



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

NOTICE OF MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual Meeting of the **EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held on **THURSDAY 21 MAY 2020** commencing at **6.00pm** with up to 15 minutes of Public Question Time, immediately followed by the formal business, and you are summoned to attend for the transaction of the following business.

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.

A minute's silence will be observed as a mark of respect following the death of former District Councillor Colin Fordham, Independent Member for Soham from 1999 to 2007 & 2011 to 2015

AGENDA

1. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME [oral]

The meeting will commence with up to 15 minutes Public Question Time

Please Note: due to this being a remote meeting, questions from the public should be e-mailed to tracy.couper@eastcambs.gov.uk by 5pm on Tuesday 19 May 2020 (see Notes box at the end of the Agenda)

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 2020/21

Nomination

Cllr Lis Every

Proposed By

Cllr Anna Bailey

Seconded By

Cllr Josh Schumann

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [oral]

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [oral]

To receive declarations of interest from Members for any items on the Agenda in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct

5. MINUTES – 20 FEBRUARY 2020

To confirm as a correct record

6. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN 2020/21

Nomination	Proposed By	Seconded By
Cllr Alan Sharp Cllr Gareth Wilson	Cllr Anna Bailey Cllr Simon Harries	Cllr Josh Schumann Cllr Christine Whelan

7. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS [oral]

8. TO RECEIVE PETITION(S) (if any) [oral]

9. NOTICE OF MOTIONS UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 10 [oral]

Rebuilding from the Coronavirus Pandemic

Council notes the Coronavirus pandemic is the worse health emergency in over a century and is predicted by the Bank of England to lead to the largest annual contraction in UK GDP for more than three centuries. The impact at national, international and local level is unprecedented in recent history.

Council recognises that the Coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on many people's health and well-being and has caused many deaths across our district. We offer our sympathy to all the people affected.

We also express our gratitude to the medical and care staff, and other key workers who have kept core services going, and to those council staff in East Cambridgeshire who have maintained services to the public throughout the crisis. We are also grateful to our Parish Councils and the many community groups which are supporting residents across the district with shopping, gardening, prescription collection, pet care and many other imaginative initiatives.

As well as continuing to deliver services and support to assist our communities in their response, we recognise the challenges ahead that we face including:

1. The Bank of England predicting a 14% fall in GDP impacting many of our residents' lives and the local economy;
2. Likely continuing restrictions on retail and leisure providers including pubs, restaurants and businesses dependent on tourism;
3. Lord Deben, as chair of the UK Independent Committee on Climate Change, stating "the actions needed to tackle climate change are central to rebuilding our economy".

We need to re-purpose the council to move beyond day to day service delivery to address the massive challenges we face for the District's recovery and its longer-term resilience. We also welcome new opportunities, notably:

1. To build on the community spirit demonstrated across the district;
2. To support and develop community support groups across our District that have provided essential support to residents;
3. To maintain reduction in vehicle journeys and increase in cycling and walking and the consequent environmental improvements.

This Council therefore resolves as a first step to set up a working party, modelled on the successful Bus 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.

Amongst the initiatives the Group should consider, but not be limited to, are:

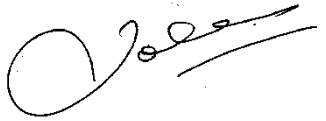
1. A business survey, to fully understand the needs and concerns of our business community and represent our district in discussions with the Combined Authority;
2. A parish council and community groups survey, to fully understand their needs and concerns and their capacity to assist with the recovery;
3. Collecting options for experimental transport initiatives which can be promoted to the county council for speedy implementation to privilege active modes of travel to and within economic centres within the district;
4. Engaging ECTC and the wider developer community to use the likely post-covid housing market conditions as an opportunity to build more affordable and social housing;
5. Exploring further opportunities to facilitate working from home and remote locations through the deployment across the district of initiatives such as 5G and ultrafast broadband infrastructure.

Proposer: Cllr Charlotte Cane

Seconder: Cllr Mark Inskip

- 10. TO ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS (if any) [oral]**
- 11. LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, GROUP LEADERS AND DEPUTY GROUP LEADERS**
- 12. POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY**
- 13. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES (INCLUDING SUBSTITUTES) AND OTHER MEMBER BODIES 2020/21**
- 14. CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY**
 - (a) Appointments to Combined Authority**
 - (b) Update Report**
- 15. WITCHFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN ADOPTION**

Due to being an A4 colour document, the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan has been circulated separately. A copy is available on the Council's website www.eastcambs.gov.uk and on request from Democratic Services
- 16. COVID-19 UPDATE**
- 17. ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ON THE GROUNDS OF URGENCY**



J Hill
Chief Executive

To: All Members of the Council

NOTE:

AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING, THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES/SUB-COMMITTEES WILL MEET TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN AND A VICE-CHAIRMAN, ETC, FOR 2020/21:

- **FINANCE AND ASSETS COMMITTEE**
- **OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**
- **LICENSING COMMITTEE**
- **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

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 Tracy Couper, Democratic Services Officer for full Council tracy.couper@eastcambs.gov.uk by 5pm on Tuesday, 19th May 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 Council meeting.

2. A live stream of the meeting will be available on YouTube at www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/council-21052020 for public viewing.
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 item no(s). X because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the item(s) there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Category X of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”

ANNUAL COUNCIL - 21 MAY 2020

AGENDA ITEM 1 – PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Virginie Ganivet:

- What are you doing to help eligible SEC residents with their Settled Status applications?
- What do you plan to do in the future?
- What have you done and what will you do to ensure eligible residents who are not registered to vote are aware of the necessity to apply, of the deadlines for doing so, and of any help available? We are particularly concerned about the elderly, carers, people receiving care, and people who are generally isolated.
- What can you do against the effects of the hostile environment, xenophobia and discrimination within our communities?



EAST
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Agenda Item 5

Minutes of the Meeting of East Cambridgeshire
District Council held in the Council Chamber,
The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on Thursday
20 February 2020 at 6.00pm

PRESENT

Councillor Christine Ambrose-Smith	Councillor Bill Hunt
Councillor David Ambrose-Smith	Councillor Mark Inskip
Councillor Sue Austen	Councillor Alec Jones
Councillor Anna Bailey	Councillor Daniel Schumann
Councillor Ian Bovingdon	Councillor Joshua Schumann
Councillor David Brown	Councillor Alan Sharp
Councillor Charlotte Cane	Councillor Amy Starkey
Councillor Victoria Charlesworth	Councillor Lisa Stubbs
Councillor Matthew Downey	Councillor John Trapp
Councillor Lorna Dupré	Councillor Jo Webber
Councillor Lis Every (Chairman)	Councillor Alison Whelan
Councillor Simon Harries	Councillor Christine Whelan
Councillor Julia Huffer	Councillor Gareth Wilson

Approximately 24 members of the public were in attendance.

Prior to the formal commencement of the meeting, the Chairman announced the recent death of former District Councillor PJ Bridge, Independent Member for Cheveley from 1973 to 1999. One minute's silence was observed as a mark of respect.

56. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

8 Questions were submitted regarding Agenda Item 9: Call-in of the decision made at Operational Services Committee on 20 January 2020 relating to the review of grant to Citizen's Advice Rural Cambridgeshire (CARC) by the following people:

- Anita Mills (Volunteer) – 2 questions
- Karl Relton (Ely Foodbank)
- Revd Robert Ely & Mrs Teresa Ely
- Chris Prescott (Volunteer)
- Pat Del Grazia (CARC Advice Service Leader)
- Linda Spiers (Volunteer)
- Penny Taylor (Volunteer)

The questions and responses are detailed in the Appendix to these Minutes.

A statement/question was asked by Susan Bussell from the newly formed East Cambridgeshire Climate Action Network (CAN) regarding the sustainability of the Kennett development. Ms Bussell stated that East Cambridgeshire CAN was a diverse Group and would welcome the opportunity to meet with representatives of the Council on the issue of Climate Change.

Ms Bussell stated that concerted action was needed on Climate Change both nationally and locally, as it was affecting the health, safety and well-being of all people and the delivery of public services. The Kennett development would be a potential source of significant levels of carbon emissions and needed to be designed to be as sustainable as possible. Therefore, she questioned what the new build standards would be and how issues such as flooding mitigation would be addressed? Ms Bussell emphasised that what was good for the local community should be at the heart of the development and therefore urged Councillors to support the Motion on the Council Agenda tonight relating to Climate Change and Kennett Garden Village and to commit to consultation with experts and organisations such as East Cambridgeshire CAN to provide a sustainable community at Kennett that will thrive.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Anna Bailey, thanked Ms Bussell for her question and commended the title of the new East Cambridgeshire CAN, which reflected the 'can do' approach of this Council, and stated that the Council would welcome the opportunity to meet and work with the network. The Council was planning for a highly sustainable development at Kennett and this was also reflected in the Supplementary Planning Document on the subject currently being drafted, that would come to Committee in the summer. Similarly, Building Control Regulations were being revised to ensure sustainable development. More detail on these issues would be given in response to the Motion contained later on this Agenda.

The following question was submitted by retired District Councillor, Mr Peter Cresswell:

'Will East Cambridgeshire District Council please enter into negotiations with neighbouring authorities, West Suffolk Council and Newmarket Town Council, in order to convince Suffolk County Council that the household waste and recycling site, in Depot Road, Newmarket, should be re-opened as a matter of priority? Despite being in Suffolk, a great many East Cambridgeshire District Council residents used this facility, prior to its closure.

Households in the south of the district, particularly those in Woodditton Ward, have to travel up to 20 miles to their nearest waste disposal centre. How does this square with the Council's policy to reduce the carbon footprint in the district?

This is yet another cross border issue that needs addressing.

In the event of the above question receiving a positive response, will the Council please report back on discussions that take place with neighbouring authorities at the next Council meeting on 16th April 2020?’

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Anna Bailey, thanked Peter Cresswell for the question and stated that this Council had received a number of letters and lobbying on the issue. This Council was committed to keeping all of its Household Recycling sites open. Whilst this was not a site within East Cambridgeshire, there did need to be some cross-border discussion and co-operation. Following a request for data from our officers, there had been no evidence of increased instances of fly-tipping in the South of the District as a result of the closure of the Newmarket site. However, the Leader stated that she had written to Suffolk County Council on the closure of the Newmarket site and a copy of that letter had been circulated at the meeting. In addition, Councillors Starkey and Sharp, as local Ward Members, were in dialogue with Suffolk Councils on the issue.

57. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lavinia Edwards and Paola Trimarco

58. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

At the request of Chairman, the Democratic Services Manager confirmed that Members had a statutory exemption to allow them to vote on the Budget.

No declarations of Interests were made by Councillors.

59. **MINUTES**

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to clarification that the meeting had concluded at 12.25am, having continued into the following day of 18th October.

60. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

Council Procedure Rules

The Chairman reminded Members of relevant Council Procedure Rules and the Code of Conduct regarding debate at this meeting, including length of speeches; points of order and personal explanation; treating others with respect. The Chairman also noted the Procedure Rule on Members standing for speeches, but respected those Members not able to stand, without them needing to make a formal request to remain seated.

Alteration of Order of Business

Due to the level of public interest and attendance for the item, the Chairman stated that she had agreed to an amendment to the order of business to take Agenda Item 9: Call-in of decision made at Operational Services Committee on 20 January 2020 - review of grant to Citizen's Advice Rural Cambridgeshire (CARC) after Agenda Item 6 on Petitions.

61. PETITIONS

Council received a Petition of over 500 local signatures requesting East Cambridgeshire District Council to reinstate its grant to Ely Citizen's Advice Bureau:

East Cambridgeshire District Council has decided to cease its grant funding to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) in Ely and provide the service itself. This means the CAB office may close, or its service be reduced.

- The Council does not have, and will not be seen to have, the **independence** which is essential to the service offered by the CAB, so it is probable that many people who need advice in the Ely area will be reluctant to use the Council's proposed service.
- The Council will be **wasting public funds** by employing and training staff to replace the free service provided by the CAB's many, experienced volunteers.

The Petition Organiser, Mr John Shippey, presented the Petition to the Council and addressed the Council. He stated that the Petition now had reached over 650 local signatures. He highlighted that the review had taken place without consultation, which was against the spirit of the community compact, even if it was not mandatory in this instance. Mr Shippey also drew particular attention to the issues of independence and value for money. With regard to independence, Mr Shippey was not questioning the Council's ability to deal with a range of queries from local residents but about whether such advice would be perceived as independent, particularly where a member of the public was in dispute with the Council. With regard to value for money, Mr Shippey highlighted that the independently verified value of CARC volunteers was almost twice that of the £47,000 grant and CARC was continuously looking to identify new funding streams. The Council will be spending twice the money of the grant to CARC to employ staff to undertake the services.

As the Petition related to the Call-in on the review of grant to CARC, Members were requested to consider the Petition and the comments of Mr Shippey as part of their deliberations on this item.

62. **CALL-IN OF DECISION MADE AT OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
20 JANUARY 2020 – REVIEW OF GRANT TO CITIZEN’S ADVICE RURAL
CAMBRIDGESHIRE**

Council considered the Call-in relating to the decision made at Operational Services Committee on 20 January 2020 regarding the review of Grant to Citizen’s Advice Rural Cambridgeshire (CARC).

The Chairman referred Members to the Call-in Procedure Note attached at Agenda item 9a, and explained the purpose of the Call-in, which was for full Council to consider the matter afresh and whether it wished to make a final decision on the matter, which could be to uphold, amend or reject the previous decision of the Policy Committee.

The Director Commercial spoke to present the original report and extract of Minutes from the Operational Services Committee and drew Members’ attention to the Update Briefing Note detailing the latest position on the issues.

Councillor Mark Inskip, as Spokesperson for the Members who had submitted the Call-in, then proposed a Motion, which was seconded by Councillor Charlesworth, as follows:

‘To pause the review of the grant to Citizen’s Advice Rural Cambridgeshire for up to six months, retaining grant funding at the current level, to explore alternative ways forward that retain the advantages to the community of a significant contribution from Citizen’s Advice and the opportunity to clarify funding options. This pause to be further extended for a mutually agreed defined period if necessary.’

In speaking to his Motion, Councillor Inskip explained that the independence of CARC gave the public confidence which they may not have in seeking advice from the Council, as CARC’s advice services were free from any actual or perceived conflict of interest. This would be lost, if the Council delivered the service. It would also destroy the valuable expertise available from the CARC volunteers gathered over many years and accredited by the national organisation. This dedication and time was greatly valued both qualitatively and in terms of comparative actual value for money. The CARC services provided were much broader and multi-layered than detailed in the review document and could be permanently lost. This was why the wording of the Motion called for a pause, since there had been no formal discussion since March 2019, to enable meaningful discussion to take place to find a way forward.

The Chairman of Operational Services Committee, Councillor David Ambrose-Smith, summarised what had happened at the Committee, which included an extensive Public Question Time session, long debate and finally a vote to support the recommendations in the report which was carried. No alternative proposal had been presented at the Committee. Councillor

Ambrose-Smith requested a recorded vote on the Motion from Councillor Inskip.

Mr Michael Mealing, Chair of the CARC Trustee Board, addressed the Council and referred to the current position with regard to the Petition which showed the importance of the service to the local community. This was not a commercial service but a local charitable body with national accreditation and support. It provided a face-to-face information and advice service from the Ely office which was open 5 days a week – 3 days on a drop-in basis and 2 days by appointment. The local volunteers had 100s of hours training and experience, were closely supervised and had robust quality assurance mechanisms. There were 20 active volunteers from a wide range of professional backgrounds. Without funding, the knowledge, experience and ability of these volunteers to deal with clients with multiple problems and their valuable contribution to the community would be lost. Without the District Council grant funding, the Ely office also was likely to close from 31 March 2020. A Board meeting was taking place next week to consider a recommendation to that effect, since it was unlikely that the office could be kept open despite the rent-free nature of occupation of the District Council owned premises. Therefore, CARC would urge a pause for more time to find a better way forward.

The Leader of the Council expressed the sincere gratitude of the Council to the CARC volunteers for the excellent service they had provided over a number of years. She also explained the history of the grant to CARC and the excellent holistic services provided by the Housing and Community Services Team and their record in homelessness prevention, which had resulted in this Council not spending a penny on Bed and Breakfast accommodation since 2012 and which made us a national exemplar in this field. CARC had been informed of the proposed withdrawal of funding in March 2019 and the Government grant was only available to fund Council services. The review had shown a duplication of the services provided by CARC and the Council. In addition, CARC had been unable to deliver an outreach service in Soham and Littleport and open digital access. The EDCD grant only accounted for 10% of CARC's funding. The Council had a track record of providing holistic, accessible and immediate services 40 hours per week, as well as an out of hours service. The Community Hubs provided immediate, intensive and local support. This Council took seriously its duty to provide the best possible services to its residents and Councillor Bailey believed that this best could be achieved by our own staff and this was why she could not support the Motion.

In the ensuing debate on the Motion, questions were raised and comments made as follows:

A Member asked Mr Blencowe, CARC Chief Officer, how clients would be affected by the closure of the Ely office and a move to telephone/website access, as many of its clients were not IT literate. Mr Blencowe state that this would be a significant problem, since many clients had complex issues that needed face-to-face advice. The

Member urged Councillors to support the Motion, as she considered that the decision on withdrawal of the grant had been taken too quickly and without sufficient consultation. Therefore, a pause was required to conduct a proper review. Whilst she acknowledged the good qualities of the Housing and Community Services Teams in supporting local residents, many people were wary of authority of any sort and CARC had the independence which allayed such fears and this was a tremendous attribute that the Council did not have. Whilst the Council grant may be only 10% of CARC funding, organisations of this nature had to gather fractions of money from a range of sources in order to continue to function, so taking away this 10% may result in losing the service altogether. Therefore more time was needed for further discussions and to enable the organisation to address the potential loss of grant and find a sustainable way forward.

In response to a question by the Liberal Democrat Leader to the Chair of Operational Services Committee as to whether a copy of the full review report had been made available to CARC and if not could this be done, the Chair stated that he would confirm the position and respond. Councillor Dupré then referred to the fact that CAB was a nationally recognised body utilising many local volunteers who could be lost to the District. CARC could be forced into closure by default, sending a terrible message to the local community as to how this Council treats voluntary and charitable sector partners. The Motion provided a way back from this position, to allow for proper dialogue to enable the retention of the organisation and the expertise of its volunteers.

In response to a question by a Member requesting details of the training and assessment of CARC advisors, Mr Blencowe reported that there was a recognised qualification at NVQ level 2/3. Volunteers received triage and initial checks before undertaking up to 6 months training. There was then continual training and development, case feedback and reviews. Higher level advisors undertook up to 12 months training, with continual monitoring and review. All of this was a nationally recognised and accredited system. Similarly, the Council's Housing and Community Safety Manager explained the nationally recognised and continual training/assessment processes for her staff. The Member then commented that he did not consider that the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) had been adequately completed.

In response to a question by a Member as to why outreach work was not carried out by CARC volunteers, Mr Blencowe stated that this had not proved effective in the experience of CARC. The member then commented that the review had shown an arrogance on the part of the Council and did not reflect the strength of local support and representations for CARC. He did not believe that adequate consultation had been undertaken with CARC on the issue.

A Member commented that some good points had been made, but this did not detract from the fact that CARC had been notified in March 2019 of the review of its funding. She acknowledged that people were sometimes reluctant to come to the Council offices for advice, which was why the Community Hubs were established.

In that connection, a Member highlighted the fact that this Council was providing a wider service than CARC and the national recognition of its expertise in the field of homelessness prevention. The key to the proposals was to provide the widest and best possible service to local residents in the most varied and imaginative way.

A Member emphasised that this Council was not closing down CARC but simply wanted to provide a holistic service to its residents. The Council was attempting to break down barriers through the Community Hubs and by offering home visits. CARC also had received advanced notification of the review. Funding streams changed for all organisations and the Council had faith in its award-winning Housing and Community Services Teams, whilst still giving some support to CARC by the continuation of rent-free premises for the Ely office. He acknowledged the valuable work of the CARC volunteers and hoped that the organisation would continue to work with the Council in the future.

