compared to profiled budgeted spend at the end of June 2020, where no variance is forecast for yearend, are detailed below:

Service	Variance £	Explanation
Corporate Management Local Plans Museum(Old Gaol) Financial Services	(£23,906) (£100,890) (£12,112) (£43,479)	These budgets have accruals from 2019/20 that remain unpaid or have external income brought forward into 2020/21
Economic Development	(£45,897)	The charge of Littleport Wi-Fi to Cambridgeshire County Council has been undertaken in advance, but costs will be incurred throughout the year.
Housing Strategy	(£55,979)	Staff Savings in the first quarter of 2020/21
Miscellaneous Finance	£213,806	Insurance invoice paid and will be allocated to service areas in July 2020
Cost of Other Elections Local Elections	(£40,375) (£22,205)	Roll over of income from 2019/20 to fund future elections
Registration of Electors	(41,611)	This relates to income received in advance for individual electoral registration

- 3.7 Explanations for the forecast yearend variances reported for this Committee are detailed in the table on the next page:

Service	Variance £	Explanation
Covid-19	£553,000	Various increases in expenditure and reductions in income, matched to some extent from Government grant provided to support councils through the pandemic. See 16 th July Council report for full details.

Capital

- 3.8 The Council's capital programme for 2020/21 (appendix 3) has had £1,596,590 slippage from 2019-20 applied, this change results in the total capital programme value for 2020-21 of £5,189,116. Committee is asked to approve the carry forward of this slippage as it relates to underspends in 2019-20 caused by timing issues, as opposed to genuine underspends on schemes. This funding is therefore needed in 2020-21 in order to fund the expenditure that is still expected to be incurred in the coming year.
- 3.9 The £1,596,590 of funding to be carried forward relates to a number of schemes; disabled facilities grant (where there is a time delay between funding being allocated to schemes and the actual work being undertaken, resulting in a number of schemes being completed in the following year), the purchase of the Riverside Moorings from the Environment Agency is expected to take place later this year; the extension of the Commuter car park which was delayed and the previously approved funding of the Trading Company, which has not yet been drawn down.
- 3.10 There is one yearend variation forecast at this time, this relates to the purchase of wheeled bins. It was originally anticipated that the purchase and distribution of these would be actioned via East Cambs Street Scene, but as these need to remain as an asset to the Council, it is now felt appropriate that the cost of these is charged to the Council's capital budget.

4 ARGUMENTS / CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The projected net revenue expenditure for the Council is forecast to be £13,774,311 in 2020/21. This would give an overspend of £496,000 compared to the Council's approved budget.
- 4.2 The projected Capital Outturn for the Council stands at £5,199,116. This reflects an overspend of £10,000 when compared to the revised budget.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 There is a revenue overspend of £496,000 compared to this Council's approved budget, all things being equal, this will be a further draw from the Surplus Savings Reserve at yearend.
- 5.2 Equality Impact Assessment (INRA) not required.
- 5.3 Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) not required.

6 APPENDICES

- 6.1 Appendix 1 – Summary Budget Monitoring – June 2020
Appendix 2 – Operational Services Budget Monitoring – June 2020
Appendix 3 – Capital Budget Monitoring – June 2020

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
Council Budget as approved by Council on the 20 th February 2020	Room 104 The Grange Ely	Ian Smith Finance Manager Tel: (01353) 616470 E-mail: ian.smith@eastcambs.gov.uk
Full Council report on the impact of Covid-19 on the Council's Finances on the 16 th July, agenda item 10		

FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - 30th June 2020

	Total Budget 2020-21	Profiled Budget to 30 June 2020	Actual to 30 June 2020	Variance	Projected Outturn	Variance between Total Budget & Projected Outturn
Revenue	£		£	£	£	£
Asset Management	141,918	--	(4,950)	4,950	141,918	--
Award Ditches	8,829	2,207	--	(2,207)	8,829	--
Civic Relations	21,794	5,458	1,722	(3,736)	21,794	--
Closed Churchyards	29,086	7,271	23	(7,248)	29,086	--
Community Safety	--	--	--	--	--	--
Community Transport	15,000	--	--	--	15,000	--
Corporate Management	170,724	128	(23,778)	(23,906)	170,724	--
Cost of Other Elections	--	--	(40,375)	(40,375)	--	--
Council Tax Accounting	422,337	61,888	56,158	(5,730)	422,337	--
Data Management	99,024	24,763	23,488	(1,275)	99,024	--
Depot Services	--	19,971	19,971	--	--	--
Economic Development	(13,155)	(2,679)	(48,576)	(45,897)	(13,155)	--
Financial Services	335,662	83,915	40,436	(43,479)	335,662	--
General Gang	117,565	8,729	8,729	--	117,565	--
Health & Safety (Work)	22,280	5,570	--	(5,570)	22,280	--
Housing Benefits	373,717	(546,571)	(556,244)	(9,673)	373,717	--
Housing Strategic	210,597	77,979	22,000	(55,979)	210,597	--
Human Resources	186,883	46,266	37,910	(8,356)	186,883	--
Interest & Financial Transactions	(142,347)	13,146	13,146	--	(142,347)	--
Internal Audit	70,855	--	--	--	70,855	--
Land Charges Admin	(59,353)	(13,338)	(13,651)	(313)	(59,353)	--
Legal	221,889	55,472	55,688	216	221,889	--
Leisure Centre	(396,613)	6,000	201	(5,799)	(396,613)	--
Local Elections	22,500	--	(22,205)	(22,205)	22,500	--
Local Plans	95,000	23,750	(77,140)	(100,890)	95,000	--
Management Team	296,018	78,929	71,925	(7,004)	296,018	--
Member & Committee Support	498,187	124,339	116,036	(8,303)	498,187	--
Mepal Outdoor Centre	22,900	22,525	25,140	2,615	22,900	--
Miscellaneous Properties	(45,124)	(10,719)	(12,766)	(2,047)	(45,124)	--
Miscellaneous Finance	831,648	69,878	283,684	213,806	831,648	--
Movement in Corporate Reserves	--	--	--	--	--	--
Museums - Old Gaol House	--	--	(12,112)	(12,112)	--	--
NNDR Collection Costs	42,040	34,807	32,688	(2,119)	42,040	--
Office Accommodation	355,278	141,069	135,201	(5,868)	355,278	--
Oliver Cromwell House	--	--	--	--	--	--
Out Of Hours call out Service	15,000	3,750	278	(3,472)	15,000	--
Parking Of Vehicles	(44,514)	94,708	143,388	48,680	(44,514)	--
Parks And Gardens Team	261,832	148,264	148,264	--	261,832	--
Payroll	63,485	15,871	11,386	(4,485)	63,485	--
Public Conveniences	150,988	50,145	55,590	5,445	150,988	--
Refuse Collection	--	8,171	8,171	--	--	--
Registration of Electors	53,371	8,554	(33,057)	(41,611)	53,371	--
Reprographics	111,559	28,055	25,412	(2,643)	111,559	--
Sport & Recreation	88,412	(2,752)	(12,593)	(9,841)	88,412	--
Covid 19			(930,510)	(930,510)	553,000	553,000
Finance & Assets Committee Total	4,655,272	695,519	(451,322)	(1,136,941)	5,208,272	553,000
Operational Services Committee	5,650,903	1,386,988	624,036	(762,952)	5,593,903	(57,000)
Other Spend						
Parish Precepts	2,470,158	1,235,079	1,235,080	1	2,470,158	--
Internal Drainage Boards	501,978	250,989	247,484	(3,505)	501,978	--
Revenue Budget Total	13,278,311	3,568,575	1,655,278	(1,903,397)	13,774,311	496,000
Funding						
Council Tax	(6,820,563)	--	--	--	(6,820,563)	--
Revenue Support Grant	(11,764)	--	(1,059)	(1,059)	(11,764)	--
Business Rates	(4,455,162)	--	--	--	(4,455,162)	--
Other Government Grants (NHB / RSG etc.)	(965,176)	(214,211)	(3,916,761)	(4,130,972)	(965,176)	--
Budgeted draw from Surplus Savings Reserve	(1,025,646)	(322,885)	--	(322,885)	(1,025,646)	--
	(13,278,311)	(537,096)	(3,917,820)	(4,454,916)	(13,278,311)	--
Revenue Total	--	3,031,479	(2,262,542)	(6,358,313)	496,000	496,000

OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - JUNE 2020

	Total Budget 2020-21	Profiled Budget to 30 June 2020	Actual to 30 June 2020	Variance to date	Projected Outturn	Variance between Total Budget & Projected Outturn
Revenue	£	£	£	£	£	£
Building Regulations	27,520	6,880	7,039	159	27,520	
CIL	(0)	2,000	(77,203)	(79,203)	--	
Civic Amenities Act	11,428	2,232	2,176	(56)	11,428	
Community Projects & Grants	221,578	45,765	3,078	(42,687)	174,578	(47,000)
Community Safety	50,834	5,391	(27,204)	(32,595)	50,834	
Cons.Area & Listed Buildings	60,578	15,145	14,864	(281)	60,578	
Customer Services	465,859	119,550	108,820	(10,730)	455,859	(10,000)
Dog Warden Scheme	34,512	8,815	6,840	(1,975)	34,512	
Ely Markets	(0)	23,397	23,397	--	--	
Emergency Planning	28,088	5,603	8,835	3,232	28,088	
Environmental Issues	90,260	19,565	14,482	(5,083)	90,260	
Health - Admin. & Misc.	407,059	104,948	96,082	(8,866)	407,059	
Homelessness	372,074	(114,734)	(664,084)	(549,350)	372,074	
IT	801,156	312,864	311,624	(1,240)	801,156	
Licencing	(899)	(225)	2,266	2,491	(899)	
Marketing & Grants	66,345	47,501	37,017	(10,484)	66,345	
National Practitioner Support Programme	--	--	--	--	--	
Neighbourhood Panels	1,500	375	--	(375)	1,500	
Nuisance Investigation	70,970	17,742	17,428	(314)	70,970	
Performance Management	10,400	2,600	--	(2,600)	10,400	
Pest Control	9,090	2,272	2,134	(138)	9,090	
Planning	(16,131)	(38,950)	(56,845)	(17,895)	(16,131)	
Public Relations	75,172	6,793	6,000	(793)	75,172	
Refuge Recycling	952,785	225,605	225,605	--	952,785	
Refuse Collection	1,177,951	356,163	356,163	--	1,177,951	
Renovation Grants	--	--	--	--	--	
Street Cleansing	689,469	173,763	173,763	--	689,469	
Street Naming & Numbering	7,896	1,974	2,158	184	7,896	
Travellers Sites	(20,000)	20,102	20,102	--	(20,000)	--
Tree Preservation	55,409	13,852	9,499	(4,353)	55,409	--
Revenue Total	5,650,903	1,386,988	624,036	(762,952)	5,593,903	(57,000)

CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2020/21

Capital	Published Budget 2020-21 £	Slippage from 2019-20 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2020-21 £	Actual at 30th June 2020 £	Forecast Outturn £	Variance between Revised Budget & Forecast Outturn £
OPERATIONAL SERVICES							
Conservation Area Schemes - 2nd round		27,506		27,506		27,506	0
Refuse & Cleansing Vehicles	1,882,077			1,882,077		1,882,077	0
Waste - Wheelied Bins					8,272	10,000	10,000
Depot	745,950	100,000		845,950		845,950	0
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants	697,299	94,417		791,716	-152,725	791,716	0
Empty Properties, Discretionary DFGs, Minor Works, Home Repair Asst.	75,000			75,000	-2,746	75,000	0
Vehicle Etc. Replacements	29,000	89,187		118,187		118,187	0
Leisure Centre						0	0
FINANCE & ASSETS							
East Cambs Trading Company - original		280,000		280,000	150,000	280,000	0
East Cambs Trading Company - MOD		300,000		300,000		300,000	0
Riverside Moorings		289,500		289,500		289,500	0
Internet / HR / Payroll System		15,980		15,980		15,980	0
Commuter Car Park - Ely (additional)		400,000		400,000		400,000	0
Extension to Ely Country Park	163,200			163,200		163,200	0
Total	3,592,526	1,596,590	0	5,189,116	2,801	5,199,116	10,000

SOURCES OF FINANCING	Published Budget 2020-21 £	Slippage from 2019-20 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2020-21 £	Variations £	Forecast Outturn £
Operational Services						
Grants / Contributions (DFG)	526,577			526,577		526,577
Revenue Contribution		89,187		89,187		89,187
Capital Receipts	245,722	94,417		340,139		340,139
Borrowing - Waste	2,628,027	100,000		2,728,027	0	2,728,027
Section 106 / CIL	29,000	27,506		56,506		56,506
Operational Services Total	3,429,326	311,110	0	3,740,436	0	3,740,436
Finance & Assets						
Capital Receipts		305,480		305,480		305,480
Section 106 / CIL	163,200	400,000		563,200		563,200
Borrowing - Company	0	580,000		580,000	0	580,000
Finance & Assets Total	163,200	1,285,480	0	1,448,680	0	1,448,680
Capital Funding Total	3,592,526	1,596,590	0	5,189,116	0	5,189,116

Capital Resources Forecast	Published Budget 2020-21 £	Slippage from 2019-20 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2020-21 £	Variations £	Forecast Outturn £
Balance Brought Forward	463,173	921,751		1,384,924		1,384,924
Add receipts from Sales of Assets	2,273,500			2,273,500		2,273,500
Less Capital Receipts Applied	(245,722)	(399,897)		(645,619)		(645,619)
Capital Reserves Carried Forward	2,490,951	521,854	0	3,012,805	0	3,012,805

Borrowing	Published Budget 2020-21 £	Slippage from 2019-20 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2020-21 £	Variations £	Forecast Outturn £
Balance Brought Forward	13,145,749	(1,384,891)		11,760,858		11,760,858
Less MRP Applied	(499,058)			(499,058)	0	(499,058)
Repayment from ECTC	(3,620,000)	(1,180,000)		(4,800,000)	0	(4,800,000)
Add additional Borrowing Applied	2,628,027	680,000		3,308,027	0	3,308,027
Borrowing Carried Forward	11,654,718	(1,884,891)	0	9,769,827	0	9,769,827

TITLE: FINANCE REPORT

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 23rd July 2020

Author: Finance Manager

[V44]

1. ISSUE

1.1 This report provides Members with 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. RECOMMENDATION (S)

2.1 Members are requested to note:

- This Committee has a yearend underspend of £807,631 when compared to its approved revenue budget of £5,181,667.
- That overall the Council has a yearend underspend of £1,690,450 when compared to its approved revenue budget of £13,445,801.
- That the overall position for the Council on Capital is an outturn of £2,363,745, which is an underspend of £8,772,060 when compared to its revised budget.

3. BACKGROUND / OPTIONS

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 2019-20 financial year and details actual expenditure incurred and income earned as at 31st March 2020.

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 shown in summary.

3.4 The detailed revenue budget position for the Operational Services Committee is shown in appendix 2. A report explaining the variances for this Committee was presented to the Operational Services Committee on the 20th July 2020.

3.5 In summary the most significant outturn expenditure variances within Operational Services Committee are:

- Three overspends relate to Customer Services and Environment caused by the pay review (budgeted for within F&A Committee (see Miscellaneous Finance below) and Planning where we had to employ extra external staff resource to cope with in the increase workload and to cover staff vacancies.
- The underspends are in ICT and Street naming and numbering where there were delays in staff recruitment; in Community Projects and Grants where despite two campaigns there was only a limited number of applicants, and Licencing where there was an increased amount of income from taxi operators and Animal welfare. Staff savings were also achieved in Performance Management where the post was left unfilled.

3.6 Explanations for the forecast yearend variances reported for this Committee are detailed in the below table:

Service	Variance £	Explanation
Economic Development	(£37,751)	This relates to an increase in the rental income for E-space North. With the short-term nature of many of the leases at the Council's business centre, it was difficult to determine overall income levels until very late in the financial year.
Financial Services	(£39,884)	Underspend on staff due to a vacancy within the team and reduced consultancy support costs as more work was undertaken by core staff within the team.
Housing Benefit	(£106,911)	The Housing Benefit budget was built using information as at August 2018, the most up-to-date information available at the time. However, the final position reported is based on true costs in the year, which have resulted in the underspend shown.
Housing Strategic	(£228,853)	CIL admin grant of £150,000 was allocated at yearend to assist in funding of this service. There was also staff/consultancy savings during the year.
Land Admin Charges	£29,718	Due to the housing market slowing down in the latter part of the year, Search fees and Con 29 were substantially reduced during this period.