In response to a question by a Member regarding the nature of CARC's response to the notification of the funding review in March 2019, Mr Blencowe stated that CARC had considered it to be a general review of the SLA with the Council rather than the likelihood of loss of the grant. In that connection, the Director Commercial stated that the Council had been clear at the meeting with CARC in March 2019 of the nature of the review and lack of guarantee of grant funding continuing after 2019/20. In addition, there had been ongoing discussions between CARC and the Communities and Partnerships Manager on the review and the report to Operational Services Committee. The Member then expressed concern at the apparent misunderstanding and ambiguity between the two organisations on the future of funding to CARC. It appeared that the Council was putting the letter of the law above the spirit of the law with regard to consultation. This could bring the Council into disrepute with other partner providers. The Member also questioned if the Council should be providing licensed financial advice to people. Therefore, a short pause was required to consider such matters further.

Whilst recognising and expressing the Council's thanks to the CARC volunteers, a Member referred to the expanding nature of the District which placed even greater pressures on resources and the delivery of services. Therefore, we needed to be ready to meet these challenges in the most innovative ways possible. The Council's Housing Team had done an incredible job in homelessness prevention and much of this

was due to the responsive nature of the service, helping people through a wide range of methods for the maximum hours per week possible. Whilst not denigrating the excellent services of CARC, ECDC can provide a quicker, more response service with better IT systems. This, combined with the inability to use the Government grant for CARC funding, was why he supported the Operational Services Committee review and decision.

A Member asked what services still would be provided by CARC if the Ely office closed from 31 March 2020. Mr Blencowe stated that these would comprise of the national phone line and Cambridgeshire Local Assistance Scheme. The Member then asked if TUPE would apply to the staff employed at the Ely office. The Director Commercial stated that if TUPE applied, the Council would be happy to take the staff concerned. The Member stated that his local Ward constituents had expressed their opposition to him with regard to the closure of the Ely office and lack of advance knowledge of this. Therefore, further dialogue was required on the issues. He believed that a compromise solution could be reached, with more time and discussion.

A Member commented that the discussions this evening had demonstrated the benefits of the local Community Hubs and queried why these were not operated by CARC. Mr Blencowe stated that CARC had trialled outreach services, but these had not proved effective. In response to a further question to the Housing and Community Safety Manager, it was confirmed that the Ely Community Hub operated weekly at present and it was anticipated that, with the recruitment of additional staff, a weekly service could be operated for all Community Hubs.

In response to a further question by a Member, the Housing and Community Safety Manager agreed to provide details of the training received by members of her Team. The Member asked Mr Blencowe to assess the importance of the independence of CARC and he stated that this was a vital attribute, as many people had a fear and distrust of 'establishment' and 'authority' which meant that they would not seek advice from the Council. In that connection, the Member highlighted the fact that many of the CARC volunteers were retired professionals with an extensive range of past knowledge and skills, who could provide complex advice. They received continuous training and had the support of the national framework of CAB. Speed of response was not the only issue in the provision of advice, but it also needed to be considered and consistent. This was why more time was required to work with CARC.

In summing-up, Councillor Inskip stated that he had serious concerns about how the review process had been conducted and the differing interpretations of the meeting held in March 2019. This had left the intentions of the Council with regard to the ceasing of grant funding

unclear and was why a deferral was required. Members had not been briefed on the matter before it came to the Operational Services Committee and had only been made aware of the possible closure of the Ely office from 31 March 2020 this evening. Whilst no reflection on the advice services provided by the Housing and Community Services Teams, it would be better to spend 6 months in discussion with CARC to ensure the provision of the best services possible to the local community from both providers.

A recorded vote was taken on the Motion, the results of which were as follows:

FOR: (11) – Cllrs Cane, Charlesworth, Downey, Dupré, Harries, Inskip, Jones, Trapp, A Whelan, C Whelan and Wilson.

AGAINST: (13) – Cllrs C Ambrose Smith, D Ambrose Smith, Bailey, Bovingdon, Brown, Huffer, Hunt, D Schumann, J Schumann, Sharp, Starkey, Stubbs and Webber.

ABSTENTIONS: (2) – Cllrs Austen and Every.

The Motion was declared to be lost.

Following the defeat of the Motion, the Democratic Services Manager was requested to explain the procedural position. She stated that in the event that Council declined or was unable to take a decision on the issue, the original decision of the Operational Services Committee would stand.

No further Motion was proposed.

In the absence of a decision by Council on the matter, the decision of Operational Services Committee on 20 January 2020 regarding the review of Grant to Citizen's Advice Rural Cambridgeshire (CARC) stands unchanged as follows:

1. That the availability of grant funding to CARC in 2020/21 and future years cease.
2. That the recommendation to directly deliver the service as set out in paragraph 5.12 of the report to Operational Services Committee be approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.55pm for departing members of the public and re-convened at 7.56pm. Councillor Huffer left the meeting at 7.55pm and did not return.

63. **MOTIONS**

(i) **Antisemitism**

The following Motion was proposed by Cllr Anna Bailey and seconded by Cllr David Brown:

East Cambridgeshire is a welcoming, safe and tolerant district; incidents of police reported hate crime are low compared with the wider Cambridgeshire Constabulary area.

Nevertheless, East Cambridgeshire District Council acknowledges with concern the Community Security Trust's (CST) 2019 report "Antisemitic Incidents January - June 2019" which cites a worrying increase of antisemitic incidents in the UK and the highest total on record in the first six months of 2019. Home Office statistics from October 2019 show that 18% of religiously motivated hatred is targeted at Jewish people, up from 12% in 2018.

East Cambridgeshire District Council is currently drafting a revised Inclusivity, Equality and Diversity scheme to replace its Single Equalities Scheme 2016 - 2020.

East Cambridgeshire District Council 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, including its associated 11 contemporary examples, 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."

To guide IHRA in its work, the following examples may serve as illustrations:

Manifestations might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity. However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic. Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for "why things go wrong." It is expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes and negative character traits.

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, dehumanising, demonising, 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 characterise 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.

Council therefore resolves to:

- 1) Condemn all forms of racism in all its manifestations
- 2) Adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism as the working model of challenging and confronting incidents of antisemitism
- 3) Include the IHRA definition in the Council's updated Inclusivity, Equality and Diversity scheme

Speaking on the Motion, the Leader of the Council stated that this had been proposed by her in response to a letter from Central Government asking all Councils to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism.

An amendment then was proposed by Councillor Mark Inskip and seconded by Councillor Simon Harries as follows:

Add to the end of the second paragraph:

“and second only to Muslim people who were the target of 47% of religiously motivated hatred in the same period.”

Such that the final sentence reads:

“Home Office statistics from October 2019 show that 18% of religiously motivated hatred is targeted at Jewish people up from 12% in 2018 and second only to Muslim people who were the target of 47% of religiously motivated hatred in the same period.”

To amend “resolves 1)” to read:

1) “Condemns all forms of discrimination against all protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity) in all its manifestations.”

Speaking in support of the amendment, Councillor Inskip stated that having visited the World Holocaust Centre in Israel, he believed that it was right to make a clear statement against antisemitism, as many people still denied that the holocaust happened. But this should not be to the exclusion of other forms of discrimination. The statistics on religious hatred were truly shocking, with Muslims facing the highest levels of racially motivated hate crimes. This was why he had proposed the amendment to ensure that all protected characteristics were addressed.

As Chairman of the Finance and Assets Committee, Councillor Brown stated that he could not support the amendment in isolation, as the wording in the amendment needed to be included at the front of the new Equalities Policy that would be submitted to the Finance and Assets Committee. Therefore, he gave an assurance that when the new draft of the Policy came to that Committee this would be included at the front of it.

A number of other Members stated that they also were unable to support the amendment as it could be seen to devalue the focus on the issue of antisemitism and due to the assurance given that the wider issues relating to protected characteristics would be addressed as part of the review of the Policy.

Other Members spoke in support of the amendment, referring to the need to focus on all forms of discrimination and particularly on the radical rise in hate crimes against people of the Muslim faith. These Members commented that it would be wrong to place the needs of one Group higher than those of another and that was why the definition needed to be more wide-ranging.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was declared to be lost by 11 votes in favour to 13 against, with 1 abstention.

A further amendment then was moved by Councillor Cane and seconded by Councillor Christine Whelan as follows:

After first sentence add:

However, East Cambridgeshire District Council acknowledges with concern the published data on increases in hate incidents and crimes towards people with protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation). We commit to ensuring that every resident of the District is treated with respect, dignity and in an equal manner.

In second paragraph replace 'Nevertheless,' with 'Furthermore,'

Speaking in support of the amendment, Councillor Cane stated that this recognised the increases in hate incidents and crimes towards people with protected characteristics, whilst the current motion appeared a bit dry and limited. This would give the clear message that every person within the District had the right to be treated with respect, dignity and in an equal manner. The level of hate crimes had increased and these could be very complex. These should not be tolerated.

The Chairman of Finance and Assets Committee and other Members reiterated their previous arguments.

Other Members stated that no forms or acts of hatred and discrimination should be seen in isolation and the hope was expressed that the Council would not be seen as paying lip service to equalities issues, as little spending on equality and diversity training had taken place in recent years.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was declared to be lost by 11 votes in favour to 13 against, with 1 abstention.

Returning to the Motion, Members acknowledged that antisemitism was a longstanding scourge on society and it was important to recognise that this would not be tolerated. Therefore, although the motion and IHRA definition could be regarded as a little dry, it should be supported to show that antisemitism would not be tolerated by this Council and Members then would hold the Chairman of Finance and Assets Committee to his assurance that all protected characteristics would be addressed in the new Equalities Policy. Councillor Brown stated that he looked forward to working with all Members of that Committee to ensure that a Policy was approved that satisfied all the issues highlighted during the debate.

On being put to the vote, the Motion was declared to be carried unanimously.

(ii) Climate Change and Kennett Garden Village

The following Motion was proposed by Cllr Simon Harries and seconded by Cllr Charlotte Cane:

Preamble

The Council notes with approval the decision taken on October 17th 2019 to declare a climate emergency in the East Cambs district. The Council further notes that the climate emergency should be the catalyst for changing methods, working practices and principles in order to deliver real, measurable benefits to the district and its people.

The Council understands that positive action will be required in priority areas to deliver maximum benefit as quickly as possible. The priorities for action should be those activities that have the greatest potential for creating carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions, and therefore offer the greatest opportunity for benefit if successfully addressed.

The Council accepts that the most carbon intensive activity undertaken today is in housing development and requests officers to review principles, methods and working practices in this area as a matter of urgency to ensure that measurable emission reductions are delivered without delay. The Council wishes priority focus to be given to the largest current development that is in S106 discussions. This development is the Kennett "Garden Village", which will therefore become a best practice exemplar for the future.

Actions

The Council instructs officers to review proposed actions related to Kennett in two specific areas: integrated transportation and build policy. The goal will be to identify actions that can be updated, improved and amended as a result of the climate emergency declaration. Using a real test case will make it possible to model real information, even if regulations do not permit substantive changes to this specific development.

By testing methods and identifying alternatives, we will learn lessons, develop better methods for the future and turn the climate emergency declaration into positive benefit.

Integrated Transportation

The Council notes that a thorough review of current and projected medium-term road traffic movements has been carried out but believes that insufficient work has been done in evaluating the likely road traffic impact of the new development, itself. The Council therefore asks officers to:

1. Evaluate the likely number of additional road vehicles passing along the B1085 once the development is complete, to reflect car ownership within the 500 housing units in the Kennett Garden Village area, together with

workers and visitors to the 100 bed care home, visitors and students to the primary school and workers / visitors at the light industrial park. Having evaluated the number of new vehicle movements, officers should provide the best available estimate concerning the increase to carbon emissions caused by this increase.

2. Liaise with Highways England and the CCC Highways Department to determine whether there is any long-term plan to close the Railway Bridge at the south of the B1085 to HGVs or if the current restrictions are only temporary.
3. Clearly state whether or not the requirements set out by Network Rail regarding the car park and rail bridge close to Kennett station have been agreed by ECDC. Notably, transfer of land ownership at no charge to NR, agreement to move the car park, agreement to replace the rail bridge at developer cost.
4. Liaise with Network Rail and the rail franchisees to give a clear date by when service frequency to Kennett station, especially for Greater Anglia trains, will be at least doubled. This needs to be a commitment, not an aspiration.

Build policy

The Council notes that air pollution levels are likely to rise in the area of Kennett by an estimated 2100% as a result of building work for the development, with other factors noted in the MLM Consultancy reports.

The Council further notes that issues have been raised by the Environment Agency, Anglia Water and Heritage England concerning potential for pollution of aquifers and damage to the natural and archaeological environment.

The Council also notes that declaration of a climate emergency implies new and measurably higher build standards in order to move fast towards a zero-carbon standard. The Council therefore instructs officers to:

1. Enumerate the changes to build standards for the future that will be set for developers in order to raise build standards related to emissions, heat loss, use of materials and building methods that go above and beyond current building regulations. In simple terms, what do we wish to change as a result of the climate emergency declaration?
2. Enumerate the clear mitigations, in terms of measurable actions, to be required from developers in order to avoid the projected growth in emissions. Where legally permitted these mitigations should be applied to Kennett, where not they should be introduced for future developments.
3. Enumerate the mitigations set in place to address issues related to possible chemical pollution, damage to the natural environment and protection of aquifers.

Long-term changes

The Council notes that the climate emergency declaration will require systemic changes in the way that planning activities are carried out, and will also require better decision-making tools for officers. The Council therefore requires officers

to present a strategy for upgrade, change and improvement in their own working methods and use of tools in order to accelerate the move to zero carbon development by the council and its trading companies.

Temporary halt to work

The Council instructs officers to take no major or irrevocable steps, such as issuing contracts, for work to commence at Kennett until the information requested in this motion has been presented to Full Council.

Speaking in support of the Motion, Councillor Harries stated that he hoped that this would be uncontroversial in the light of the motion passed at the previous Council meeting on climate change. This Motion was aimed at taking substantive action to show the Council's commitment to the declaration already made. It set out the required actions to prevent the Kennet development becoming an environmental disaster.

Members commented that the issues raised by Councillor Harries in the Motion were being addressed as part of the Planning process for the development and therefore a delay was totally unnecessary, particularly when the site was due to generate 150 units of badly needed affordable housing.

However, some Members commended Councillor Harries on work he had undertaken on the motion and the aim to put into practice the climate change declaration. They expressed the view that the principles underlying it should apply to any wholly-owned Council development, as the Council needed to mitigate the environmental impacts of its developments for the greater benefit of local residents. At present, Network Rail had given no commitment to improve rail services from Kennett Station. A Member referred to the differences between the Haddenham and Kennett CLTs, the former included extensive consultation, had the support of local residents and was a modest development, whilst the latter would see the existing population of around 350 increased by a further 500 houses and 1,000 people and was dividing local opinion. Members highlighted the need for sustainable transport links and high quality, sustainable construction standards to set an example, as the Council was the developer.

On being put to the vote, the Motion was declared to be lost by 11 votes in favour to 13 votes against, with 1 abstention.

64. **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

Questions were received and responses given by the Leader of the Council as follows:

Question from Councillor Mark Inskip:

Question to the Leader of the Council on Carbon Footprints:

What is the current annual carbon footprint of the district council?

What is the current annual carbon footprint of the East Cambs Trading Company?

What is the current annual carbon footprint of East Cambs Street Scene?

What methodology has been used to derive those carbon footprints?

Has there been any independent audit of the figures?

Response from Leader of the Council:

The Council has undertaken work to assess its carbon footprint and this will be included as part of the Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan being submitted to Operational Services Committee in April 2020. This assessment applies the tried and tested methodology from the Carbon Trust used by other authorities and independently verified.

Questions from Councillor Lorna Dupré:

(1) No money has been allocated in the budget for the next five years for the development of a new local plan. Given the importance of an effective local plan, and the significant changes (such as the growing urgency of tackling climate change) that have occurred since the current plan was adopted five years ago, on what date will the council consider whether to begin the process of drawing up a new local plan?

(2) The council's Corporate Plan 2017-2019 promised an options appraisal for redevelopment of The Grange and relocation of the council office, and a plan to realise a capital receipt from The Grange and deliver a fit for purpose and efficient council office in an accessible location. What has happened to the options appraisal and the plan?

Responses from Leader of the Council:

(1) At the October 2019 Council meeting, it was resolved to review the development of a new Local Plan within 18 months and a report will come back to full Council within that period.

(2) When reviewed at the start of the current year, the 2019-22 Corporate Plan did not include a separate item for an options appraisal for redevelopment of The Grange and relocation of the Council Offices.

65. **SCHEDULE OF ITEMS RECOMMENDED FROM COMMITTEES AND OTHER MEMBER BODIES**

Council considered a report U184, previously circulated, containing items recommended from Committees and other Member bodies as follows:

1. FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE – 28 NOVEMBER 2019

(a) Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019-20 Review

It was resolved:

- (i) That the Council retain the 8.5% benefit scheme, i.e. the maximum benefit to working age claimants to be 91.5%;
- (ii) That enhancements to the treatment of Universal Credit income be introduced as detailed in the submitted report.

(b) Treasury Operations Mid-Year Report

It was resolved:

That the mid-year review of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2019/20, as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be noted.

2. FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE – 6 FEBRUARY 2020

2020/21 Annual Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy (AIS)

It was resolved:

That approval be given to:

- The 2020/21 Treasury Management Strategy;
- The Annual Investment Strategy;
- The Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement;
- The Prudential and Treasury Indicators;

as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report.

66. REVENUE BUDGET, CAPITAL STRATEGY AND COUNCIL TAX 2020/21

Council considered a report, U185, previously circulated, detailing the Council's proposed Revenue and Capital Budgets and the required level of Council Tax for 2020/21. The report also assessed the robustness of the budgets, the adequacy of reserves and updated the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

The Chairman reminded Members that there would be a recorded vote on this issue in accordance with the relevant Regulations.

The Finance Manager and S151 Officer summarised the report as follows:

'Council is asked to approve the Council Tax Resolution as detailed in appendix 1 to this report and the Council's budget as in appendices 2 to 5 of the report.

This recommends that this Council's Council Tax for a band D property during 2020-21 will be £142.14, this being frozen for a 7th consecutive year.

When the draft budget report was presented to Finance and Assets Committee on the 6th February, we were still waiting the final Local Government Finance Settlement from Government; this has now been published.

The consequence of this and other information that has come to hand since the draft budget was published for Finance and Assets Committee have resulted in the saving requirement in 2022-21 reducing from £3.33 million to £3.27 million.

The Council is in a good position in that, via the use of its surplus savings reserve, it has a balanced budget for 2020-21 and 2021-22 and thus does not need to make any reactionary cuts to services in these years. However, the Council does continue to have a substantial saving requirement in year three, so does need to be considering now, how this gap is to be bridged in order to achieve a balanced budget for 2022-23 and beyond. The Council's main focus in doing this remains the commercial agenda, but other options as discussed in section 13 of my report will need to be considered.

And one final point if I may, Members will have noted throughout my report the uncertainty of funding beyond 2020-21, with both the Government Spending Review and the Fair Funding Review. The budget presented details a reasonably prudent view of the possible outcome of these exercises, but with no certainty it is possible that 2021-22 could be better or worse than detailed in these papers, I will of course be monitoring this situation during the coming months and provide members with updates as new information becomes available.'

The recommendations in the submitted report were moved by Councillor Bailey and seconded by Councillor J Schumann. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Bailey, spoke as follows in support of the Budget:

'The Council exists only to serve our residents, the people who pay for it. Our plan for the four-year term is built on their priorities that they gave us in the elections in May last year. I am proud of our staff who embrace what we ask them to do with a 'can-do' attitude in pursuit of providing the best possible services to our residents. It is a pleasure to work with them and I thank each and every one of them for all they do.

Residents asked us to be more commercial, but they told us to be reasonable about it! That is exactly what we are doing - being commercial for community benefit. East Cambs Trading Company (ECTC) is wholly owned by the council for the benefit of residents. It manages the district's parks and open spaces, Ely Markets and the

development of new homes, many of which are provided through Community Land Trusts (CLTs) at genuinely affordable prices and are reserved for local working people.

We are currently on-site in Haddenham where the first of 19 new CLT owned homes, including bungalows, will be ready for occupation by local people this summer. These CLT homes will provide a lasting legacy of homes for local people in perpetuity as well as an income for the village. We are also on-site in Ely at the ex-MoD housing site, bringing all the empty properties back into use, some of which are already occupied, and 15 of which will be reserved for local working people as shared equity CLT homes. We will shortly be submitting a planning application, as we are contractually required to do by the MoD, for the infill housing on the site, more than 30% of which will be affordable housing, reserved for local working people in a CLT.

The company has done everything that we asked of it, and more, delivering to its business plan with a striking level of exactitude. The Markets continue to deliver a busy, vibrant programme and have been able to make capital investments whilst still returning a profit. The Parks & Open Spaces Team has delivered a £100k reduction in the costs to the Council for its services in 2020/21, due to it being free to provide paid for, quality services to other organisations. In December the company made a partial repayment of £1.7m of the £4.62m loan it has from the Council, repaid 15 months early. It has provided over £1.6m of financial benefit to the council to date, allowing us to keep investing in great services for residents and to keep our share of council tax low.

And the new Hive Leisure Centre is performing to its business plan, running at cost neutral to the Council as planned, and providing a surplus back to the Council.

Our bid for business rates pooling in 2020/21 was successful, and we negotiated with other Councils for an advantageous share for East Cambs and Fenland, meaning East Cambs is set to receive over £400k that it wouldn't have otherwise had. To put that into context, 1% Council Tax rise raises roughly £42k for the Council.

I am delighted and proud to say that we are therefore still in the position of being able to balance the council's budget for the next two years, which also means I have the pleasure of confirming that our Conservative budget will, is once again proposing to freeze the East Cambs element of council tax for the coming year. This is the seventh consecutive year we have frozen council tax for local people. Our management costs are the lowest in the county, running at just about half that of any of the other District Councils.

We know that changes are coming - Fairer funding, the Comprehensive Spending Review, business rates retention changes. So, just as we

always have done in the past, we are looking now to our budget gaps in years 3 and 4 of the MTFS.

I welcome the additional support from the Conservative Government for our High Streets, with the increase to 50% discount on business rates for premises with lower rateable values – this will benefit many of our independent small businesses.

This year will also see further efforts to help local people wanting to get onto the property ladder. Working with the Combined Authority we will begin delivering a hugely innovative new project: £100k Homes - offering 100% freehold ownership of quality one bedroom properties for £100k at nil cost to tax payers.

East Cambs Street Scene is a huge success story. Set up in 2018 to run the council's waste, recycling and street cleaning services, it is now providing a gold standard service to our residents. This year will see them expanding their offer to begin collections of commercial waste.

We have supported projects with CIL funding at nil cost to tax payers:

- £165,000 to Ely Museum
- £250,000 to Burwell rec
- £1,000,000 to Ely Southern Bypass
- £280k to the Soham Mill project

March will see our district-wide consultation on bus services and cycling and walking infrastructure - a great cross party effort. Whilst not in the direct remit of the District Council, we are determined to ensure our residents get a better deal on alternative forms of transport as the Combined Authority makes decisions about the future of transport across Cambridgeshire.

Perhaps most pressing of all, we are focusing efforts to tackle climate change and the effects on our environment. Together with our County Council and Combined Authority colleagues we are playing our part in delivering net zero carbon emissions by 2050; I look forward to the draft Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan coming to Committee in April.

Thank you to Ian for his excellent report and thanks to the whole management team for its careful management of the budget. Thanks to all staff that make this Council what it is - I am truly proud to be involved.'

An amendment was proposed by Councillor Dupré and seconded by Councillor Wilson as follows:

The Liberal Democrat Group propose the following amendments to the budget presented in the agenda papers for this meeting:

1. ADD a cost to establish a Strategic Planning Committee of £8,500 per annum.
2. ADD a cost to employ a Climate Change Liaison Officer of £34,370 per annum.
3. INCREASE Council Tax by 1 per cent in 2020/21.

The overall impact of the additional spend will be neutralised by the increase in Council Tax.

Speaking to the amendment, Councillor Dupré stated that the Local Plan was 5 years old with no date for review. Government Housing Policy was changing and a new Local Transport Plan was nearing completion. Therefore, this Council needed to update its Local Plan, requiring a dedicated Committee to undertake this role. In addition, dedicated support was needed to progress the Council's climate change agenda and provide assistance to local parishes in this area via the Neighbourhood Planning process. She commended the modest proposals.

The Leader of the Council expressed disappointment at the last minute nature of the Liberal Democrat Budget amendment, which meant that it was impractical to give proper consideration to it. Therefore, she had requested Officers to bring forward Constitutional proposals to Council to prevent such a situation arising in the future. With regard to the individual proposals in the amendment, Councillor Bailey commented that an excellent officer resource was available in relation to climate change via the Strategic Planning Service Level Agreement, which could be called upon, as necessary. She did not believe that there was a requirement for a dedicated Strategic Planning Committee, as this role was being discharged via the Finance and Assets Committee. The Liberal Democrat Budget amendment represented a proposal to spend more unnecessarily, which was why she could not support it.

Other Members commented that since the Council had declared a climate emergency, it needed to take meaningful action on this. Therefore, this Council required a dedicated climate change officer to engage with other authorities and agencies and to support smaller parishes on the climate change agenda, if it was serious in its intentions on the issue. A dedicated Strategic Planning Committee also was required, rather than a Working Group of a Policy Committee which already had a high volume of business, and there were examples of Councils where having a dedicated Strategic Planning Committee had worked well. Many Parishes were highly critical of the level of unwelcome developments resulting from the lack of a robust Local Plan.

In accordance with the requirements of The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, a recorded vote was taken on the amendment, the results of which were as follows:

FOR: (11) – Cllrs Cane, Charlesworth, Downey, Dupré, Harries, Inskip, Jones, Trapp, A Whelan, C Whelan and Wilson.

AGAINST: (13) – Cllrs C Ambrose Smith, D Ambrose Smith, Bailey, Bovingdon, Brown, Every, Hunt, D Schumann, J Schumann, Sharp, Starkey, Stubbs and Webber.

ABSTENTIONS: (1) – Cllr Austen.

The amendment was declared to be lost.

In the debate on the Motion, a Member expressed concern regarding the political decision not to increase Council Tax, which meant that more income needed to be generated from commercial activities by the Council, which caused conflicts of interest between the Council's trading companies its role as a Planning authority. Reference was made to the huge Budget deficit in the future, with no reserves left to meet it, requiring increasingly ingenious schemes to balance the books. The commercialisation agenda monetarised everything and standards should not be lowered to fill the gap. Action was needed now to plan for the predicted deficit in 3 years time.

Other Members commented that the Finance and Assets Committee received well researched and comprehensive reports on issues within its remit and could draw on the support and advice of professional officers, as required. The Council had frozen Council Tax for 7 years, but had improved services and retained adequate Reserves, which was a testament to the foresight and professionalism of the officers.

In summing-up, Councillor Bailey stated that residents wanted the Council to be commercial but for the community benefit. This was the driving objective for both ECTC and ECSS. ECSS had generated savings of £250K from not having to undertake a procurement exercise and was providing excellent service standards. ECTC was providing high quality homes and affordable housing via the developments at Barton Road, Ely, Soham and Haddenham. Both companies had comprehensive Business Plans. Councillor Bailey commended this well-run Council with excellent staff.

In accordance with the requirements of The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, a recorded vote was taken on the Motion, the results of which were as follows:

FOR: (13) – Cllrs C Ambrose Smith, D Ambrose Smith, Bailey, Bovingdon, Brown, Every, Hunt, D Schumann, J Schumann, Sharp, Starkey, Stubbs and Webber.

AGAINST: (11) – Cllrs Cane, Charlesworth, Downey, Dupré, Harries, Inskip, Jones, Trapp, A Whelan, C Whelan and Wilson.

ABSTENTIONS: (1) – Cllr Austen.

The motion was declared to be carried.

It was resolved:

That approval be given to:

- The formal Council Tax Resolution which calculates the Council Tax requirement as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report (circulated separately).
- The draft 2020/21 Revenue Budget and MTFs for 2021/22 to 2023/24 as set out in Appendix 2 of the submitted report.
- A Council Tax freeze.
- The Statement of Reserves as set out in Appendix 3 of the submitted report.
- The 2020/21 Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix 4 of the submitted report.
- The Capital Programme and financing as set out in Appendix 5 of the submitted report.
- The awarding of discretionary Business Rate relief as set out in paragraphs 6.5 and 6.6 of the submitted report.

67. **ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP (ARP) REVISED PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

Council considered a report, U186 previously circulated, containing a proposed revised Partnership Agreement for Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP).

It was resolved:

That the revised Anglia Revenues Partnership (ARP) Agreement as set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report be approved.

68. **PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2020/21**

Council considered a report, U187 previously circulated, detailing the Council's Pay Policy Statement for 2020/21 in accordance with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011.

The HR Manager stated that the ratio between the highest grade and lowest grade at the scale minimum pay point was 1:7.1 and at the maximum pay point was 1:7.4.

It was resolved:

That the 2020/21 Pay Policy Statement be approved and adopted.

69. **COMBINED AUTHORITY UPDATE REPORTS**
a. **OCTOBER & NOVEMBER 2019**
b. **JANUARY 2020**

Council received reports on the activities of the Combined Authority from the Council's appointees.

It was resolved:

That the reports on the activities of the Combined Authority from the Council's appointees be noted.

70. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

It was resolved:

That the press and public be excluded during consideration of the following 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 public were present during the item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Category 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

71. **EXEMPT MINUTES – 17 OCTOBER 2019**

It was resolved:

That the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The meeting concluded at 10.38pm.

Chairman.....

Date

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

Agenda Item 9 - Call-In of decision made at Operational Services Committee 20 January 2020 – Review of Grant to Citizen's Advice Rural Cambridgeshire

Anita Mills - Volunteer

Is it right that tax payers will have to pay much more to East Cambs to fund people they are going to employ rather than fund the Citizens Advice Service the £47,000 that is being withdrawn? I have also spoken to many people who would not go to East Cambs for advice as they do not feel the service will be confidential and just.

Karl Relton – Chair of Trustees, Ely Foodbank

Question: Is the council short-sighted or long-sighted?

We understand that the basis of the decision to cut funding to CA includes a growing 'in house' solution and the allocation of some 'special' central govt funds to further develop these 'in house' services. Whilst we all want to benefit from special central govt funds, we all know that such funds will be available for how long? One, two ... I guess three years tops? Then what happens? The council will no doubt have a budget headache, and this newly developed service will be in the firing line to be trimmed back. [Remember the same thing happened with Childrens Centres at county level].

Meanwhile, the cut to CA funding will have meant that the council has dis-invested in an independent, resilient, nationally recognised 'go-to' brand for the average member of public.

The long-sighted approach would be to realise the value & continuity to residents that the CA provides, and have the foresight to continue investing in such provision ... so that it can thrive in conjunction with 'in house' services, and continue even after the council or other services have come and gone.

So to repeat, I want to ask: is the council short-sighted or long?

Revd Robert Ely and Mrs Teresa Ely

The CARC has years of experience and a wealth of volunteers skilled at dealing with clients in an impartial way and enjoys the confidence of those who seek help. How does the Council envisage providing a similar service?

Chris Prescott - Volunteer

Q1. Does the cost to the Council of four new full-time staff include National Insurance Contributions, pension costs and healthcare costs. If not, what is the additional cost of these?

Q2. Please advise why the following disadvantages, or potential disadvantages, of the proposal were not listed under Option 3, which recommended acceptance of the proposal.

- No exploration of options for better collaboration (see option 2)
- High level of disruption to service
- No access to customer histories held by CARC
- Lack of independence of ECDC
- Government funding uncertain and may be withdrawn
- Short-term (2 year) commitment
- No track record in the services not previously delivered
- Loss of value of volunteer time input (£31,046 pa)
- Damage to morale in voluntary sector
- Reputational damage to ECDC (see option 1)
- Alternative possible uses of central government funding not explored
- Increased cost to ECDC
- Reduced choice for customers

Q3. How many hours did the community hubs operate for in 2018-19?

Q4. With reference to the document Call-in Update Briefing, in what sense, during preparation of the Review of the CARC grant, were “all residents [given] the opportunity to engage with the Council and have their say regarding the services and resources that they need” as claimed at para 1.14.

Pat Del Grazia – Advice Service Leader

Q. Do you complete disability forms (DLA, PIP, AA) and assist with challenging or appealing failed benefit decisions? Do you do What-If benefit calculations for people with an impending change of circumstances?

Anita Mills - Volunteer

Q. Do you help complete court forms such as for a small claims or defences?

Linda Spiers - Volunteer

Q. "Paragraph 4.2.3 of the document presented to the Occupational Committee lists a number of areas of support and advice provided to residents by the Council. All of these areas are also provided by Citizens Advice in Ely, but are not listed in the services described as being provided by CAB locally in paragraph 4.2.2. Given that, can Councillors trust the information given to them in this document and its appendices about the supposed relative weakness of CAB's services?"

Penny Taylor – Volunteer

Q. If you were presented with a client with an employment issue for example dismissal, what level of advice and support would you be able to offer? Would you help with challenging an unfair dismissal decision?

Response from Leader of the Council, Councillor Anna Bailey:

We carried out this review with the aim to improve the service to meet the needs of the community. Whilst not every aspect of the review was put in the report, I can assure you that everything was considered. Delivery of an excellent service to the community is at the heart of our decisions. We engage with the community through user feedback and there is always opportunity for residents to make suggestions on service improvements.

Whilst there will be an increased cost to deliver this enhanced service, these costs will be met from a ringfenced grant from central government. The fact that we are prepared to invest more money in to the service shows the commitment we are making to the community.

The Council has taken a long-term view for ensuring that it can deliver a holistic and well-rounded service to the community and we are confident that this is sustainable now and in to the future.

We have a team of dedicated staff here who are already delivering many elements of the service and we have a plan to recruit more as the ambition is for the public to have as much access as possible to a multi skilled service.

The Council has already established community hubs in Ely, Littleport, Stretham and Earith and is due to establish community hubs in Sutton, Soham and Bottisham. We are actively working to set out hubs in as many areas as possible. Where residents do not feel comfortable coming to the Council they will be able to go to the community hubs which contain multiple agencies to assist with their needs.

There were a few questions that were very specific, I just want to answer some of those

To Chris Prescott, we did factor on-costs into the posts and the cost of this is detailed in the Operational Services Committee report. The community hubs were open for 280 hours in 2018-19 and we also had the drop-in service at the Council Offices and will go to people's homes as well.

To Pat Del Grazia and Anita Mills - We absolutely deal with assisting our residents to deal with a whole range of different and complex forms on a wide range of issues, particularly the ones you mention.

We considered all of the elements you have highlighted in your questions and I just want to be clear to everyone here tonight, this isn't about whether CARC were delivering a 'weak' service. We value the service that CARC provides to the community. This is about ensuring that the residents of East Cambs have more access to services that meet their changing needs.

9. NOTICE OF MOTIONS UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 10

Amendment

Proposed by: Anna Bailey

Seconded by: Josh Schumann

Rebuilding from the Coronavirus Pandemic

Council notes the Coronavirus pandemic is the ~~worse~~ **worst** health emergency in over a century and is predicted by the Bank of England to lead to the largest annual contraction in UK GDP for more than three centuries. The impact at national, international and local level is unprecedented in recent history.

Council recognises that the Coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on many people's health and well-being and has caused many deaths across our district. We offer our sympathy to all the people affected.

We also express our gratitude to the medical and care staff, and other key workers who have kept core services going, and to those ~~council~~ **Council** staff in East Cambridgeshire who have maintained services to the public throughout the crisis. We are also grateful to our Parish Councils and the many community groups which are supporting residents across the district with shopping, gardening, prescription collection, pet care and many other imaginative initiatives.

As well as continuing to deliver services and support to assist our communities in their response, we recognise the challenges ahead that we face including:

1. The Bank of England predicting a 14% fall in GDP impacting many of our residents' lives and the local economy;
2. Likely continuing restrictions on retail and leisure providers including pubs, restaurants and businesses dependent on tourism;
3. Lord Deben, as chair of the UK Independent Committee on Climate Change, stating "the actions needed to tackle climate change are central to rebuilding our economy".

We need to ~~re-purpose~~ **focus** the ~~council~~ **Council** to ~~move beyond day to day service delivery~~ to address the ~~massive~~ challenges we face for the ~~District's~~ **district's** recovery and its longer-term resilience.

We also welcome new opportunities, notably:

1. To build on the community spirit demonstrated across the district **by seeking to accelerate the partnership work already begun by Cambridgeshire County Council through the Think Communities approach;**
2. To **continue to** support and ~~develop~~ community support groups across our ~~District~~ **district** that have provided essential support to residents;
3. To ~~maintain reduction~~ **retain as far as possible the new enthusiasm for** ~~in vehicle journeys and increase in~~ cycling and, walking and the **reduction in vehicle journeys and the** consequent environmental improvements, **whilst**

noting that currently people are being asked by the Government to avoid using public transport where possible.

This Council therefore resolves as a first step to set up a working party, modelled on the successful Bus 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.

Amongst the initiatives the ~~Group~~ **working party** should consider, but not be limited to, are:

1. A business survey, **whether that be a new survey or seeking to utilise those already being undertaken**, to fully understand the needs and concerns of our business community, **including sector specific needs, together with opportunities taken to change/improve**, and represent our district in discussions with the Combined Authority;
2. A parish council and community groups survey, to fully understand their needs and concerns and their capacity to assist with the recovery;
3. ~~Collecting~~ **Alongside the collation of the results of the Bus, Walk, Cycle consultation, consideration of** options for experimental transport initiatives which can be promoted to the **Combined Authority and the county council County Council** for speedy implementation to ~~privilege~~ **promote** active modes of travel to and within economic centres within the district;
4. Engaging ECTC and the wider developer community to ~~use the likely post covid housing market conditions as an opportunity to build more affordable and social housing;~~ **continue to maximise the delivery of affordable and social housing on sites across the district cognisant of economic viability;**
5. Exploring further opportunities to facilitate working from home and remote locations **throughout the district** through the deployment across the district of initiatives such as 5G and ultrafast broadband infrastructure.

Proposed: Cllr Anna Bailey

Seconded: Cllr Josh Schumann

ANNUAL COUNCIL - 21 MAY 2020

AGENDA ITEM 10 – QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

Cllr Charlotte Cane:

Background:

In the ECDC Covid-19 Update on 15 May we were informed that:

“Risk assessments have been produced for both sites by our independent H & S advisers”. (Referring to Palace Green Homes’ sites at Haddenham and Ely).

We were further informed that on 7 May the Corporate Management Team and the Service Leads had logged their decision that:

“Palace Green Homes sites at Ely and Haddenham will re-open on 11/05/20.”

Questions:

1 - What are the legal implications of ECDC’s H&S advisers producing Risks Assessments for work to be carried out by ECTC Limited T/A Palace Green Homes?

2 – What are the legal implications of ECDC’s Corporate Management Team and the Service Leads taking decisions about when ECTC Limited T/A Palace Green Homes will re-open its sites?

3 – In particular, are our legal advisers confident that we have not put ourselves at risk of being seen to have impaired ‘the veil of incorporation’ by actively engaging in the provision of advice and the decision making for ECTC Limited T/A Palace Green Homes?

Cllr Mark Inskip:

Question to the Leader of the Council:

Prior to the COVID-19 office working restrictions, how many members of staff had been given permission under the Home Working Policy to work from home?

And in the light of the successful experience of working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic, will the Council review its current Home Working Policy to encourage more staff to take advantage of the option to work from home some or all of the time?

Cllr Alison Whelan:

Eleven months ago at the special full council meeting held on 19 June 2019, the Council resolved that "the Chief Executive be instructed to bring forward proposals to increase the level of affordable housing above statutory Planning requirements for Phase 2 of the MOD site, Ely."

Could the Leader of the Council update the Members on the progress towards developing these proposals and confirm when they will be presented to members for review?

Cllr Christine Whelan:

Mayor and the Citizens' Advice office

What communication has taken place between ECDC officers and/or members and the Mayor, Combined Authority officers and/or members in the last twelve months regarding the use or occupation of the premises used by Citizens Advice Rural Cambridgeshire in Market Street, Ely?

What is the current state of discussions between the district council and the Combined Authority regarding these premises?

LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, GROUP LEADERS AND DEPUTIES

Committee: Annual Council

Date: 21 May 2020

Author: Democratic Services Manager

[V1]

1.0 **ISSUE**

1.1 To receive details of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council; Political Groups; and Group Leaders and Deputies for the forthcoming year.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 That the details of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council; Political Groups; and Group Leaders and Deputies for the forthcoming municipal year, as reported at the Annual Council meeting be noted.

3.0 **BACKGROUND**

3.1 Following the establishment of an Independent Group of 2 Councillors in February 2020, the Council's currently declared Political Groups and their Leaders and Deputies are as follows:

<u>Conservative</u>	<u>Liberal Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>
Anna Bailey (Leader)	Lorna Dupré (Leader)	Sue Austen (Leader)
Joshua Schumann (Deputy)	Charlotte Cane (Deputy)	Paola Trimarco (Deputy)

3.2 In accordance with Article 2.03(b) of the Council Constitution, the declared Leader of the Council is Councillor Anna Bailey as Leader of the Conservative Group. In accordance with Article 2.03(c) of the Council Constitution, the declared Deputy Leader of the Council is Councillor Joshua Schumann as Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group.

Background Documents

None

Location

Room 214B
The Grange
Ely

Contact Officer

Tracy Couper
Democratic Services Manager
(01353) 665555
E-mail:

tracy.couper@eastcambs.gov.uk

POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY

Committee: Annual Council

Date: 21 May 2020

Author: Democratic Services Manager

[V2]

1.0 **ISSUE**

1.1 To receive details of the political balance of the Council and the implications for the allocation of seats on Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member Bodies.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 That Council notes the details of the political balance of the Council as set out in Appendix 1 and approves the allocation of seats on Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member Bodies as set out in Appendix 2, or agrees an alternative (on a Nem Con basis, if necessary).

3.0 **BACKGROUND**

3.1 Attached at Appendix 1 is a table showing the allocation of places on Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member Bodies in accordance with the requirements of the proportionality rules. Under Section 15(5)(a) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (see below), all seats on a Committee/Sub-Committee cannot be allocated to the same Political Group.

3.2 Following the establishment of an Independent Group of 2 Members in February 2020, Group Leaders were advised of the number of places available on each Committee to be filled by their Groups, and of any necessary adjustments to be made between the political Groups in their overall seat allocations. Attached at Appendix 2 are the allocation of seats on Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member Bodies agreed by Group Leaders in March 2020, to accord with the adjustments required under the proportionality rules.

3.3 At the Annual Council meeting held on 14 May 2013, the dissolution of the Council's Scrutiny Committee was approved. Similarly, the revised Committee structures approved by the Council on 15 April 2014, 11 April 2017 and 11 April 2019 did not include a Scrutiny Committee.

3.4 Agenda Item 13 deals with the appointments to be made to fill those places on Committees and other Member bodies.

4.0 THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING ACT 1989

4.1 Section 15(5) of the Act sets down the principles for the allocation of seats on Committees between the political Groups on the Council. The principles are applied in sequence and provide a safeguard to enable any distortion caused by rounding up or down to be remedied. The principles require, in effect, that:

- (a) all seats are not allocated to the same political Group.
- (b) the majority of seats are allocated to the political Group having a majority of the authority's membership.
- (c) subject to (a) and (b) above, the number of seats on the TOTAL of all committees allocated to a political Group bears the same proportion as the proportion of the seats held on full Council (this principle allows any accumulated distortion caused by rounding up or down in (d) below to be remedied).
- (d) subject to (a) to (c) above, the number of seats on each Committee allocated to a political Group bears the same proportion to the proportion on full Council.

4.2 The effect of rounding up or down across the overall number of seats to be allocated on Committees can be quite significant which is why the principles explicitly provide for any distortion to be rectified.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 None arising from this report.

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (Section 15) Local Government (Committees and Political Groups) Regulations 1990	Room 214B The Grange Ely	Tracy Couper Democratic Services Manager (01353) 665555 E-mail: tracy.couper@eastcambs.gov.uk

POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY

28 Members aligned to Political Groups

28 aligned Members – 54 seats: 1 Member = 1.929 seats

APPENDIX 1

PARTY	NO. OF COUNCILLORS	PROPORTION OF TOTAL
Conservative	15	53.571%
Liberal Democrat	11	39.286%
Independent	2	7.143%
	28	100%

BODY	TOTAL MEMBERS ON BODY	CONSERVATIVE [proportion of seats: 53.571%]		LIBERAL DEMOCRAT [proportion of seats: 39.286%]		INDEPENDENT [proportion of seats: 7.143%]	
Full Council	28	15	15	11	11	2	
Finance & Assets	9	4.821	5	3.536	4	0.643	1
Operational Services	9	4.821	5	3.536	4	0.643	1
Others:							
Licensing	10	5.357	5	3.929	4	0.714	1
Planning	11	5.893	6	4.322	4	0.786	1
F&A Hearings Sub-Cttee	7	3.750	4	2.750	3	0.500	1
Licensing (Non-Statutory) Sub-Cttee	5	2.679	3	1.964	2	0.357	0
Licensing (Statutory) Sub-Cttee	3	1.607	2	1.179	1	0.214	0
Total Seats on ordinary committees under strict proportionality	54	28.928	30	21.214	22	3.857	5
Total Seats	54	29 (need to cede 1)		21 (Need to cede 1)		4 (Need to cede 1)	

Notes:

Following consultation with Group Leaders, the Conservative Group have agreed to cede a place on F&A Hearings Sub-Committee, the Liberal Democrat Group have agreed to cede a place on Operational Services Committee and the Independent Group have agreed to cede a place on Finance and Assets Committee.

Proportionality does not apply to Anglia Revenues Partnership Joint Committee and previously it has been agreed by a Nem Con vote that proportionality should not be applied to Personnel Appeals Sub-Committee. The following allocations were agreed as a result of consultation with Group Leaders for 2019/20:

	Total Members on Body	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Independent
Anglia Revenues Partnership Joint Committee	1	1	0	0
Personnel Appeals Sub-Committee	3	2	1	0

POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY

28 Members aligned to Political Groups

28 aligned Members – 54 seats: 1 Member = 1.929 seats

APPENDIX 2

PARTY	NO. OF COUNCILLORS	PROPORTION OF TOTAL
Conservative	15	53.571%
Liberal Democrat	11	39.286%
Independent	2	7.143%
	28	100%

BODY	TOTAL MEMBERS ON BODY	CONSERVATIVE [proportion of seats: 53.571%]		LIBERAL DEMOCRAT [proportion of seats: 39.286%]		INDEPENDENT [proportion of seats: 7.143%]	
Full Council	28	15	15	11	11	2	
Finance & Assets	9	4.821	5	3.536	4	-	0
Operational Services	9	4.821	5	-	3	0.643	1
Others:							
Licensing	10	5.357	5	3.929	4	0.714	1
Planning	11	5.893	6	4.322	4	0.786	1
F&A Hearings Sub-Cttee	7	-	3	2.750	3	0.500	1
Licensing (Non-Statutory) Sub-Cttee	5	2.679	3	1.964	2	0.357	0
Licensing (Statutory) Sub-Cttee	3	1.607	2	1.179	1	0.214	0
Total Seats on ordinary committees under strict proportionality	54	28.928	29	21.214	21	3.857	4
Total Seats	54	29		21		4	

Notes:

Following consultation with Group Leaders, the Conservative Group have agreed to cede a place on F&A Hearings Sub-Committee, the Liberal Democrat Group have agreed to cede a place on Operational Services Committee and the Independent Group have agreed to cede a place on Finance and Assets Committee.

Proportionality does not apply to Anglia Revenues Partnership Joint Committee and previously it has been agreed by a Nem Con vote that proportionality should not be applied to Personnel Appeals Sub-Committee. The following allocations were agreed as a result of consultation with Group Leaders for 2019/20:

	Total Members on Body	Conservative	Liberal Democrat	Independent
Anglia Revenues Partnership Joint Committee	1	1	0	0
Personnel Appeals Sub-Committee	3	2	1	0

MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND SUB-COMMITTEES (INCLUDING SUBSTITUTES) AND OTHER MEMBER BODIES 2020/21

To: Annual Council

Date: 21 May 2020

Author: Democratic Services Manager

[V3]

1.0 **ISSUE**

1.1 To consider the appointment of Members and substitutes to Committees, Sub-Committees and to other Member bodies for 2020/21.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 That Council approves the membership of Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member bodies for 2020/21 attached at Appendix 1.

3.0 **BACKGROUND**

3.1 A list of Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member bodies for 2020/21 is set out in Appendix 1. A number of Sub-Committees and other informal Member bodies have been established by the relevant Committees and those continuing in 2020/21 will be re-appointed to at the 'mini meetings' of Committees that follow this Council meeting.

3.2 Group Leaders have been advised of the number of places available to be filled by their respective Groups on each body under the rules relating to proportionality (see also Agenda Item 12). The details of the proposed membership of Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member bodies for 2020/21 are shown in Appendix 1.

4.0 **APPENDICES**

4.1 Appendix 1 - List of Membership of Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member bodies for 2020/21.

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
ECDC Constitution	Room 214B The Grange Ely	Tracy Couper Democratic Services Manager (01353) 665555 E-mail: tracy.couper@eastcambs.gov.uk

COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND OTHER MEMBER BODIES 2020/21

FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE (9) 5:4:0 and up to 3 Subs	OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE (9) 5:3:1 and up to 3 Subs	PLANNING COMMITTEE (11) 6:4:1 and up to 3 Subs	LICENSING COMMITTEE (10) 5:4:1 and up 3 subs
<p><u>CONSERVATIVE</u> David Ambrose Smith Ian Bovingdon David Brown Bill Hunt Alan Sharp</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> Dan Schumann Josh Schumann Jo Webber</p>	<p><u>CONSERVATIVE</u> Christine Ambrose Smith David Ambrose Smith Lis Every Julia Huffer Jo Webber</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> Anna Bailey Dan Schumann Lisa Stubbs</p>	<p><u>CONSERVATIVE</u> Christine Ambrose Smith David Brown Lavinia Edwards Bill Hunt Josh Schumann Lisa Stubbs</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> David Ambrose Smith Lis Every Julia Huffer</p>	<p><u>CONSERVATIVE</u> David Ambrose Smith Lavinia Edwards Julia Huffer Alan Sharp Jo Webber</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> Christine Ambrose Smith Ian Bovingdon Lisa Stubbs</p>
<p><u>LIB DEM</u> Charlotte Cane Simon Harries John Trapp Alison Whelan (Lead Member)</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> Matt Downey Christine Whelan Gareth Wilson</p>	<p><u>LIB DEM</u> Mark Inskip (Lead Member) Victoria Charlesworth Christine Whelan</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> Simon Harries John Trapp Alison Whelan</p>	<p><u>LIB DEM</u> Matt Downey (Lead Member) Alec Jones John Trapp Gareth Wilson</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> Charlotte Cane Simon Harries Christine Whelan</p>	<p><u>LIB DEM</u> Simon Harries Mark Inskip Alec Jones (Lead Member) Gareth Wilson</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> Victoria Charlesworth Lorna Dupré John Trapp</p>
<p><u>INDEPENDENT</u> None</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> None</p>	<p><u>INDEPENDENT</u> Paola Trimarco (Lead Member)</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> Sue Austen</p>	<p><u>INDEPENDENT</u> Sue Austen (Lead Member)</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> Paola Trimarco</p>	<p><u>INDEPENDENT</u> Sue Austen (Lead Member)</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> Paola Trimarco</p>

COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES AND OTHER MEMBER BODIES 2020/21

<p>ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE (1) 1:0:0 and 2 Subs</p>			
<p><u>CONSERVATIVE</u> David Ambrose Smith</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> David Brown Josh Schumann</p>			
<p><u>LIB DEM</u> None</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> None</p>			
<p><u>INDEPENDENT</u> None</p> <p><u>Substitutes:</u> None</p>			

**CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY –
MEMBERSHIP AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS**

To: Council

Meeting Date: 21 May 2020

From: Chief Executive

Purpose: This report requests the Council to make appointments to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority for the municipal year 2020/2021.

Recommendation: That Full Council makes the following appointments/nominations to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority for the municipal year 2020/2021:

- (a) appoint the Leader of Council to act as the Council's appointee to the Combined Authority and the Deputy Leader to act as the substitute member;
- (b) nominate two members from the relevant parties as indicated in Appendix 1, to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and two substitute members from the same political parties as those appointed;
- (c) nominate one member from the relevant party as indicated in Appendix 2, to the Audit and Governance Committee and one substitute member from the same political party; and
- (d) authorise the Chief Executive to make any amendments to the appointments to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Audit and Governance Committee in consultation with the Political Group Leaders, if the political balance is amended by the Combined Authority between now and the next Council meeting.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. In accordance with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Order 2017, each Constituent Council must appoint one of its elected members and a substitute member to the Combined Authority. This is normally the Leader. The Council is asked to appoint a member and substitute member for the municipal year 2020/21.

Non-Executive Committees

- 1.2 The Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2016 requires the Combined Authority to establish an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and an Audit Committee. The Order sets out the rules for membership. The membership

of the Overview and Scrutiny and the Audit Committees as a whole should reflect so far as reasonably practicable the balance of political parties of the constituent councils when taken together. The balance is based on membership of political parties, not political groups, on constituent councils across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

- 1.3 There being no local elections held in May 2020 the Combined Authority has reviewed the political balance on constituent councils, based upon by-elections held throughout municipal year 2019/20 and has requested constituent councils to make the following appointments to these committees.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 1.4 The Combined Authority agreed that to ensure an equitable representation across each constituent authority, two members from each council should be appointed to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee representing a total membership of fourteen members.
- 1.5 The implications of applying political proportionality to a fourteen member Overview and Scrutiny Committee are detailed in **Appendix 1**.
- 1.6 The Council is required to nominate two members from the relevant parties as indicated in Appendix 1, to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2020/21 based on the political balance set out in Appendix 1.

Audit and Governance Committee

- 1.7 The Combined Authority agreed to establish an Audit and Governance Committee consisting of seven constituent members: one member from each constituent council.
- 1.8 The implications of applying political proportionality to a seven member Audit and Governance Committee are detailed in Appendix 2. The Council is required to nominate one member from the relevant party as indicated in Appendix 2, to sit on the Audit and Governance Committee for the municipal year 2020/21 based on the political balance set out in Appendix 2.

Substitute members

- 1.9 The Combined Authority has agreed that substitute members should be appointed for each position on the Audit and Governance Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Any substitute members should come from the same party as the Member they are substituting for to maintain political balance.
- 1.10 For the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the quorum set down in legislation is two thirds of the total membership. Therefore, it is preferable to appoint two substitute members in case both members are absent from a meeting and require a substitute.

2. CONCLUSION

- 2.1 All appointments and nominations made by constituent councils will be reported to the Combined Authority's annual meeting on 3 June 2020.
- 2.2 The political balance calculations in the Appendices are based on up to date statistics given by constituent councils and take account of the outcome of constituent council by-elections in 2019/20.
- 2.3 If there are consequential changes to the overall political balance, the Combined Authority may need to review the membership and the allocation of seats to political parties on the above committees. The Monitoring Officer will advise constituent councils if any subsequent changes have been necessary, and whether any changes need to be made to their nominations.
- 2.4 If there is no provision in constituent council's standing orders, the Council may wish to consider giving delegated powers for the Chief Executive to approve any consequential changes to these appointments in consultation with the relevant Party Group leaders.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 In accordance with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Order 2017, no remuneration is to be payable by the Combined Authority to its members.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

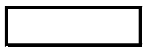
- 4.1 These are set out in the report. The Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2016 requires a combined authority to ensure that the members of the committee taken as a whole reflect so far as reasonably practicable the balance of political parties for the time being prevailing among members of the constituent councils when taken together.

Background Documents	Contact Officer
Combined Authority Reports	Robert Fox, Combined Authority Scrutiny Officer Robert.Fox@cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 14
POLITICAL BALANCE ACROSS THE COUNTY as at 8 May 2020**

	Total	Vacancy	Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Independent	Green	St. Neots Independent	Liberal Party	Werrington First	HDC Independent	Total	Entitlement
CAMBRIDGESHIRE	2		35	7	16	1		2				61	1 Conservative; 1 Lib Dem
CAMBRIDGE CITY	2			26	15	1						42	1 Labour; 1 Lib Dem
EAST CAMBS.	2		15		11	2						28	1 Conservative; 1 Lib Dem
FENLAND	2		25		2	10	1					38	2 Conservative
HUNTINGDONSHIRE	2		30	4	7	1					10	52	1 Conservative; 1 Lib Dem
PETERBOROUGH	2		27	17	9		2		1	3		59	1 Conservative; 1 Labour
SOUTH CAMBS.	2		11	2	30	2						45	1 Lib Dem; 1 Conservative
TOTAL	14	0	143	56	90	17	3	2	1	3	10	325	
POLITICAL BALANCE %			44.00	17.23	27.69	5.23	0.92	0.62	0.31	0.92	3.08		
Seat allocation			7	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	
Committee seat allocation	14		6.16	2.41	3.88	0.73	0.13	0.09	0.04	0.13	0.43	14	



APPENDIX 2

**Audit and Governance Committee of 7
POLITICAL BALANCE ACROSS THE COUNTY as at 8 May 2020**

	Total	Vacancy	Conservative	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Independent	Green	St. Neots Independent	Liberal Party	Werrington First	HDC Independent	Total
CAMBRIDGESHIRE	1		35	7	16	1		2				61
CAMBRIDGE CITY	1			26	15	1						42
EAST CAMBS.	1		15		11	2						28
FENLAND	1		25		2	10	1					38
HUNTINGDONSHIRE	1		30	4	7	1					10	52
PETERBOROUGH	1		27	17	9		2		1	3		59
SOUTH CAMBS.	1		11	2	30	2						45
TOTAL	7	0	143	56	90	17	3	2	1	3	10	325
POLITICAL BALANCE %			44.00	17.23	27.69	5.23	0.92	0.62	0.31	0.92	3.08	
Seat allocation			4	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Committee seat allocation	7		3.08	1.2061	1.9383	0.3661	0.0644	0.0434	0.0217	0.0644	0.2156	7

Entitlement
1 Conservative
1 Labour
1 Conservative
1 Conservative
1 Conservative
1 Liberal Democrat
1 Lib Dem



Agenda Item: 14(b)

**Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority
Reports from Constituent Council Representatives on the Combined Authority**

Meeting	Dates of Meeting	Representative
Mayoral Decision-Making Meeting	25th March 2020	Councillor Anna Bailey (Substitute: Councillor Joshua Schumann)
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	24th April 2020	Councillors Lorna Dupré and Alan Sharp (Substitutes: Councillors Charlotte Cane and David Ambrose-Smith)
Combined Authority Board	29th April 2020	Councillor Anna Bailey (Substitute: Councillor Joshua Schumann)

The above meetings have taken place in March and April 2020.

Mayoral Decision Making Meeting – Wednesday 25th March 2020

Due to Government guidance on social distancing, this meeting was being held remotely via Zoom. The law as it stood meant that these virtual arrangements could not stand in place of a physical meeting of the Combined Authority Board. In order for decisions to be made via these virtual arrangements they were made by the Mayor using his General Power of Competence. However, in order to ensure that these decisions remained as transparent and accountable as possible, officers introduced each report in the usual way and the Mayor invited the views of the members of the Combined Authority Board before taking each decision

This meeting took place on the 25th March 2020. The decision summary is attached as **Appendix 1**.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Friday 24th April 2020

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 24th April 2020, the decision summary is attached as **Appendix 2**.

Combined Authority Board – Wednesday 29th April 2020

The Combined Authority Board met on 29th April 2020, the decision summary is attached as **Appendix 3**.

The agendas and minutes of the meetings are on the Combined Authority's website – Link in the appendices.



CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY - MAYORAL DECISIONS FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH THE COMBINED AUTHORITY BOARD

Meeting: 25 March 2020

Agenda/Minutes: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Board - 25th March 2020

Item	Topic	Decision
Part 1 – Governance Items		
1.1	Announcements, Apologies and Declarations of Interest	Apologies were received from Councillors S Count (substituted by Councillor R Hickford) and R Fuller (substituted by Councillor J Neish) and Jessica Bawden, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group. No declarations of interest were made.
1.2	Minutes – 29 January 2020	Consideration of the minutes of the meeting on 29 January 2020 was deferred.
1.3	Petitions	None received.