Legal	(£49,973)	There was an underspend on the staff budget in the first half of 2019/20 while there were vacancies within the Team and the role of Planning Lawyer was covered by a part time member of staff. There was also an increase in chargeable fees for the Legal Team in the final quarter.
Local Plans	19,146	Additional costs associated with the SLA between the Council and Peterborough City Council linked to additional climate change work between October and March.
Management Team	(£101,205)	This relates to income generated from the secondment of senior staff at the Council to the Combined Authority.
Miscellaneous Properties	£34,521/ (£29,156)	With the delay in determining plans for the on-going use of Mepal Outdoor Centre, the Council has been required to pick up costs for the site, including Business Rates and security. This is mostly matched by savings on other properties in the District.
Miscellaneous Finance	(£388,656)	No external borrowing was required during the year, resulting in a saving on the external interest budget. The amount of Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) contribution was also reduced as more CIL was allocated to the Leisure Centre in 2018/19 than originally planned, reducing the amount of borrowing required and also MRP is now being paid over 25 years on the Centre, rather than 20 years, as detailed in the Treasury Management Report. A contingency for the additional costs of the pay review was built into this cost centre, with the review having now been implemented, any additional costs have been charged to appropriate cost centres and so this provision has been declared surplus.
Movement in Corporate Reserves	£286,331	This mostly relates to transferring the additional Business Rates received from the Enterprise Zone to Reserve (see Funding - Business Rates below).
Out of hours call out Service	(£14,140)	There has been a saving on this budget in year. The budget for 2020/21 has been reduced to reflect this.

Parking of Vehicles	(£59,190)	An increase in usage over that anticipated when the budget was set for the commuter car parks in Ely and Littleport has resulted in greater income than forecast for 2019/20.
Payroll	£17,360	An overspend on salary costs has occurred as a result of the pay review. Also there were unexpected system costs from MHR.
Public conveniences	£30,329	An overspend on salary costs has occurred as a result of the pay review.
Sports & Recreation	(£15,674)	A number of grants were awarded during the year, but not to the full value of the budget.
Funding - Business Rates	(£700,301)	During the year the Council gained additional Business Rate receipts in relation to its Enterprise Zone and renewable energy, both of which are retained by the Council, rather than being shared as part of the overall Collection Fund. We also received the final instalment of the Cambridgeshire Business Rate deal money from Government and this proved to be higher than had been anticipated.
Funding - Other Government Grants	(£60,093)	The Government provided councils with un-ringfenced grant to support them through the Brexit process

- 3.6 The Council's capital programme for 2019/20 (appendix 3) contains the slippage from 2018/19 and the revised value of Disabled Facilities Grant for this year (this was notified to us after the budget was set). These two changes resulted in the total capital programme budget for 2019/20 of £11,135,805.
- 3.7 The Council underspent its revised budget by £8,772,060. This mainly relates to the Soham Eastern Gateway project, where the County Council decided that it no longer wanted to apply for the Housing Infrastructure Fund funding for the development in Soham. And, further the Trading Company has not yet drawn down the full value of the loan facility offered to it by the Council. Indeed, ECTC repaid the Council an initial £1.7 million of the original loan in December 2019.
- 3.8 There is also an underspend on Operational Services capital, as a consequence of delays with the improvements to the Depot at Littleport as further costings are obtained to ensure that best value for money is achieved.

Reserves

- 3.9 The Council's movements in Reserves for the year are detailed in appendix 4, this shows that the General Fund has increased to remain at the 10% of the net budget as agreed at Council. Other Earmarked Reserves (excluding CIL) increased by £232,066.
- 3.10 As a consequence of movements within year, the Council's Surplus Savings Reserve now stands at £7,017,799, an increase of £783,148. This accounts for the initial draw from the reserve as detailed in the budget, the underspend reported in this report and movements from the New Homes Bonus Reserve and Cambridgeshire Deal Business Rate reserve, both of which had previously been agreed by Council.

4 ARGUMENTS / CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The projected net revenue expenditure for the Council is £12,515,744 in 2019/20. This equates to an underspend of £1,690,450 when compared to the Council's approved budget.
- 4.2 The projected Capital outturn for the Council stands at £2,363,745. This reflects an under spend of £ 8,772,060 when compared to the revised budget.

5 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 There is a revenue underspend of £1,690,450 compared to this Council's approved budget, this has been transferred to the Surplus Savings Reserve and will now become available to support the Council's MTFS in future years.
- 5.2 Equality Impact Assessment (INRA) not required.
- 5.3 Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) not required.

6 APPENDICES

- 6.1 Appendix 1 – Summary Outturn Report
Appendix 2 – Operational Services Outturn Report
Appendix 3 – Capital Outturn Report
Appendix 4 – Reserve Accounts