1.4	Public Questions	None received.
1.5	Forward Plan – March 2020	Having consulted the Combined Authority Board, the Mayor resolved to: Approve the Forward Plan
1.6	Designation of Monitoring Officer and Director of Angle Holdings Ltd	The Board considered a report recommending the appointment of a new Monitoring Officer and Director of Angle Holdings Limited. Having consulted the Combined Authority Board, the Mayor resolved to: a) Designate Robert Parkin as Monitoring Officer with effect from 26th March 2020 b) Consent to the appointment of Robert Parkin as a Director of Angle Holdings Limited
1.7	Designation of Scrutiny Officer	The Board considered a report recommending the appointment of a new interim Scrutiny Officer. Having consulted the Combined Authority Board, the Mayor resolved to: Designate Robert Fox as the interim Scrutiny Officer until the return of the permanent Scrutiny Officer.
Part 2 – Finance		
2.1	Budget Monitor Update – March 2020	This report was deferred.

2.2	Treasury Management Strategies 2020-21	<p>The Board considered a report outlining the draft Treasury Management Strategies for 2020/21.</p> <p>Having consulted the Combined Authority Board, the Mayor resolved to:</p> <p>a) Approve the following Treasury Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The Capital Strategy 2020/21 ii. The Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21 iii. The Investment Strategy 2020/21 iv. The Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2020/21 <p>b) Approve the creation of a £40m 'top up' fund to extend the availability of recycled funding to bring additional affordable housing to the market.</p>
Part 3 - Combined Authority Decisions		
3.1	Market Towns Programme - Approval of Masterplans for Huntingdonshire	<p>The Board considered a report requesting approval of the 'Prospectus for Growth' Market Town Masterplans produced for the Huntingdonshire towns of St Ives, Huntingdon and Ramsey.</p> <p>Having consulted the Combined Authority Board, the Mayor resolved to:</p> <p>Approve the Huntingdonshire 'Prospectus for Growth' Market Town Masterplans produced for St Ives, Huntingdon and Ramsey.</p>
By Recommendation to the Combined Authority:		
Part 4 – Transport & Infrastructure Committee Recommendations to the Combined Authority		
4.1	Lancaster Way A142/ A10 Roundabout Improvements	This report was deferred.

4.2	St Neots River Great Ouse Northern Crossing Cycle Bridge	This report was deferred.
By Recommendation to the Combined Authority		
Part 5 – Housing and Communities Committee Recommendations to the Combined Authority		
5.1	£100m Affordable Housing Programme (Non-Grant) - Cambridge City, Histon Road, Development Loan to Laragh Homes	<p>The Board considered a report seeking approval for the provision of a 30 month repayable loan facility capped at £9.637m to Histon Road Development LLP for the development of a 27 unit housing scheme at 295-301 Histon Road, Cambridge CB4 3NF.</p> <p>Having consulted the Combined Authority Board, the Mayor resolved to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approve the provision of a loan facility of £9.637m to Histon Road Developments LLP for a scheme of 27 units based on the heads of terms detailed in exempt Appendix 1. b) Delegate authority to the Director of Housing and Development, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, the Monitoring Officer and the Lead Member for Investment and Finance, to conclude any necessary legal documentation, including the determination of the interest rate to be charged and the security for the loan by way of a first charge upon the land.
By Recommendation to the Combined Authority		
Part 6 – Business Board Recommendations to the Combined Authority		
6.1	Business Board Governance Review	The Board considered a report presenting the findings of the Business Board Governance Review and requesting approval of its recommendations.

		<p>Having consulted the Combined Authority Board, the Mayor resolved to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approve the preliminary recommendations and next steps outlined in the Appendix. b) Delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer to amend the Assurance Framework and Constitution to reflect the recommendations outlined in the Appendix.
6.2	Enterprise Zone Funding Utilisation	<p>The Board considered a report seeking approval to revise the level of financial commitment made against Combined Authority Enterprise Zone NNDR income and reallocate a proportion to Local Growth Funds (LGF).</p> <p>Having consulted the Combined Authority Board, the Mayor resolved to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Approve the reallocation of £306,313 (representing 75% of all eligible costs) from Enterprise Zone National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) income to Local Growth Fund.</p>
6.3	Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Sector Strategy	This report was deferred.
Part 7 – Urgent Report		
7.1	Combined Authority Response to Covid-19	<p>The Board considered a report outlining the Combined Authority’s response to COVID-19.</p> <p>Having consulted the Combined Authority Board, the Mayor resolved to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Note the proposed Combined Authority response to COVID-19 set out in this report

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">b) Note the development of medium term business recovery supportc) Note the offer of interest accruing repayment holidays to companies in receipt of a Local Growth Fund loans covering repayments due between 24th March 2020 and 31st August 2020d) Note the adjustment of the current Small Capital Grant Scheme criteria on Intervention rates, Jobs output value ratio to grant value, including safeguarded jobs in output measures for grants, subject to consultation with BEIS advice.
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Overview and Scrutiny Committee Decision Summary

Meeting: 24 April 2020

Agenda/Minutes [Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 24th April 2020](#)

Chair: Cllr Lorna Dupre

Summary of decisions taken at this meeting

Item	Topic	Decision <i>[None of the decisions below are key decisions]</i>
1.	Apologies	Apologies were received from: Cllr P Heylings (substituted by Cllr P Fane), and Cllr K Price (substituted by Cllr C McQueen)
2.	Declaration of Interests	There were no declarations of interest
3.	Minutes of the last meeting held on 24 February 2020	The minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2020 were agreed as a correct record.
4.	Public Questions	There were no public questions received.

5.	The Mayor of the Combined Authority	<p>Mayor James Palmer was in attendance.</p> <p>Any decision related to the relocation of the Combined Authority offices would be presented to the Combined Authority Board as a matter of process.</p> <p>The Mayor gave his commitment that transport links into Alconbury would be provided for when the County Council moves its offices. A timeline for this implementation would be published.</p>
6.	The Chair of the Business Board	<p>Austen Adams, Chair of the Business Board was in attendance.</p> <p>AGREED:</p> <p>a) The response from BEIS will be shared with the O&S Committee once established this is available publicly and also be made available on the Business Board website</p>
7.	Market Town Masterplans	<p>The East Cambridgeshire Market Town Masterplans would be presented to the Combined Authority Board in June 2020.</p>
8.	Chairman of the Independent Commission on Climate Change	<p>Process for the appointment of a Chairman was ongoing.</p> <p>The Commission appointees would take account of broad diversity requirements.</p> <p>Constituent authorities were being kept abreast of developments on technical work.</p> <p>AGREED:</p> <p>a) Once appointed the Chair of the Commission be invited to attend the O&S Committee as soon as is practicable</p>

9.	Wisbech Rail Project	<p>The Final Business Case for the project was due in June 2020.</p> <p>There was ongoing liaison with Network Rail regard to the Ely expansion.</p> <p>AGREED:</p> <p>a) Following publication of the Final Business Case a further update be presented to the O&S Committee</p>
10.	Overview & Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2019/20	<p>The report was endorsed.</p> <p>AGREED:</p> <p>a) The request by the Bus Review Task & Finish Group to continue its work to take into account the publication of the Bus Review Final Business Case in January 2020 be deferred for consideration by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee appointed for 2020/21</p> <p>b) The recommendations of the Bus Review Task & Finish Group were agreed</p> <p>c) The extension to the work of the CAM Metro Task & Finish Group to May 2020 was agreed</p> <p>d) It was agreed the Annual report be submitted to the Combined Authority Board</p>

11.	Combined Authority Board Agenda	<p>The following questions from the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee were:</p> <p>AGREED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) When and how does the Combined Authority intend to publish the results of the recent public consultation on the CAM Metro, and how does it intend to use the response to guide its future work on this scheme? b) The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is concerned by the delay in the appointment of a Chairman of the Independent Commission on Climate Change. Can the Overview & Scrutiny Committee have a statement on the progress on an appointment, and on the progress of work in this area, and when the Committee might expect some engagement with the Chairman once appointed? c) What have been the additional set-up costs of the Angle Holdings traded companies as it is stated that some of these costs would have been incurred in any case? d) The answer provided to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in March on the plans by Homes England to proactively fund accessible homes and homes that tackle climate change indicated an allocation of £125 million of government monies is being made available through the Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee recognises this will be used to develop new affordable homes, which meet the needs of older people and disabled adults. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee has heard that, to date, just one disabled family has been assisted in the Combined Authority area. Can the Board assure the Overview & Scrutiny Committee that the Combined Authority will be doing all it possibly can to
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		<p>improve the accessibility of new homes and to achieve homes that meet the 2050 carbon-neutral target?</p> <p>e) The Overview & Scrutiny Committee has expressed some reservation around the transparency of the process to date regarding the Combined Authority headquarters move to Ely. Can the Committee therefore be supplied with details of the process, both to date and moving forward, and when the Board is expected to be asked to make the decision regarding the lease at Alconbury and any new lease to be entered into?</p>
12.	Combined Authority Forward Plan	<p>AGREED:</p> <p>a) The O&S Committee appointed for 2020/21 to consider going forward</p>
13.	Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme	<p>AGREED:</p> <p>a) The O&S Committee appointed for 2020/21 to consider going forward</p>
14.	Committee Meetings – Lead Member Questions and Answers	<p>Questions for the Skills Committee from Cllr Coles:</p> <p>a) Regarding the Innovation fund item on the agenda: Is the premise of the fund still on target when the impact of social distancing is to have substantial and medium-term impact on the ability of training organisations to delivery any face-to-face training? Is there a review in place to consider how best to deliver training and skills through virtual and distance learning programmes over all areas if social distancing measures make standard training delivery more difficult? How nimble is the current strategy to the possible impact of longer-term social distancing measures?</p> <p>b) Regarding the Work Readiness and Careers Aspiration Pilot item on the agenda: We note the project is on hold for six months due to school closure measures. What is being done over this six-month period to ensure the</p>

		<p>project can restart after the pause in work – NEET learners are already the most difficult group to engage with in terms of training delivery. What assurances can be given that the participating students will remain engaged with the project and be guided into work in the current climate? What alternatives are in place to facilitate their continued engagement during the “lockdown” period?</p> <p>c) Regarding the ESB Board item on the agenda: Clearly the impact of the pandemic on businesses in the CA area has been profound and there are significant levels of uncertainty ahead as the country seeks to recover from the “lockdown”. How well is the ESB sighted on the impact of the pandemic measures on local business and how long will it take to be able to provide strategic leadership on what future skills development and learning programmes will be necessary to support local businesses in the recovery phase?</p> <p>Questions for the Housing & Communities Committee from Cllr Murphy:</p> <p>Questions for the Transport & Infrastructure Committee from Cllr Sharp:</p> <p>a) Budget & Performance Report: In terms of capital spend, a number of the projects have been delayed because of circumstances and now with Covid-19?</p> <p>b) Are there any thoughts on how this will affect the plan for deliverables for 2020/2021?</p> <p>c) Presumably, there may need to be a revision of the MTFP and budget for 2020/2021 and what is achievable in the new world that we are living in?</p> <p>d) Bus Review: The vision of the bus network is very laudable and when implemented will provide a solution in helping the transport infrastructure. How are we working with other counties to get connectivity to out of county</p>
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		<p>locations around the area, as this affects a number of communities around the county?</p> <p>e) When the scheme is set-up, what proposals are there for encouraging people out of the car and onto public transport. We can set the system up and show that it runs well, but what positive steps can we make to increase usage?</p>
15.	Date of next meeting	<p>AGREED:</p> <p>a) The Scrutiny Officer to circulate dates for week commencing 25 May 2020</p> <p>b) The meeting will be held virtually</p>



CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY BOARD - Decision Summary

Meeting: 29 April 2020

Agenda/Minutes: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Board - 29th April 2020

Item	Topic	Decision
Part 1 – Governance Items		
1.1	Announcements, Apologies and Declarations of Interest	<p>Apologies were received from Councillor Ray Bisby, Acting Police and Crime Commissioner for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.</p> <p>A declaration of interest was made by Mayor James Palmer in Item 6.1: Consent to the Adoption of a Revised Business Plan for Angle Developments (East) Limited. The Mayor left the meeting for the duration of this item and the vote.</p>
1.2	Minutes of the Combined Authority Board meeting 29 January 2020	The minutes of the meeting on 29 January 2020 were confirmed as an accurate record.

1.3	Minutes of the Mayoral decision-making meeting 25 March 2020	The minutes of the Mayoral decision making meeting on 25 March 2020 were confirmed as an accurate record.
1.4	Petitions and public questions	None received
1.5	Forward Plan – 21 April 2020	It was resolved to: Approve the Forward Plan
Part 2 – Finance		
2.1	Budget Monitor Update – April 2020	The Board considered a report providing an update on the 2019/20 financial position of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority as at 29 th February 2020. It was resolved to: Note the updated financial position of the Combined Authority for the year.
Part 3 - Combined Authority Decisions		
3.1	Update on the Combined Authority's response to Covid-19 and Funding Decisions	The Board considered a report providing an update on the Combined Authority's response to COVID-19 and requesting approval of further recommendations to enhance the response work. It was resolved to: a) Approve the Combined Authority responses to COVID-19, as described in this report b) Approve the Recover Orient Adapt and Regrowth (ROAR) approach, set out in appendix A

		<p>c) Approve the offer of interest-accruing repayment holidays to companies in receipt of a Local Growth Fund loans, covering repayments due between 24th March 2020 and 31st August 2020</p> <p>d) Approve the adjustment of the current Small Capital Grant Scheme eligibility criteria on Intervention rates, Jobs output-value ratio to grant-value, including safeguarded jobs in output measures for grants, subject to consultation with BEIS where appropriate</p> <p>e) Approve the allocation of £3million Local Growth Funding to the COVID-19 Capital Grant Scheme, from returned unallocated Local Growth Funding.</p> <p>f) Approve the creation of a £500,000 capital grant scheme aimed at supporting the smallest businesses in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority area and delegate to the Director of Business and Skills, in consultation with the Mayor, the Section 73 and the Monitoring Officer, the setting of detailed parameters and criteria for the scheme.</p>
3.2	Sustainable Travel	<p>The Board considered a report requesting the release of funding for the 2020/21 financial year for Peterborough Council's work on Sustainable Travel.</p> <p>It was resolved to:</p> <p>Approve the release of £150,000 from the provisional allocation in the Medium-Term Financial Plan to continue with the sustainable travel project within Peterborough.</p>

3.3	Local Transport Plan Sub Strategy – Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro	<p>The Board considered a report reviewing and requesting agreement for the Local Transport Plan (LTP) sub-strategy setting out the vision for the Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro (CAM) as a whole to go to public consultation.</p> <p>It was resolved to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Note the draft Cambridgeshire Autonomous Metro (CAM) Local Transport Plan Sub Strategy that sets out the vision for the CAM metro as a whole, against which schemes contributing to the CAM will be considered; and b) Agree for a public consultation exercise to be conducted in relation to the proposed Sub Strategy with the results of that consultation being brought back to a further meeting of the Combined Authority Board.
<p>By Recommendation to the Combined Authority:</p> <p>Part 4 – Transport & Infrastructure Committee Recommendations to the Combined Authority</p>		
4.1	Lancaster Way A142 - A10 Roundabout Improvements	<p>The Board considered a report presenting a summary of the position on the A142/A10 roundabout scheme to date.</p> <p>It was resolved to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Approve a new additional budget of £1,168,243.20 from the 2020/21 single pot allocation to reflect current cost estimate, including a 20% risk allowance. b) Grant the Director of Delivery and Strategy, in consultation with the Mayor, delegated authority to either (i) approve a reduction in the scope of the scheme to enable delivery of the BP Roundabout alone in the event of the risks set out at paragraph 2.7 of the report materialising or (ii) to conduct a review of the budget and timetable for the project should there be any

		<p>further costs arising and refer approval of any additional budget to the Transport Committee.</p> <p>c) Delegate authority to an extraordinary Transport Committee to approve additional budget for the scheme subject to a full account from the Highways Authority of the reasons for the budget and an assessment of the risks for Covid.</p> <p>d) Agree that the Transport Committee are authorised to approve any additional budget and Covid risk subject to ratification of that budget at the next Board meeting.</p>
4.2	St Neots River Great Ouse Northern Crossing Cycle Bridge	<p>The Board considered a report summarising the work to date on the St Neots Foot and Cycle Bridge at Regatta Meadows. The report also sought approval that the scheme should not proceed as it no longer met the requirements for Value for Money set out in the Combined Authority's Assurance Framework.</p> <p>It was resolved to:</p> <p>a) Agree that work on the St Neots Foot and Cycle Bridge should cease and the project be removed from the Combined Authority's Business Plan; and</p> <p>b) Agree that the £3.1m CPCA funding allocated to the project be re-allocated to projects within the St Neots Masterplan.</p>

By Recommendation to the Combined Authority		
Part 5 – Skills Committee Recommendations to the Combined Authority		
5.1	Adult Education Budget Innovation Fund	<p>The Board considered a report recommending the establishment of an Adult Education Budget (AEB) Innovation Fund.</p> <p>It was resolved to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Approve the carry forward of 50% of the 2019-20 underspend on the “AEB Devolution Programme – ITP and grant ” funding lines and ring-fence this for the Innovation Fund in the 2020-21 Budget, up to a maximum of £500k.</p>
By Recommendation to the Combined Authority		
Part 6 – Housing and Communities Recommendations to the Combined Authority		
6.1	Consent to the Adoption of a Revised Business Plan for Angle Developments (East) Limited	<p>The Board considered a report requesting that consent be given to the adoption of the revised business plan for Angle Development (East) Limited.</p> <p>It was resolved to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Consent to the adoption of the revised business plan for Angle Development (East) Limited at Appendix 3.</p>

THE MAKING (ADOPTION) OF THE WITCHFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Committee: Full Council

Date: 21 May 2020

Author: Richard Kay, Strategic Planning Manager

[V4]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 Following the successful referendum on 19 March 2020, the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan needs to be formally 'made' by East Cambridgeshire District Council and thereby be formalised as part of the Development Plan (alongside the 2015 Local Plan and other made Neighbourhood Plans) for East Cambridgeshire. Please note that the word 'made' is the word used in legislation when referring to Neighbourhood Plans, and means to all intents and purposes 'adopted'.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 That the Council:

- (A) congratulates Witchford Parish Council on its preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan and a successful referendum outcome, becoming the third parish council to do so in East Cambridgeshire; and
- (B) formally makes the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan (as attached at Appendix 1) part of the Development Plan for East Cambridgeshire with immediate effect.

3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

3.1 At the Parish Council's request, the Witchford Neighbourhood Area was designated by East Cambridgeshire District Council in August 2016. This paved the way for a Neighbourhood Plan to be prepared.

3.2 Following preliminary consultation and evidence gathering, the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to the Council by Witchford Parish Council on 17 October 2019. As required by legislation, the District Council then published the Plan, for the purpose of final consultation, in October and November 2019. Following the publication period, the District Council submitted the Plan for independent examination. The examination commenced in December 2019 and concluded in February 2020. The examination was carried out through written representations. No public hearing session was required.

3.3 The examiner's report concluded that, subject to recommended modifications being followed (which were relatively minor in nature), the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan makes appropriate provision for sustainable development;

has appropriate regard to national policy; is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the local area; and is compatible with EU obligations, including human rights requirements.

- 3.4 In February 2020, the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan was modified as per the examiner's recommendations. The District Council reviewed the modified plan, and was satisfied the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan meets the 'basic conditions' and other legal requirements, as detailed in the required Decision Statement (published 09 February 2020). Following publication of the Decision Statement, the Council proceeded to arrange a referendum.
- 3.5 In March 2020, a legal challenge was lodged by an external party against the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan on the grounds that, in summary, the Plan had not complied with legislative requirements. For the avoidance of doubt, the Council considers that the plan *does* meet its legal obligations, as discussed at para. 3.4.
- 3.6 As part of its legal challenge the external party tried, but was unsuccessful, in obtaining an injunction from the courts to prevent the Council from holding a referendum on the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan. Whilst the legal challenge remains ongoing, the status of the Plan is unaffected until the challenge is concluded. In addition, more recently, a second legal challenge has been lodged, but again, the Plan is unaffected until that challenge is concluded. The two challenges are by separate parties, both of whom have land interests in the Witchford area.
- 3.7 The Council proceeded to hold the referendum on Thursday 19 March 2020. Voters in Witchford were asked the following question (the question wording being set by legislation):
- Do you want East Cambridgeshire District Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Witchford to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'*
- 3.8 Of the votes cast, 572 were in favour and 25 were against. 2 ballot papers were rejected.
- 3.9 With approximately 95% of votes in favour, the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan received the majority support it needed. Following the referendum result, the Neighbourhood Planning Act (2017) automatically gave the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan the same legal status as a plan which has been made (or 'adopted') by the applicable District Council. Accordingly, since the referendum result, the Council has treated the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan as part of the Development Plan for the purposes of decision-making.
- 3.10 However, despite this automatic post-referendum legal position, East Cambridgeshire District Council is required (by virtue of 38A(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004) to formally 'make' the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan part of the Development Plan for the district.

3.11 The only exception to 38A(4) is if the Council considers “that the making of the Plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998)” (see s38A(6) of the Act). Officers, having carefully considered throughout the process the Plan, the evidence base of the Plan, the representations received on the Plan, the Examiner’s Report and the submitted legal challenges, do not consider there to be any such breach, and hence recommend the plan to be made.

4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The Witchford Neighbourhood Plan received majority support at a duly held referendum of 19 March 2020. The District Council is therefore required to ‘make’ the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan part of the Development Plan for East Cambridgeshire, as per the will of the majority of voters in Witchford. In doing so, legally it has the same status as the 2015 East Cambridgeshire Local Plan. The ongoing legal challenge does not prevent the Council from adopting the plan, nor does it remove the Council’s obligation to uphold the referendum result.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this decision. Costs incurred to date by the District Council (for example, officer support and referendum costs) have been broadly covered by the fixed £25,000 grant payable to East Cambridgeshire District Council by Government (a grant payable for each Neighbourhood Plan which reaches the referendum stage).

5.2 Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

5.3 Climate Impact Assessment not required.

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix 1: Witchford Neighbourhood Plan (circulated separately)

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
	Room 12, The Grange, Ely	Edward Dade Strategic Planning Officer (01353) 616458 E-mail: edward.dade@eastcambs.gov.uk



WITCHFORD Neighbourhood Plan

AS MADE (ADOPTED) ON 21 MAY 2020

Witchford Neighbourhood Plan

Foreword

Witchford Neighbourhood Plan – what is it, and why have we spent three years developing it?

It is a land-use plan that fits into the East Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan, but it is focussed on the priorities of our community.

Witchford has changed massively over the last fifty years, from a community that needed Rackham School to accommodate sixty pupils to one that must now educate three hundred plus. The village doubled its population in the 1990s as new housing built to the north and south of Main Street was occupied. Witchford is facing massive unexpected and unplanned change following the failure of the District Council to allocate enough land to meet government housing targets. A Neighbourhood Plan can influence the type and location of new housing and will ensure that more of the money raised from development will be available to the parish rather than being spent across the district.

The changes to the village have had positive as well as negative impacts. The new population has brought a diversity of employment and much greater educational opportunities. New development need not be feared if it meets local needs. The reasonable fear of change, which we cannot prevent, can be tempered by obtaining the benefits from new development for our community, for example more affordable housing or potentially assistance with village hall improvements.

The Plan seeks to robustly defend undeveloped green spaces that are particularly special to the community, while agreeing to the development of others that would have less negative impact. All the priorities of the Plan have been selected following analysis of the consultation questionnaires and feedback from issues raised at stalls run by volunteers at village events. We have tried to get responses from all sections of the community, young and old, those working here and elsewhere and also local employers. We have benefitted from professional assistance in landscape appraisal and in structuring and writing the document.

We have received many comments on issues that cannot be addressed through this land-use based process. These include health provision, educational facilities, retail expansion and some transport issues. All the responses will provide an evidence base for further work by the Parish Council.

The Neighbourhood Plan will provide reassurance that all planning applications will have to take into account the policies and priorities of the Plan. In addition to the East Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan will have independent legal status as a planning document.

The Plan aims to give greater certainty over development and seeks to anticipate change that is likely in the period to 2031. I hope it meets with your approval and support.

Ian Allen Chairman Neighbourhood Plan Committee

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Witchford Neighbourhood Plan was commissioned by the Parish Council in 2016, who then created a Steering Group

The Steering Group comprised: Councillor Ian Allen (Chairman), Cllr Rose Lacey, Mrs Jo Forrest, Mrs Jane Heath, Mr Kenneth Lee and Mrs Shelagh Monteith, with professional planning support from Modicum Planning.

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Advice and feedback were provided by the Strategic Planning Officer at East Cambridgeshire District Council

The Witchford Neighbourhood Plan Landscape appraisal was undertaken by Alison Farmer of Alison Farmer Associates

On behalf of the Parish Council and personally, I thank all who have contributed to bringing the plan to fruition not least the whole community of Witchford for participation in the creation of this important document

Ian Allen

Chair

Witchford Neighbourhood Plan Committee

Fig. 1 - Witchford Neighbourhood Plan Process



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Appendices:

Appendix 1 Documentary evidence used in the production of Witchford Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 2 Complementary Projects List

In Chapter 3 ‘The Key Issues Facing Witchford’, quotes shown in blocks are comments *in their own words* taken directly from the Witchford residents’ Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire February 2018.

1. Introduction

1.1 This document is the Made Witchford Neighbourhood Plan.

About Neighbourhood Plans

1.2 The Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 gave local communities new powers to directly influence how the places they live in will develop in the future by producing Neighbourhood Development Plans. This is reinforced by the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 which states "*Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies.*" (para.29). Witchford's Neighbourhood Plan has been produced under these powers.

1.3 When adopted, the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan will have the same status as the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan, becoming part of the 'development plan'. Decisions on planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material conditions indicate otherwise. As such this Neighbourhood Plan will provide an important framework for how Witchford will develop in the coming years.

1.4 The Local Planning Authority covering the Neighbourhood Area is East Cambridgeshire District Council. The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for its area and must have regard to national policy and advice. The Local Plan currently in force is the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan adopted 21st April 2015

About the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan

1.5 This Neighbourhood Development Plan (called the 'Witchford Neighbourhood Plan' in the rest of this document) is submitted by Witchford Parish Council on behalf of the community of Witchford. This document covers the period 2019 – 2031, mirroring the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan which covers the period 2011-2031.

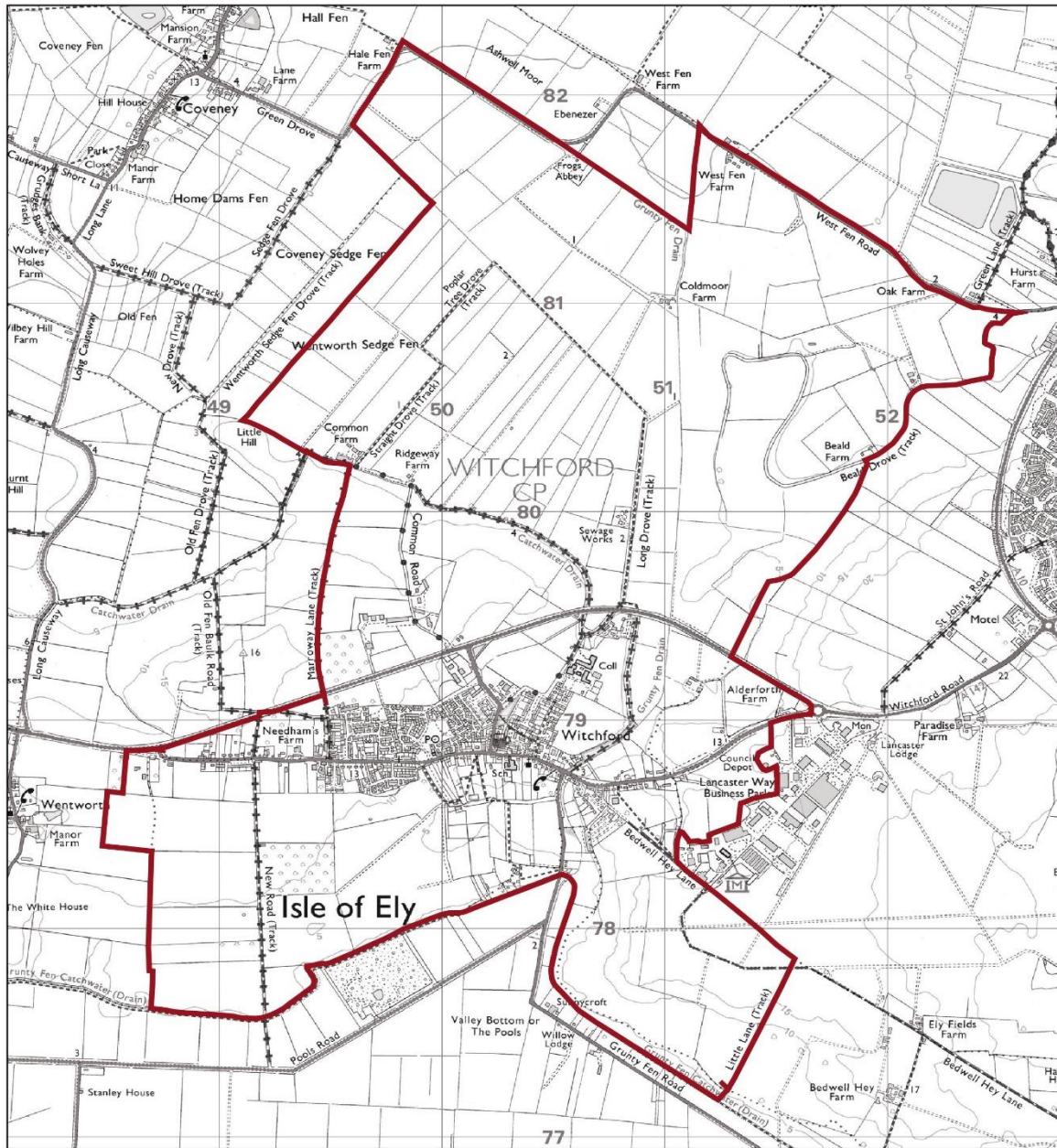
1.6 The purpose of the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan is to allow the community to form a vision for the future of Witchford, and to produce a range of planning policies that will ensure future development is sustainable and in sympathy with that vision.

The Vision Statement that underpins this Neighbourhood Plan is:

'To value and protect the rural character and community spirit of Witchford, ensuring that future development meets local needs'

Through this Neighbourhood Plan, Witchford will be able to ensure that its vision of a distinct, thriving community sits firmly within the local planning framework.

1.7 The Witchford Neighbourhood Plan Area covers the whole of the administrative parish of Witchford. Neighbourhood Area designation was confirmed by East Cambridgeshire District Council on 26th August 2016. The Witchford parish boundary was altered by means of the East Cambridgeshire District Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2018 and the Neighbourhood Plan Area was amended accordingly on 6th February 2019.



Witchford Neighbourhood Area

Key

 Witchford Neighbourhood Area



**East Cambridgeshire
District Council**

Date: 02/05/2019
Scale: 1:25,000



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Map 1: Witchford Neighbourhood Plan Area

2. About the Witchford Neighbourhood Area

2.1 About Witchford

Witchford is a parish within the Local Authority area of East Cambridgeshire District Council. The heart of the village lies about three miles south west of Ely city centre. The village itself lies to the south of the A142. However, the parish boundary takes in a much larger, mainly rural, hinterland which extends both southwards and northwards from the village. The village is situated in the Isle of Ely, one of the larger islands of higher ground which prior to the drainage of the Fens in the seventeenth century remained dry and habitable when the low-lying fens were flooded. Archaeology indicates that the area was settled from Roman times, and the village is mentioned in Domesday Book. Economic activity was mainly agricultural; by the early-twentieth century Witchford had also developed as a major horse-trading centre. In 1942 Witchford RAF Station was built on land east of the village, remaining operational until the end of the Second World War. Its location now forms the core of Lancaster Way Business Park. Witchford developed as a linear settlement along the main road west of Ely; this is the Main Street of the village where all the older housing is situated. The A142 bypass to the north of the village was constructed in 1989 and housing development followed, with two large estates built to the north of Main Street in the 1990s.

2.2 Settlement form and character

The Witchford Landscape Appraisal (WLA) identifies three distinct built forms:

- The historic core, a concentration of historic buildings (including St Andrew's Church, the telephone kiosk and five houses along Main Street) built in traditional yellow brick and local vernacular styles reflecting rural cottages and farmhouses. Buildings often sit at the edge of the pavement along Main Street, and are predominately one plot deep, creating a clearly defined streetscape;
- An area of linear development along Sutton Road comprising a dispersed pattern of historic farm buildings/rural cottages separated by more recent infill dwellings and notable areas of open space/agricultural land. Dwellings are often set back from the road with front garden plots and the character of Sutton Road is rural with grass verges, hedges and trees; and
- An area of infill estate development which has established in the second half of the 20th century to the north of Main Street. In these areas houses have a visual uniformity and are arranged in cul-de-sac road layouts.

The Witchford Landscape Appraisal describes Witchford as *"a typical fenland settlement in that it is primarily located on the south facing slopes of a low hill surrounded by open fenland farmland and has historically comprised a linear arrangement of dwellings and farms along the road which connected Ely to March. At right angles to this route are 'drove roads' and lanes which connected the settlement to the wider fen/common. The village is unusual for two reasons, firstly in its proximity to Ely and secondly its historic focus on a shallow valley which separates the wider Isle of Ely from the lower, smaller island on which the village sits. The subtle changes in topography and arrangement/hierarchy of linear routes has shaped the form and feel of the village and also affects the gateways. The A142 has had a relatively small influence on settlement gateways and continues to be perceived as separate from the village."*

2.3 Landscape

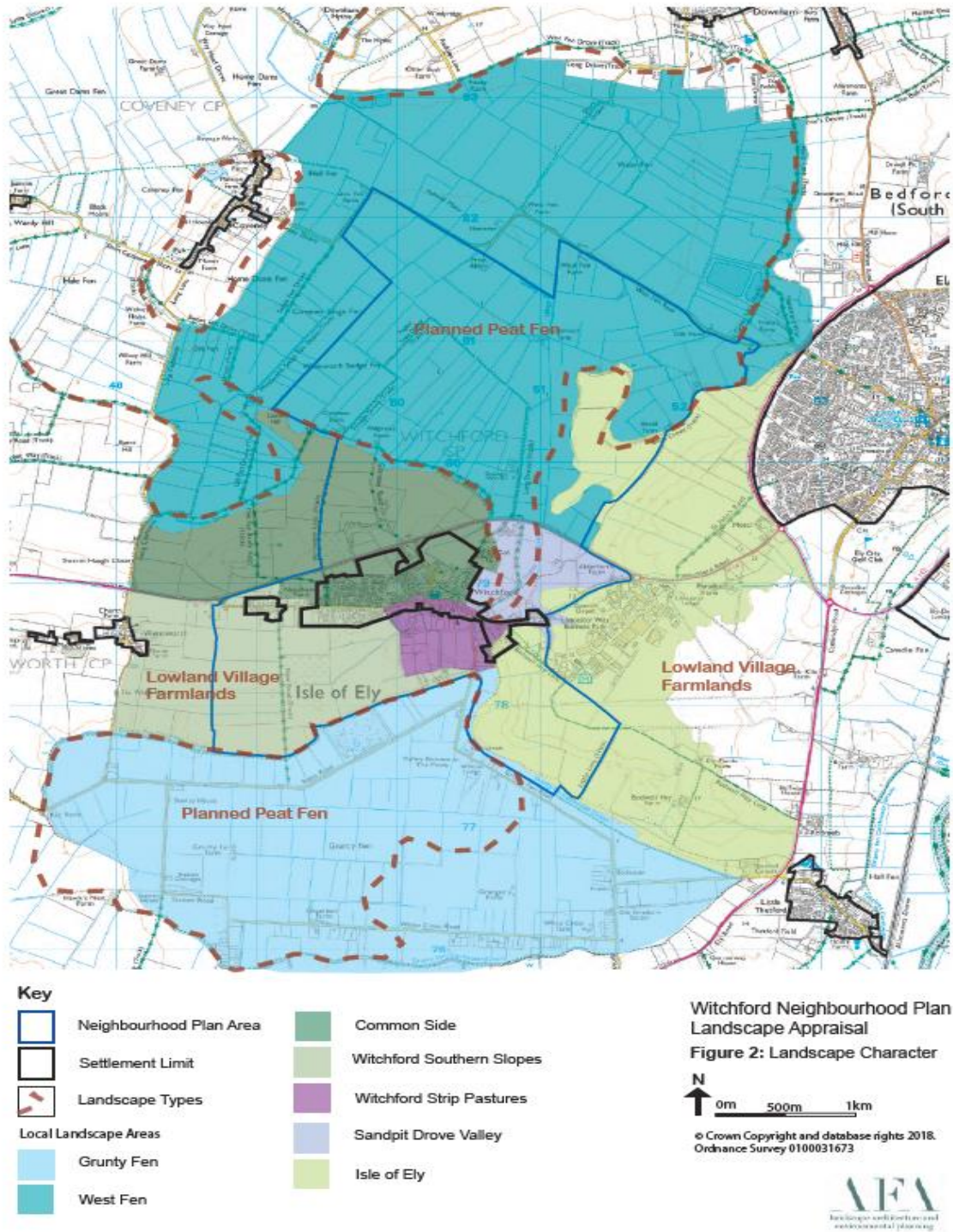
National Character Area Profiles, produced by Natural England, are broad divisions of landscape forming the basic units of cohesive countryside character. Witchford falls within National Character Area 46 The Fens, described as *"a distinctive, historic and human influenced wetland landscape which formerly constituted the largest wetland area in England. The area is notable for its large-scale, flat, open landscape with extensive vistas*

to level horizons. The level, open topography shapes the impression of huge skies which convey a strong sense of place, tranquility and inspiration.”

The East of England Landscape Typology defines two landscape character types in the Witchford plan area: Lowland Village Farmland and Planned Peat Fen (shown on Map 2).

The Witchford Landscape Appraisal supplements the Landscape Typology and draws out local variations in character. The assessment defines a further seven local character areas which are geographically specific and unique. The settlement character and landscape context are described for each character area. The assessment illustrates the variety of character in the plan area and helps with understanding sense of place in Witchford and the wider parish. The character areas help to describe the variety of character found within the Neighbourhood Plan area and local sense of place. These areas are:

- Grunty Fen
- West Fen
- Common Side
- Witchford Southern Slopes
- Witchford Historic Core and Strip Pastures
- Sandpit Drove Valley
- Island of Ely



Map 2: Extract from the Witchford Landscape Appraisal

2.4 The residents of Witchford

Witchford's population stood at 2,360 in 2015. Witchford experienced significant growth during the 1990s but has been much more stable recently. The population grew from 1,440 in 1991 to 2,270 in 2001, and has grown much more slowly since. Witchford is a popular village for families. There are high levels of family households and school age children. In contrast, there is a very low proportion of people in their 20s.

Economic activity rates are high in Witchford. This is heavily influenced by high levels of part-time working among women. There are relatively few people employed in professional roles. Witchford employed residents are more likely to be employed in 'intermediate' occupations such as administration and sales. This is related to qualification levels. Relatively few people in Witchford are qualified to Higher Education level (see Demographic and Socio-Economic report (DSER), 2017).

Witchford experiences relatively little deprivation. The main issues are access to services and housing affordability. The DSER finds that the number of working age benefit claimants in Witchford fell by a third during the five-year period 2012-2017. Most benefit claims are related to unemployment. However, caring responsibilities and disability are also factors.

2.5 Employment and services

The largest employment sectors in Witchford are education and 'administrative & support service activities'. A significant amount of employment in manufacturing, retail, construction, transport and storage is provided by the Lancaster Way Business Park (an Enterprise Zone comprising 175 acres). Although not in Witchford parish, the business park impacts directly upon Witchford from the point of view of employment, landscape and traffic generation. The smaller Sedgeway Business Park and Greenham Park, north and south of the A142 respectively, provide a similar range of jobs, as well as some flexible office space.

Most employed residents in Witchford commute relatively short distances. About half either work from home or commute within East Cambridgeshire. About a quarter commute to Cambridge City or South Cambridgeshire, with a smaller number commuting to London via Ely railway station.