Background Documents

Location

Contact Officer

Council Budget as approved by
Council on the 21st February
2019

Room 104
The Grange
Ely

Ian Smith
Finance Manager
Tel: (01353) 616470
E-mail: ian.smith@eastcambs.gov.uk

FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - 31st March 2020

	Budget 2019-20	Actual to 31st March 2020	Variance	Variance between Budget & Projected Outturn previous quarter
Revenue	£	£	£	£
Asset Management	15,926	(20,934)	(36,860)	--
Award Ditches	8,829	12,922	4,093	--
Civic Relations	13,292	9,023	(4,269)	--
Closed Churchyards	29,086	20,876	(8,210)	--
Community Safety	--	--	--	--
Community Transport	15,000	15,000	--	--
Corporate Management	173,016	130,768	(42,248)	--
Cost of Other Elections	--	--	--	--
Council Tax Accounting	402,508	406,536	4,028	--
Data Management	95,352	99,770	4,418	--
Depot Services	--	--	--	--
Economic Development	23,006	(14,565)	(37,571)	(27,000)
Financial Services	329,265	289,382	(39,884)	(25,000)
General Gang	111,987	70,142	(41,845)	--
Health & Safety (Work)	14,000	19,100	5,100	--
Housing Benefits	338,516	231,605	(106,911)	(83,000)
Housing Strategic	244,191	15,338	(228,853)	--
Human Resources	186,195	172,070	(14,125)	--
Interest & Financial Transactions	(225,916)	(243,976)	(18,060)	(40,000)
Internal Audit	71,710	66,979	(4,731)	--
Land Charges Admin	(97,602)	(67,884)	29,718	--
Legal	241,452	191,479	(49,973)	(15,000)
Leisure Centre	(311,937)	(343,678)	(31,741)	--
Local Elections	22,500	22,500	--	--
Local Plans	91,000	110,146	19,146	--
Management Team	447,732	346,527	(101,205)	(100,000)
Member & Committee Support	481,990	480,046	(1,944)	17,000
Mepal Outdoor Centre	--	34,521	34,521	8,000
Miscellaneous Properties	(18,039)	(47,195)	(29,156)	--
Miscellaneous Finance	1,170,878	782,222	(388,656)	(340,000)
Movement in Corporate Reserves	(58,006)	228,325	286,331	--
Museums - Old Gaol House	52,982	53,105	123	--
NNDR Collection Costs	36,867	42,192	5,325	--
Office Accomodation	436,688	445,115	8,427	--
Oliver Cromwell House	--	(5,407)	(5,407)	--
Out Of Hours call out Service	20,000	5,860	(14,140)	(10,000)
Parking Of Vehicles	(22,638)	(81,828)	(59,190)	(20,000)
Parks And Gardens Team	384,896	417,265	32,369	--
Payroll	53,833	71,463	17,630	10,000
Public Conveniences	151,910	182,239	30,329	18,000
Refuse Collection	--	--	--	--
Registration of Electors	58,431	55,185	(3,246)	(3,500)
Reprographics	106,121	98,631	(7,490)	--
Sport & Recreation	86,646	70,972	(15,674)	(16,000)
COVID-19		2,200	2,200	--
Finance & Assets Committee Total	5,181,667	4,374,036	(807,631)	(626,500)
Operational Services Committee	5,516,770	5,394,350	(122,421)	(1,000)
Other Spend				
Parish Precepts	2,255,224	2,255,224	(0)	--
Internal Drainage Boards	492,140	492,135	(5)	(5)
Revenue Budget Total	13,445,801	12,515,744	(930,057)	(627,505)
Funding				
Council Tax	(6,562,114)	(6,562,114)	--	--
Revenue Support Grant	(11,576)	(11,576)	--	--
Business Rates	(4,599,026)	(5,299,327)	(700,301)	--
Other Government Grants (NHB / RSG etc.)	(734,287)	(794,380)	(60,093)	--
Budgeted draw from Surplus Savings Reserve	(1,538,798)	(1,538,798)	--	--
	(13,445,801)	(14,206,195)	(760,394)	--
Revenue Total	--	(1,690,450)	(1,690,450)	(627,505)

OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**31st March 2020**

	Budget 2019-20	Actual to 31st March 2020	Variance	Variance between Budget & Projected Outturn pervious quarter
Revenue	£	£	£	£
Building Regulations	18,280	23,082	4,802	-.-
Civic Amenities Act	11,102	8,803	(2,299)	-.-
Community Projects & Grants	221,424	184,882	(36,542)	-.-
Community Safety	46,346	60,116	13,770	-.-
Cons.Area & Listed Buildings	59,701	59,625	(76)	-.-
Customer Services	359,094	404,975	45,881	45,000
Dog Warden Scheme	40,317	31,835	(8,482)	-.-
Ely Markets	(0)	(0)	0	-.-
Emergency Planning	27,808	25,943	(1,865)	-.-
Environmental Issues	85,609	86,769	1,160	-.-
Health - Admin. & Misc.	379,249	395,607	16,358	-.-
Homelessness	337,757	331,938	(5,819)	(51,000)
IT	833,281	793,361	(39,920)	-.-
Licencing	1,848	(21,101)	(22,949)	-.-
Marketing & Grants	66,119	68,558	2,439	-.-
Parish Conferences	2,000	869	(1,131)	-.-
Nuisance Investigation	65,201	69,786	4,585	-.-
Performance Management	56,486	26,522	(29,964)	(34,000)
Pest Control	8,055	8,706	651	-.-
Planning	(80,821)	(63,843)	16,978	50,000
Public Relations	74,435	72,786	(1,649)	-.-
Refuge Recycling	840,750	832,058	(8,692)	-.-
Refuse Collection	1,370,393	1,325,012	(45,381)	-.-
Renovation Grants	1,300	133	(1,167)	-.-
Street Cleansing	609,548	606,866	(2,683)	-.-
Street Naming & Numbering	3,062	(14,196)	(17,258)	(11,000)
Town Centres	-.-	406	406	-.-
Travellers Sites	(20,000)	(20,000)	-.-	-.-
Tree Preservation	98,426	94,851	(3,575)	-.-
Revenue Total	5,516,770	5,394,350	(122,421)	(1,000)