Witchford benefits from pre-school, primary school and secondary school facilities. The Rackham CofE Primary School 2018-19 PAN (Published Admission Number) is 315, Witchford Village College's 2018-19 PAN is 900 (but the number of pupils on roll in January 2019 is 800) and there is current capacity for early years provision (provided by Witchford Rackham Pre-School and Lancaster Lodge Childcare) for 98 places.

As at July 2019, there are no capacity issues for early years provision, primary school provision and secondary school provision. With regard to primary-aged children there were 246 children aged 4-10 living in the catchment and this total is expected to fall to 180 by 2025/26. With regard to secondary school-aged children in January 2018, there were 875 children aged 11 – 15 living in the catchment area and this is anticipated to increase to 979 by 2022/23.

However, the County Council has articulated as part of responses to planning applications that increases in the catchment population, together with increases triggered by approved development, mean that there is a certain need to increase secondary school places at Witchford Village College at some point during the plan period and the County Council has costed a project for this to take place.

The County Council also anticipates a potential shortfall in primary school places and early years if development is built out on sites put forward through planning applications, but not included as part of the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan. This can be seen for example from viewing the County Council response to a planning application for land at

27-39 Sutton Road (19/00966/OUM) prepared in July 2019. Here, they anticipate that the development pipeline could increase the primary-aged population by a further 168 pupils (168 plus 180 (as at 2025/26) takes the overall demand to 348 which exceeds the current capacity of 315 at Rackham primary school). In their calculations, the County Council has taken into account development coming forward on permitted sites as well as development on three sites (not anticipated as part of this Neighbourhood Plan) pending appeal and consent.

The County Council’s position in July 2019 can be established by reviewing their response to a recent planning application for land at 27-39 Sutton Road (19/00966/OUM). This can be found at www.eastcamb.gov.uk and is also provided in the evidence base supporting this plan.

There is a much-valued post office and general store, but this is open only during the day so shopping at the evening and weekends (particularly for commuting families) depends on supermarkets in Ely. There is a Chinese take-away in the village, one pub, a hairdressing salon and veterinary surgery. A mobile library visits Witchford fortnightly. The nearest petrol station is on the A10 Ely bypass, although there are two car repair garages in the village. There are no GP, dentist or nurse practitioner facilities in Witchford.



Fig 2. Witchford take-away and Post Office. Photo taken February 2019

Three play areas cater for children up to the age of 14, but there are no facilities for teenagers. Access to leisure facilities in Ely (including the Ely Leisure Park and The Hive Leisure Centre) is car-dependant because of the lack of a safe pedestrian/cycle crossing at the A10/A142 junction.



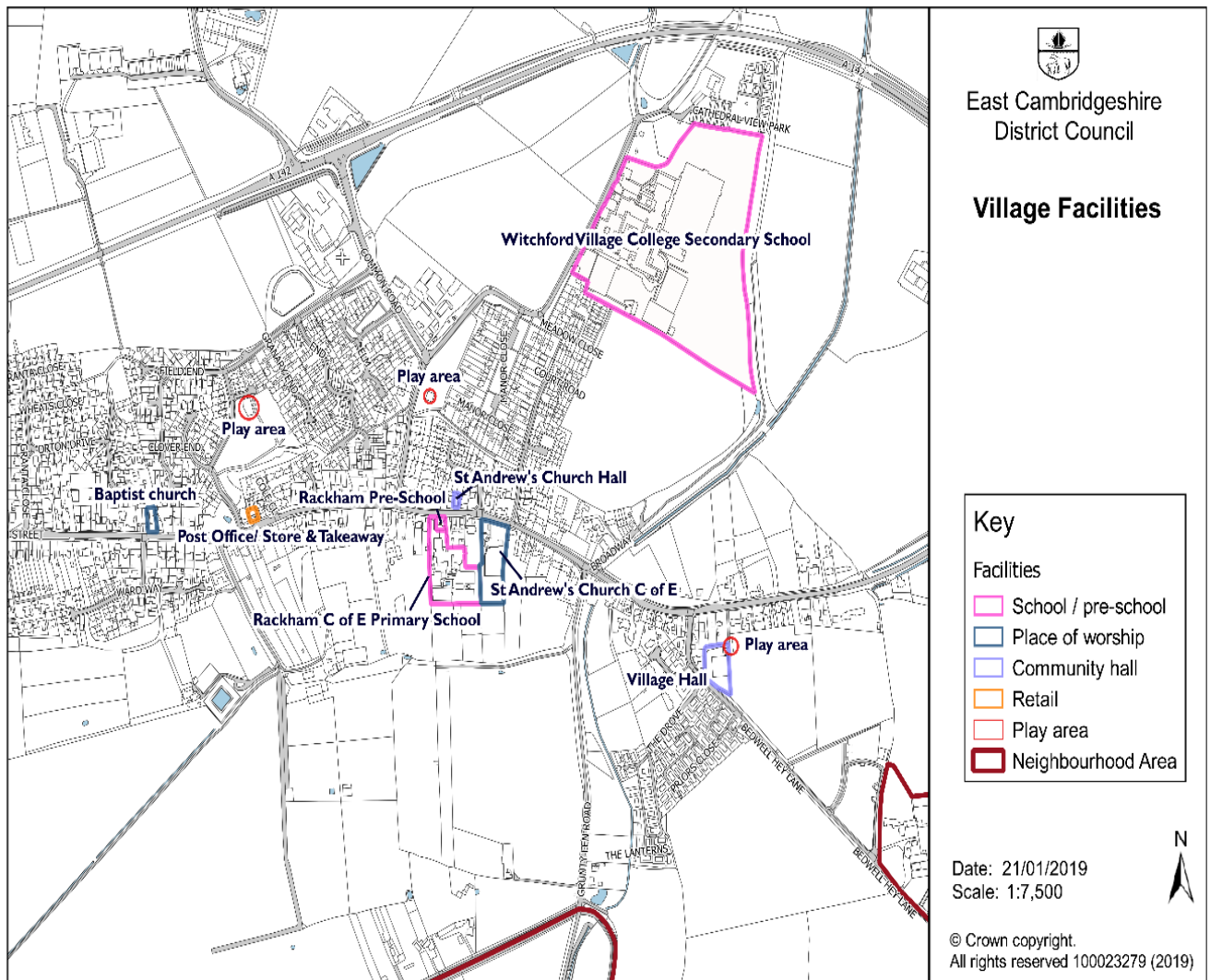
Fig 3. Common Road play area. Photo taken February 2019

2.6 **Community**

Witchford has a range of community facilities. Sport is mainly centred on football with a number of teams using the playing field attached to the village hall. Astro-turf pitches are available to hire at Witchford Village College, and gym facilities at the College are open to the public. Evening classes are also held at the College. A riding stables offers a range of equestrian services and the network of droves north of the village provide good off-road horse-riding and cycling opportunities.

The village hall, built in 1990, is in need of refurbishment and modernisation. The hall is run by the Witchford Playing Field Association, which is developing plans and a funding strategy for the required improvements.

Community groups include drama, choral singing, two sets of allotments, conservation volunteers, WI, Rainbows, Brownies and Scouts. Witchford is served by a Parish Church and a Baptist Church.



Map 3: Community Facilities, Employment Centres and Services

2.7 Housing

As noted in the Demographic and Socio-Economic report supporting this plan (2017), the number of dwellings grew from 590 in 1991 to 920 in 2001 before slowing down to 960 in 2011. In 2015 the dwelling stock stood at 970. However, planning permissions granted during 2016-19 suggest that Witchford is about to enter into another period of significant growth, which could see the village grow by about 40 per cent.

Witchford's housing stock is dominated by owner occupation. There is relatively little rented property whether affordable or market. The majority of housing is detached or semi-detached. There are two mobile home parks. In general, house prices are well above the average for East Cambridgeshire. There is a particularly high premium for larger properties which is consistent with a high demand from families. However, house prices and rental costs for all property sizes in Witchford are challenging for low income families. The number of households with a Witchford connection on the district's housing register was 38 as at September 2019.

2.8 Transport


Witchford village is situated approximately 1 mile west of the A10 Ely bypass and immediately south of the A142 Witchford bypass. The village is therefore sandwiched between the two main arterial routes in East Cambridgeshire District: the A142 carrying traffic between the main Fenland towns of Wisbech, March and Chatteris to Ely and on to Newmarket and the A14 Trunk Road, and the A10 carrying traffic from Kings Lynn south to Cambridge and on to London. A minor road leading south from the village (Grunty Fen Road) links directly to the A10. At peak times, congestion on the A142 and issues of traffic speed and volume from commuting traffic, school traffic and 'rat-running' cause intense pressure on the main road through Witchford. Other problems are parking and traffic speed/volume from in-village car journeys (exacerbated by the elongated layout of the village).

A bus service runs every two hours between Witchford and Ely. The railway station at Ely (3 miles away) has very regular services but there is no direct public transport service from Witchford to the station.

A pedestrian/cyclepath runs alongside the A142 between Sutton (5 miles west of Witchford) to the A142/A10 junction. However, access to the services in Ely is hampered by the lack of a safe pedestrian/cycle crossing over the A10 at that junction.




Indicative diagram to show location of Witchford Neighbourhood Area



East Cambridgeshire District Council

Key
Witchford Neighbourhood Area

Date: 15/01/2019
Scale: 1:300,000



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Map 4: Transport Links

3. The Key Issues facing Witchford

Keeping the village moving with the modern world and expanding doesn't mean it has to lose its charm.

3.1 The key issues facing Witchford have been identified from the documentary evidence base and the responses to consultations with the Witchford community (see Consultation Statement and Appendix 1). It is these key issues which form the basis of the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan.

3.2 Some of the priorities which are important for residents are not achievable through land-based planning policies, or are not directly within the remit of the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan. Witchford Parish Council aims to address these wider priorities as free-standing projects, separate to but informed by the Neighbourhood Plan. These are outlined in Appendix 2 to the Plan.

3.3 Landscape and character

Retaining the character of Witchford as a discrete rural community – separate from Ely – is a key issue arising from all the consultation undertaken with residents. This can be addressed by ensuring an undeveloped area of land is retained between Witchford and Ely and between Witchford and the Lancaster Way Business Park. The distinctiveness of Witchford can be protected by paying particular attention to views to and from Witchford over the surrounding countryside, and by defining a characteristic village edge.

I love Witchford. It's a lovely village and a village it should remain!

3.4 Green infrastructure

Listing, designating and protecting existing green infrastructure has emerged as a key issue for residents, along with enhancing opportunities for enjoying the Witchford countryside (including wild play).

One of the most wonderful things about living in Witchford is the fantastic green areas/ walks and open spaces.

Housing

3.5 Key issues that have been identified relating to housing are the need for smaller housing units to enable young people to stay in Witchford (a notable feature of the demographic make-up of Witchford is the low proportion of people in their 20s), for affordable housing units for single-person households and families, and for bungalows or adaptable housing units to allow older residents to downsize from family homes to free these up.

We need to build affordable accommodation that allows our children to afford to live here and be part of the community where they grew up.

3.6 Infrastructure

Key issues that have been identified relating to infrastructure are the need for the provision of facilities to keep pace with housing supply, facilities for teenagers, expanded shopping facilities, the provision of health services in Witchford and the refurbishment of the village hall.

'Development is inevitable but should be proportionate and go hand in hand with infrastructure improvements and increased facilities'.

3.7 Traffic

Key issues that have been identified relating to traffic in Witchford village are the need to address the volume and speed of traffic on Main Street (both from in-village traffic and 'rat-running'), the difficulty of leaving the village at the Common Road/A142 junction, congestion at the Lancaster Way Business Park roundabout leaving Witchford village, parking and congestion issues on Main Street (including those related to the primary school) and on Manor Road near the Village College.

'Road safety has to be a priority'

3.8 Witchford and Ely connectivity

Being able to access the services at Ely and Cambridge/London (via Ely railway station) is a key issue for residents. This includes access for both road users and pedestrians and cyclists. Road improvements and the enhancement of links for pedestrians and cyclists (which could have the additional effect of reducing pressure on the roads) are needed. Measures include improvements to the A142 and A10, a pedestrian/cycle crossing over the A10 into Ely from Witchford and a more regular bus service to Ely.

'Any additional developments within the village must be preceded by better road provision. The current traffic system from Witchford to Ely cannot cope with current, let alone future, demands'

3.9 Supporting Witchford's micro-economy

The Demographic and Socio-Economic report which supports this plan finds that most employed residents in Witchford commute relatively short distances. About half either work from home or commute within East Cambridgeshire. A further 10 per cent have 'no fixed workplace'. This could include, for example, construction workers who will work on different sites. About a quarter commute to Cambridge City or South Cambridgeshire. Fewer than 30 employed residents commute to London and there are similar numbers commuting to Fenland and Huntingdonshire. The parish itself also includes a number of employers including businesses at Sedgeway Business Park, Greenham Park, Witchford Village College and Witchford Primary School.

On the face of it therefore, Witchford would appear to be sustainable in terms of local economic opportunities.

However, due to the significant road congestion issues on the A142 (alongside the difficulty of crossing the A10/A142 for those without a vehicle) the need to travel any distance outside of the parish presents challenges to residents. Simply providing more

job opportunities on existing employment sites within or around the parish will not necessarily address these challenges since local job opportunities will not necessarily attract or be suitable for Witchford based residents.

Instead this plan recognises the level of current parish-based employment activity maintained by parish residents (e.g. home workers and local businesses). Parish based employment activity helps to limit the amount of daily out and in commuting. It is also important for the purpose of maintaining a lively village atmosphere through different times of the day.

A key priority here is therefore to implement and encourage measures which will contribute to Witchford’s micro-economy.

‘I would support more industry and business around Witchford’

4. Witchford Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives

4.1 The overall vision for the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan was developed during the initial consultations with residents, and was tested in February 2018 in a village-wide survey (with a 40% response rate), when 97.94% of respondents agreed that this wording should be adopted as the Vision Statement for the Plan:

‘To value and protect the rural character and community spirit of Witchford, ensuring that future development meets local needs’

4.2 Seven objectives have been formulated through consultation and engagement with the community, addressing the key issues facing Witchford during the life of the Neighbourhood Plan. Individual policies have then been developed within the framework of these objectives.

4.3 The seven objectives set out below are in no order of priority:

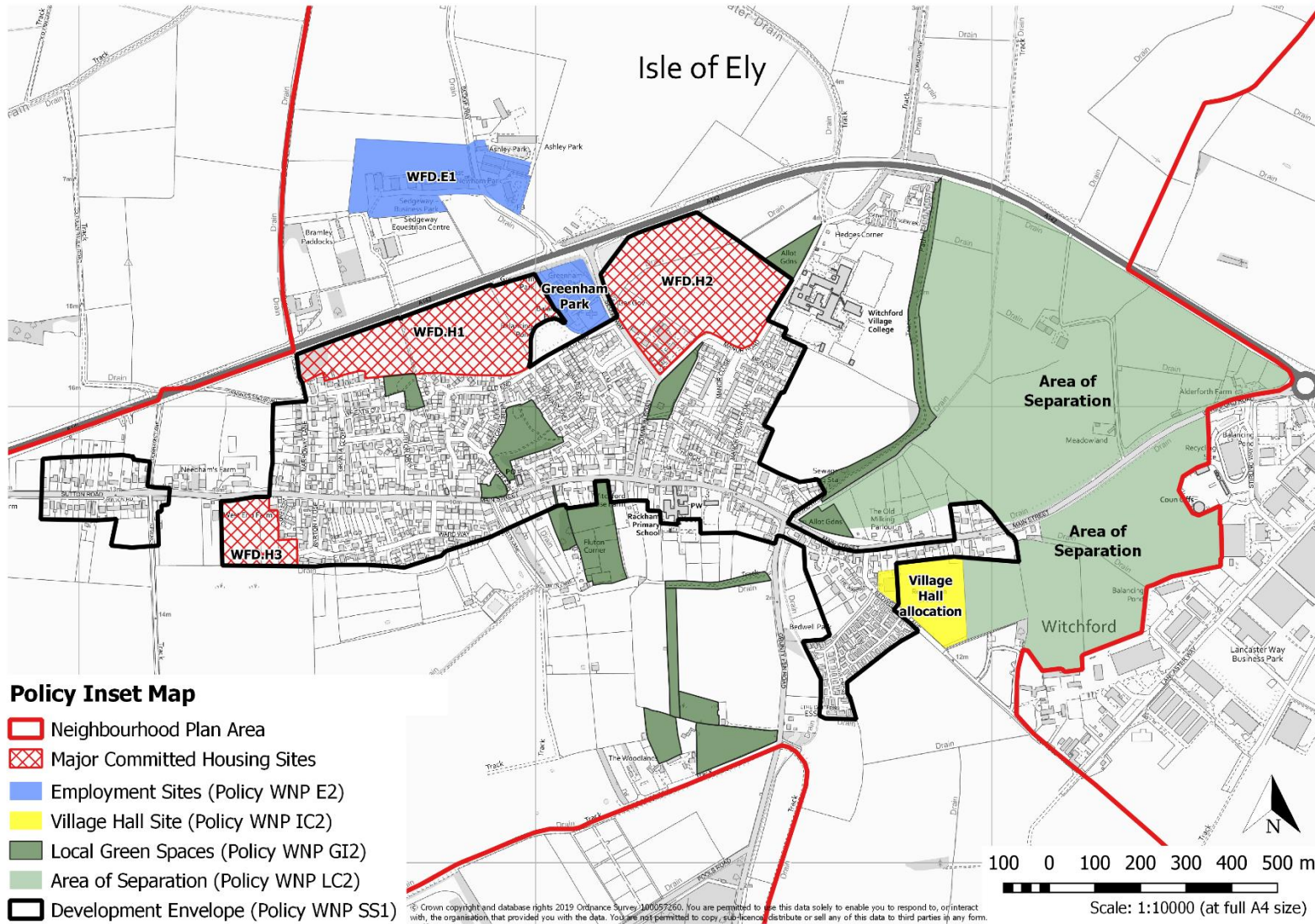
- i. Landscape and character: To maintain the rural fenland character of Witchford. To protect the open space between Witchford and Ely, so that the village remains a distinct and separate community.
- ii. Green infrastructure: To identify, protect and enhance the green infrastructure, open spaces and valued views of Witchford and the opportunities to enjoy the Witchford countryside.
- iii. Housing: To maintain a thriving community through the provision of housing to meet the range of needs of current and future residents of Witchford.
- iv. Infrastructure: To encourage and promote the provision of sufficient infrastructure, amenities and services to allow Witchford to retain its character as a self-sustaining, thriving community.
- v. Traffic in Witchford: To address issues relating to the speed and volume of traffic through the village, and to create attractive and usable opportunities for pedestrian and cycle access within Witchford with the aim of reducing in-village car use.
- vi. Witchford to Ely connectivity: To support proposals to improve infrastructure for safe and easy travel by cycle, on foot and by public transport to Ely and to Ely train station.
- vii. Supporting Witchford’s micro-economy: To support existing local businesses and to encourage increased economic activity appropriate to the rural nature of the parish.

- 4.4 This framework of vision, objectives and policies was underpinned by the results of two village-wide questionnaires and a range of other consultation opportunities. Full details of the community consultations can be found in the separate Consultation Statement.
- 4.5 A wide range of documentary evidence on all the policy areas was used in drafting this Neighbourhood Plan. A full list of all the documentary evidence is included in Appendix 1. Copies of all the documentary evidence or relevant weblinks are all available via the Parish Council website www.witchfordpc.org/neighbourhood

5. Policies

This part of the Neighbourhood Plan addresses the following policy areas:

- Location of new development: A spatial strategy for Witchford
- Landscape and character
- Green infrastructure
- Housing
- Infrastructure
- Village traffic
- Witchford to Ely connectivity
- Supporting Witchford's micro-economy



Map 5: Inset Map of Policy Allocations

5.1 Location of new development: A spatial strategy for Witchford

Policy WNP SS1 A spatial strategy for Witchford

The permitted housing sites WFD H1, WFD H2 and WFD H3 will deliver approximately 330 homes during the plan period 2019 – 2031. In addition, other proposals within Witchford’s development envelope, which is defined on Policy Map 6 will be supported provided they accord with other provisions in the Development Plan.