CAPITAL OUTTURN 2019/20

Capital	Published Budget 2019-20 £	Slippage from 2018-19 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2019-20 £	Actual £	Variance between Revised Budget & Actual £
OPERATIONAL SERVICES						
Conservation Area Schemes - 2nd round		27,506		27,506		(27,506)
Refuse & Cleansing Vehicles	52,450			52,450		(52,450)
Depot	795,950	50,000		845,950		(845,950)
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants	697,299	368,231	15,278	1,080,808	986,391	(94,417)
Empty Properties, Discretionary DFGs, Minor Works, Home Repair Asst.	75,000	3,619		78,619	53,824	(24,795)
Vehicle Etc. Replacements	29,000	89,187		118,187		(118,187)
Waste - Wheeled Bins					13,395	13,395
Ely Country Park	6,670			6,670		(6,670)
FINANCE & ASSETS						
East Cambs Trading Company - original	380,000			380,000	100,000	(280,000)
East Cambs Trading Company - MOD	1,500,000			1,500,000	1,200,000	(300,000)
Riverside Moorings		289,500		289,500		(289,500)
Internet / HR / Payroll System		26,115		26,115	10,135	(15,980)
Commuter Car Park - Ely (additional)	400,000			400,000		(400,000)
Soham Eastern Gateway	6,330,000			6,330,000		(6,330,000)
Total	10,266,369	854,158	15,278	11,135,805	2,363,745	(8,772,060)

SOURCES OF FINANCING	Published Budget 2019-20 £	Slippage from 2018-19 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2019-20 £	Variences £	Outturn £
Operational Services						
Grants / Contributions (DFG)	511,299		15,278	526,577		526,577
Revenue Contribution		89,187		89,187	(75,792)	13,395
Capital Receipts	261,000	371,850		632,850	(119,212)	513,638
Borrowing - Waste	848,400	50,000		898,400	(898,400)	0
Borrowing - Leisure Centre					(1,832,441)	-1,832,441
Section 106 / CIL	35,670	27,506		63,176	1,769,265	1,832,441
Operational Services Total	1,656,369	538,543	15,278	2,210,190	(1,156,580)	1,053,610
Finance & Assets						
Capital Receipts		315,615		315,615	(305,480)	10,135
Section 106 / CIL	400,000	0		400,000	(400,000)	0
Grants (Housing Infrastructure Fund)	6,330,000	0		6,330,000	(6,330,000)	0
Borrowing - Company	1,880,000	0		1,880,000	(580,000)	1,300,000
Finance & Assets Total	8,610,000	315,615	0	8,925,615	(7,615,480)	1,310,135
Capital Funding Total	10,266,369	854,158	15,278	11,135,805	(8,772,060)	2,363,745

Capital Resources Forecast	Published Budget 2019-20 £	Slippage from 2018-19 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2019-20 £	Variences £	Outturn £
Balance Brought Forward	720,787	640,851		1,361,638		1,361,638
Add receipts from Sales of Assets	50,000			50,000	497,059	547,059
Less Capital Receipts Applied	(261,000)	(687,465)		(948,465)	424,692	(523,773)
Capital Reserves Carried Forward	509,787	(46,614)	0	463,173	921,751	1,384,924

Borrowing	Published Budget 2019-20 £	Slippage from 2018-19 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2019-20 £	Variences £	Outturn £
Balance Brought Forward	15,386,292	(899,763)		14,486,529		14,486,529
Less MRP Applied	(627,470)			(627,470)	134,240	(493,230)
Repayment from ECTC					(1,700,000)	(1,700,000)
Add additional Borrowing Applied	2,728,400	50,000		2,778,400	(3,310,841)	(532,441)
Borrowing Carried Forward	17,487,222	(849,763)	0	16,637,459	(4,876,601)	11,760,858

Reserve Accounts

Description	2019/20			
	Opening Balance 1 April	Transfers to Reserve	Contributions from Reserve	Forecast Balance 31 March
	£	£	£	£
District Elections	73,185		(73,185)	0
Historic Buildings Grants	6,190			6,190
Housing Conditions Survey	35,000	5,000		40,000
Building Control	23,155			23,155
Change Management	284,015		(47,271)	236,744
Major Project Development	100,000			100,000
Asset Management	26,690		(26,690)	0
Leisure	0			0
Surplus Savings Reserve	6,234,651	2,321,947	(1,538,798)	7,017,799
Vehicle Replacements	89,187			89,187
New Homes Bonus	577,682		(532,997)	44,685
Leisure Centre - sinking fund	(42,953)		(1,733)	(44,685)
Insurance	16,343			16,343
IT	0	40,000		40,000
CIL	1,690,698	3,360,834	(1,832,441)	3,219,091
CIL Admin	267,681	108,878	(150,000)	226,560
Care and Repair	45,000			45,000
Wheeled Bins Reserve	10,000		(10,000)	0
Community Fund Reserves	14,884			14,884
Housing	79,547			79,547
Affordable Housing	294,070	52,080		346,150
General Fund Balance	1,010,837	34,792		1,045,629
MTFS Reserve	0			0
Commercial Invest to Save	20,000			20,000
External Elections	0			0
CLT Grant Applications	19,000	1,000		20,000
Weekly Waste Collection Grant	0			0
Travellers' Sites	0	4,357		4,357
Enterprise Zone NNDR	75,600	286,653	(108,676)	253,577
Economic Development	98,500		(98,500)	0
Business Rates Retention Pilot	0			0
Other				
Section 106 Agreements	2,392,542	198,541	(323,633)	2,267,451
Internal Borrowing	(14,486,530)	2,725,671		(11,760,859)
Total Reserves	(1,045,023)	9,139,754	(4,743,923)	3,350,807

Reserves for Statement of Accounts	11,048,964	6,215,541	(4,420,290)	12,844,215
General Fund	1,010,837	34,792	0	1,045,629
CIL	1,690,698	3,360,834	(1,832,441)	3,219,091
Earmarked Reserves	8,347,429	2,819,915	(2,587,849)	8,579,495
Increase in Earmarked Reserves				(232,066)

**TITLE: BUS SERVICES AND CYCLING AND WALKING ROUTES
CONSULTATION UPDATE**

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 23rd July 2020

Author: Infrastructure and Strategy Manager

[V45]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To receive an update on the Bus Services and Cycling and Walking Routes consultation.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 Members are requested to note the report.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The aim of the Bus Services and Cycling and Walking Routes consultation was to identify key bus services, identify new cycling and walking routes and obtain feedback regarding existing cycle paths/footpaths that are in disrepair and where safe crossing points are needed.

3.2 The consultation commenced on 9th March and ended on 31st May. The deadline was extended by 6 weeks, due to the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions resulting in the closure of many of the drop-box locations.

3.3 The questionnaire was available online on the District Council website and a copy was delivered by Royal Mail to every home in the district. Drop-boxes to enable people to return their questionnaire locally were provided in shops, pubs and community facilities.

3.4 District Councillors also arranged sessions to meet with local residents and capture their proposals for new bus, cycling and walking routes. However, the majority of these were cancelled as a result to the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.

4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The following number of responses was received for each of the questionnaires:

- Bus services questionnaire – 1,458 responses
- Cycling questionnaire – 1,186 responses
- Walking questionnaire – 866 responses

4.2 In addition to the questionnaire responses, 44 emails containing comments were received via the buscyclewalk@eastcambs.gov.uk email address and a number of bus, cycling and walking related comments were received by the Council via the Climate Change Ideas Forum. All of these comments will be incorporated into the consultation feedback report.

4.3 Officers are currently analysing the feedback received. The bus services consultation feedback will be presented to a future meeting of the Bus Services Review Working Party, the cycling and walking feedback will be presented to a future meeting of the COVID-19 Working Party.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required.

5.3 Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) not required.

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 None.

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
None	Room 12 The Grange, Ely	Sally Bonnett Infrastructure and Strategy Manager (01353) 61645 sally.bonnett@eastcambs.gov.uk

TITLE: ASSETS UPDATE

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 23 July 2020

Author: Director Commercial and Open Spaces & Facilities Manager

[V46]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To receive an update on Council owned assets.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are requested to note the update on Council owned assets.

3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

3.1 On 26 September 2019 (Agenda Item 16) 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 **Maltings Cottage, Ely**

On 18 June 2020, a short update was provided to inform Members that a building condition survey had been carried out at Maltings Cottage, Ely with an undertaking to provide a fuller briefing.

The survey has identified immediate works to be carried out by City of Ely Council, who lease Maltings Cottage, to make good the premises and prevent further deterioration.

Full detail and the recommended action to be taken is provided in an exempt report elsewhere on the agenda.

3.3 **70 Market Street, Ely**

On 18 June 2020 Members were provided with an update on the current position of 70 Market Street, Ely.

Citizens Advice Rural Cambridgeshire has now vacated the premises. Final arrangements are being made to market the site. Further information will be provided to Members when it is available.

Once the site has been marketed and a potential occupier has been identified a recommendation will be brought to Finance & Assets Committee.

3.4 Council Owned Public Open Space

During the COVID-19 lockdown period the Council did not close its public open spaces. It did however close the playgrounds contained within the open spaces (as required by government). Appropriate signage was placed in all open spaces managed and/or owned by the Council. Advice was offered to all Parish Councils on any actions they should take and assistance to print and erect signs was also provided.

The lockdown restrictions are starting to be lifted and as such the Council has now re-opened the playgrounds (as required by government). A full risk assessment has been completed to cover the changed position. Appropriate signage has been placed in all open spaces managed and/or owned by the Council. A copy of the Councils risk assessment has been provided to all Parish Councils to assist them with managing playgrounds that they are responsible for.

3.5 Public Conveniences

The Causeway, Burwell

Members will recall that the Public Conveniences at The Causeway, Burwell were to be transferred to Burwell Parish Council. The transfer has now been completed and the freehold has been transferred to Burwell Parish Council.

Carter Street, Fordham

Members will recall that the Public Conveniences at Carter Street, Fordham were to be transferred to Fordham Parish Council. The transfer has now been completed and the freehold has been transferred to Fordham Parish Council.

Both Burwell Parish Council and Fordham Parish Council will operate the public conveniences once refurbishment work has been carried out.

Public Conveniences- Ship Lane, Ely and Palace Green, Ely

During the COVID-19 period both of these locations were closed. Both of these locations are have now been re-opened. At the request of the police the public conveniences at Ship Lane, Ely opening times have been amended for a temporary period; the opening times have been extended until 9pm. This decision will be reviewed at the end of Summer 2020.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 There are no financial implication arising from this report.

4.2 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required.

4.3 A Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) is not required.

5.0 APPENDICES

5.1 None

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
Finance & Assets Committee- 26 September 2019- Agenda Item 16	Room 106, The Grange, Ely	Spencer Clark Open Spaces & Facilities Manager (01353) 616960 E-mail: spencer.clark@eastcambs.gov.uk

FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE
ANNUAL AGENDA PLAN

AGENDA ITEM NO 16

LEAD OFFICER(S): Emma Grima, Director Commercial

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: Janis Murfet

Meeting on: Thursday 23 July 2020 4.30pm			Meeting on: Thursday, 24 September 2020 4.30pm			Meeting on: Thursday, 26 November 2020 4.30pm		
Agenda Planning meeting:			Agenda Planning meeting:			Agenda Planning meeting:		
Pre-meeting briefing:			Pre-meeting briefing:			Pre-meeting briefing:		
Deadline for reports/dispatch:	4pm Monday 13 July 2020	Wednesday 15 July 2020	Deadline for reports/dispatch:	4pm Monday 14 September 2020	Wednesday 16 September 2020	Deadline for reports/dispatch:	4pm Monday, 16 November 2020	Wednesday 18 November 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairman's Announcements Internal Audit Annual Report & Opinion Draft Annual Governance Statement Financial Outturn Report 2019/20 Treasury Operations Annual Performance Review Assets Update Forward Agenda Plan Bus Services & Cycling & Walking Routes Consultation Update ECDC Environment & Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan – Consideration of Resources Required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Audit Internal Audit Finance Manager Finance Manager Director Commercial/ Open Spaces & Facilities Mgr DSO Infrastructure & Strategy Manager Director Operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairman's Announcements Annual Governance Statement Corporate Risk Management Internal Audit Progress Report External Audit Sector Update & Finance Manager's Response Statement of Accounts Assets Update Finance Report <i>Write Off of Unrecoverable Debt</i> Risk Register Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair Internal Audit Internal Audit Internal Audit External Audit/Finance Manager Finance Manager Open Spaces & Facilities Manager Finance Manager Finance Manager & S151 Officer Director Commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairman's Announcements External Audit - Audit Results Report Internal Audit Update Forward Agenda Plan Gender Pay Counter Fraud Assets Update Discretionary Business Rates Relief <i>Actions taken by the Chief Executive on the Grounds of Urgency (if any)</i> <i>Write Off of Unrecoverable Debt</i> ECTC Management Accounts (EXEMPT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair External Audit Internal Audit DSO HR Manager DSO Internal Audit Open Spaces & Facilities Manager Finance Manager & S151 Officer DSO Finance Manager/S151 Officer ECTC Finance 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

LEAD OFFICER(S): Emma Grima, Director Commercial

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: Janis Murfet

Thursday 23 July 2020 4.30pm [continued]		Meeting on:	Thursday 24 September 2020 4.30pm [continued]		Meeting on:	Thursday 26 November 2020 4.30pm [continued]		
Agenda Planning meeting:		Agenda Planning meeting:			Agenda Planning meeting:			
Pre-meeting briefing:		Pre-meeting briefing:			Pre-meeting briefing:			
Deadline for reports/dispatch:	4pm Monday 13 July 2020	4pm Wednesday 15 July 2020	Deadline for reports/dispatch:	4pm Monday 14 September 2020	Wednesday 16 September 2020	Deadline for reports/dispatch:	4pm Monday, 16 November 2020	Wednesday 18 November 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little Thetford Community Land Trust Grant Application Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy 2020 – 2023: Draft for Consultation Appointments, Transfers, Resignations (EXEMPT) Asset in the Parish of Ely (EXEMPT) 	Director Commercial		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forward Agenda Plan <i>Action taken by the Chief Executive on the Grounds of Urgency (if any)</i> Health & Safety Update Climate Change SPD – Draft for Consultation Design SPD – Draft For Consultation Developer Contributions – Draft for Consultation Self-Build SPD – For Adoption Natural Environment SPD – For Adoption ECTC Management Accounts (EXEMPT) 	DSO DSO Health & Safety Officer Strat Planning Mgr Strat Planning Mgr Strat Planning Mgr Strat Planning Mgr Strat Planning Mgr ECTC Finance 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

LEAD OFFICER(S): Emma Grima, Director Commercial

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: Janis Murfet

Meeting on: Monday 25 January 2021 4.30pm			Meeting on: Thursday, 25 th March 2021 4.30pm			Meeting on:		
Agenda Planning meeting:			Agenda Planning meeting:			Agenda Planning meeting:		
Pre-meeting briefing:			Pre-meeting briefing:			Pre-meeting briefing:		
Deadline for reports/dispatch:	4pm Wednesday 13 January 2021	Friday 15 January 2021	Deadline for reports/dispatch:	Monday 15 March 2021	Wednesday 17 March 2021	Deadline for reports/dispatch:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairman's Announcements Assets Update Forward Agenda Plan External Audit Results Report Appointments, Transfers, Resignations [EXEMPT] <i>Actions taken by the Chief Executive on the Grounds of Urgency (if any)</i> <i>Write Off of Unrecoverable Debt</i> 	Open Spaces & Facilities Manager DSO External Audit HR Manager DSO Finance Manager/S151 Officer		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chairman's Announcements Assets Update Forward Agenda Plan 	Open Spaces & Facilities Manager DSO				

[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

LEAD OFFICER(S): Emma Grima, Director Commercial

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: Janis Murfet

Meeting on: Monday 25 January 2021 4.30pm [continued]		Meeting on: Thursday, 25 March 2021 4.30pm [continued]			Meeting on:		
Agenda Planning meeting:		Agenda Planning meeting:			Agenda Planning meeting:		
Pre-meeting briefing:		Pre-meeting briefing:			Pre-meeting briefing:		
Deadline for reports/dispatch:	4pm Wednesday 13 January 2021	Friday 15 January 2021	Deadline for reports/dispatch:	Monday 15 March 2021	Wednesday 17 March 2021	Deadline for reports/dispatch:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ECTC Management Accounts (EXEMPT) 	ECTC Finance Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Appointments, Transfers, Resignations [EXEMPT]</i> <i>Action taken by the Chief Executive on the Grounds of Urgency (if any)</i> <i>Write Off of Unrecoverable Debt</i> 	HR Manager	DSO	Finance Manager & S151 Officer		

[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]