Outside the development envelope, development will be restricted to:

- rural exception housing on the edge of the village where such schemes accord with Policy WNP H2 of this plan;
- appropriate employment development at the Sedgeway Business Park where such schemes accord with Policy WNP – E2 of this plan; and
- development for agriculture, horticulture, outdoor recreation, essential educational infrastructure and other uses that need to be located in the countryside.

5.1.1 Intent

To provide a strategic overview and clarity of the future direction of development in the Plan area. For avoidance of doubt, the development envelope shown on Policy Map 6 supersedes the development envelope provided in the 2015 Local Plan.

5.1.2 Context and reasoned justification

This is an overarching policy for the Neighbourhood Plan that provides the context for all the other planning policies.

The development envelope is based on that set out in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 for Witchford but amended to include within it the recent major housing commitments particularly those to the north of Witchford extending out to the A142. It is shown on Policy Map 6. Development proposals coming forward outside the development envelope will be regarded as countryside locations, whereas the principle of development within the development envelope is generally accepted.

In the last plan period, parcels of land outside the Local Plan development envelope were given permission for housing development. These were permitted on appeal (after East Cambridgeshire District Council had recommended refusal) on the basis that the district could not demonstrate a sufficient supply of housing (referred to as a sufficient 5-year land supply¹). Development, including these 5-year land supply sites, has resulted in schemes coming forward without due regard to the context, character and sensitivities of Witchford’s setting and wider landscape character. Notwithstanding this, it is important that the Neighbourhood Plan spatial strategy for the parish is one which takes into account existing commitments (planning permissions) and uses this as a starting position from which to plan ahead.

¹ A 5 year land supply is a supply of specific deliverable sites that can provide 5 years’ worth of housing against a housing requirement agreed as part of a Local Plan or against a local housing need

Witchford Housing Requirement

The adopted Local Plan for East Cambridgeshire District Council does not allocate any housing sites in the parish. It does define a development envelope tightly around the built-up part of the village and supports in principle infill development within these boundaries. The Local Plan allows in principle for rural exceptions housing to come forward on the edge of the development envelope and anticipates that approximately 37 new dwellings (c. 2 per year) will be built on infill sites in the village during the period 2013 to 2031.

Since June 2015, the policies specific to housing delivery in the Local Plan have been found to be out of date (when the planning inspectorate approved an appeal for development of up to 128 homes outside Witchford's village envelope on a site referred to as Land off Field Road. The inspector found that the district did not have a 5-year land supply² and because of this, the balance was tipped in favour of that particular development).

To inform the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan, East Cambridgeshire District Council have provided the parish with an updated housing requirement figure to be met during the period 2018 to 2031. This figure is 252 dwellings, or 19.4 dwellings per annum in the period 01 April 2018 to 31 March 2031. This figure has been provided in line with paragraph 66 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states the housing requirement figure for a neighbourhood plan should take into account the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood plan area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.

The purpose of providing a new housing requirement figure for the Neighbourhood Plan (an updated figure to the one provided in the adopted Local Plan) is to make sure that once the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan is made (adopted), it can be considered to be up to date in the decision-making process.

The District Council calculated the indicative housing requirement for Witchford in a manner which is consistent with national policy, taking into account a range of relevant factors.

The most recently available planning strategy for the district, the Local Plan 2015, formed the starting point for calculating the indicative figure - both in terms of the overall housing requirement and its locational strategy for growth.

Reflecting the diminished status of the strategic policies of the Local Plan, the District Council has also taken into consideration dwelling completions since the start of the plan period and latest housing commitment data from extant planning permissions within the Neighbourhood Area.

The District Council has compared its method for calculating the indicative figure against the latest evidence of housing need, namely the Local Housing Need figure for East Cambridgeshire calculated as per government's standard method.

These factors led the District Council to set an indicative housing requirement which exceeds the housing delivery identified for Witchford by the Local Plan.

To ensure the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan is prepared in a positive way, which complements the district's approach in delivering required housing growth whilst also protecting the parish from further unplanned speculative development, the Neighbourhood Plan should not depart from the up to date growth assumptions adopted

² A 5-year land supply is a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide 5 years' worth of housing against a housing requirement set out in an adopted Local Plan, or against a local housing need

by the District. The Neighbourhood Plan has a role to play in planning for this growth in a sustainable way.

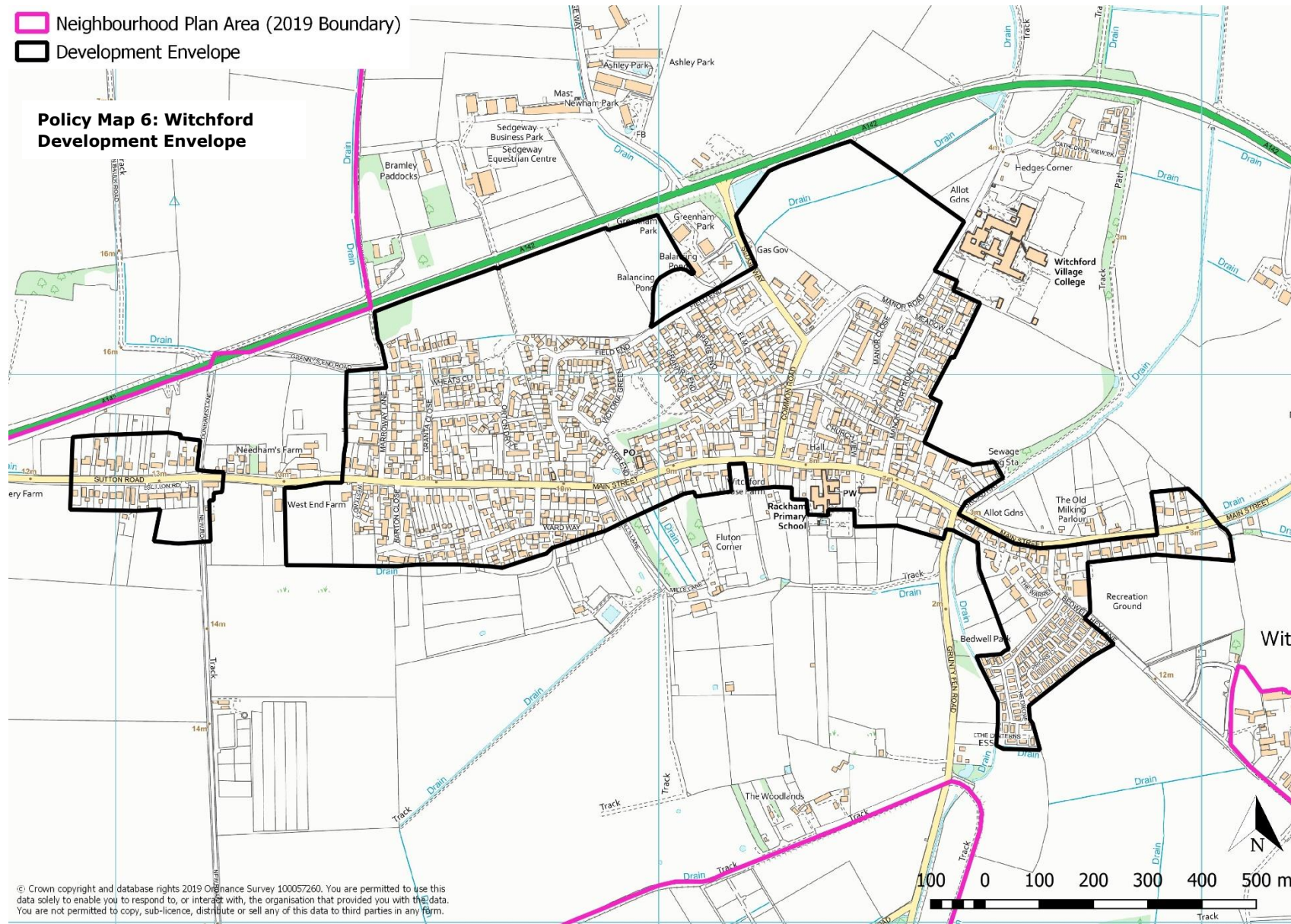
The Neighbourhood Plan therefore includes the following housing provision:

Committed development on major sites	Land north of Field End (WFD H1A)	128 homes
	Land off Marroway Lane (WFD H1B)	40 homes
	Land at Common Road (WFD H2)	116 homes
	Land to South of Main Street (WFD H3)	46 homes
		330 homes
Infill development within development limits	2019-31 (Assumed approximately 2 per year)	24 homes
Total	2019-31	354 homes

The Neighbourhood Plan assumes that from 2019 through to 2031 there will be a delivery of around 350 homes in Witchford Village. In 2011, Witchford had 960 homes (Census 2011). Since then there have been 24 net dwelling completions. Growth of 330 homes therefore represents a 33% increase during the period 2018 to 2031. In addition, the Neighbourhood Plan allows for further dwellings to be delivered via appropriate policy compliant infill within the Witchford development envelope.

- Neighbourhood Plan Area (2019 Boundary)
- Development Envelope

Policy Map 6: Witchford Development Envelope



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5.2 Landscape and character policies

The objective for landscape protection within the parish in the Plan period is:

‘To maintain the rural fenland character of Witchford. To protect the open space between Witchford and Ely, so that the village remains a distinct and separate community’.

Policy WNP LC 1 – Landscape and Settlement Character

All development proposals shall be sensitive to the distinctive landscape and settlement character, as described in the Witchford Landscape Appraisal.

Specifically:

- locations defined on Map 8 where the landscape extends into the village shall be protected from development where this would result in undermining a strong connection between settlement and countryside;
- development proposals shall respect and not adversely impact upon the key views from the edge of Witchford village out into the countryside and the views from the countryside into the Witchford village – as identified on Map 8;
- Witchford’s historic core and its valued setting shall be conserved and where possible enhanced;
- Witchford shall remain an island settlement; the northern slopes and the low-lying landscapes which surround Witchford shall remain open; and
- the sense of arrival and distinctiveness at existing settlement gateways shall remain intact or be strengthened.

Where potential impacts on Witchford’s distinctive landscape and settlement character are identified, applicants will be expected to demonstrate accordance with these principles through the provision of an assessment of landscape and visual impacts (proportionate to the scheme proposed) and drawing, in this process, on guidance and recommendations in the Witchford Landscape Appraisal.

5.2.1 Intent

To ensure that the character of Witchford’s setting and landscape is protected or enhanced through: the protection of key views, keeping the land to the south of Witchford’s historic core open, retaining or reinforcing the four identified areas of landscape which currently penetrate into the settlement, and avoiding development which undermines Witchford’s distinctive island settlement character.

5.2.2 Policy context and reasoned justification

The National Planning Policy Framework 2018 states that planning policies and decisions should be “*sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting..*”(para 127). It also states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by, inter alia, “*protecting and enhancing valued landscapes...*”

Policy WNP – LC 1 complements the national and local policy context by providing locally specific detail and criteria to guide development. The policy is underpinned by the

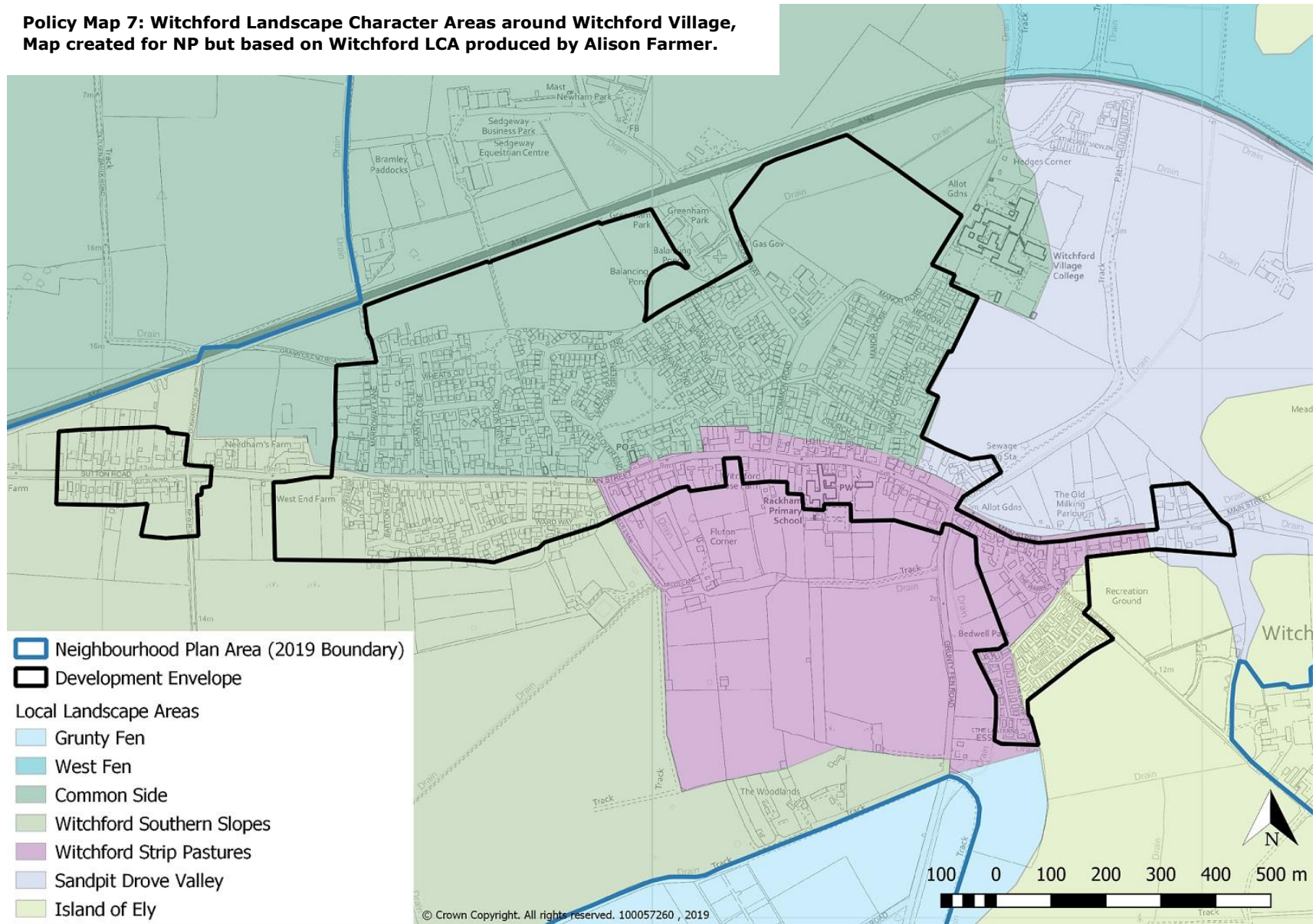
documentary evidence included in Appendix 1 and particularly by the evidence set out in the Witchford Landscape Appraisal (WLA) adopted by the Parish Council in January 2019. The WLA provides an understanding of the sensitivity and capacity of the Parish to accommodate new growth; it identifies special qualities to be conserved and enhanced; and includes a detailed settlement and landscape analysis which is useful in informing an appropriate approach to take in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Witchford parish falls within two landscape types identified in the East of England Landscape Typology; Lowland Village Farmland and Planned Peat Fen. The WLA breaks these down further and identifies seven local landscape areas specific to the parish. These are:

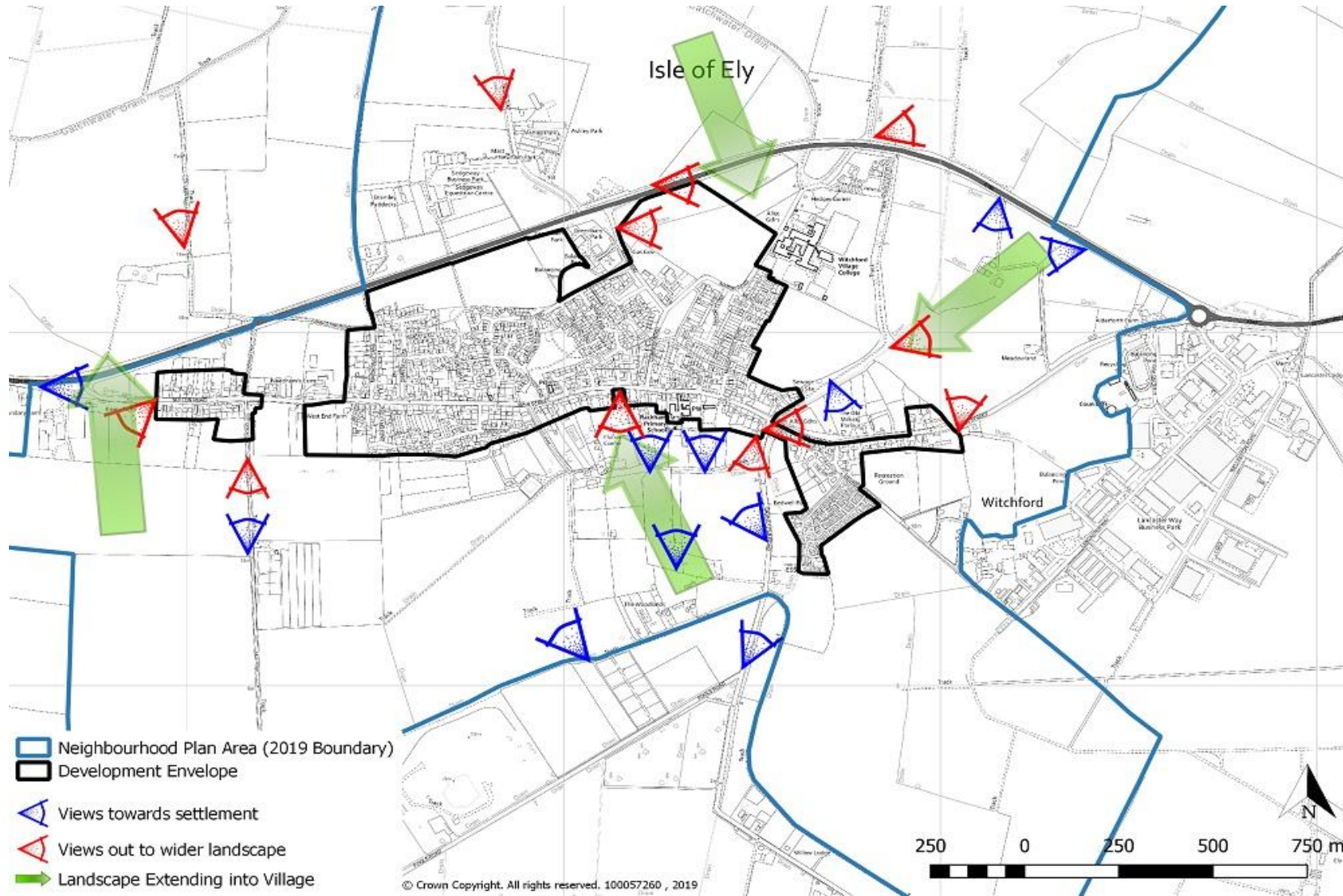
- Grunty Fen – lies to the south of the village and predominantly outside the neighbourhood plan area with small section in the north extending into the plan area.
- West Fen – lies to the north of the village with half of the area extending beyond the neighbourhood plan area.
- Common Side – includes the highest land in Witchford and provides the northern setting to the village.
- Witchford Southern Slopes – forms the south facing slopes to the south of the village.
- Witchford Historic Core and Strip Pastures – include the historic core of the built-up environment and the areas immediately south on the south facing slopes
- Sandpit Drove Valley – lies to the northeast of the historic core of the village and is associated with a small valley between Witchford island and the main island of Ely.
- Island of Ely – lies to the east of Witchford and extends outside of the neighbourhood plan area to the rising land of the wider Isle of Ely.

The WLA includes a map showing the full extent of these local landscape areas, together with a detailed assessment of the areas. Map 7 focuses in on the areas in and around the village.

Policy Map 7: Witchford Landscape Character Areas around Witchford Village, Map created for NP but based on Witchford LCA produced by Alison Farmer.



Policy Map 8: Views and Landscape extending into the village



Landscape areas extending into the village-

The four areas of landscape extending into the village shown on Map 8 are particularly valuable for helping to reinforce the small scale, rural character and location of the village and its historic origins as an agricultural settlement.

Views

The protection of key views in and around the parish will help maintain a sense of place and local distinctiveness during the plan period. The position of the village on the south facing slopes means that from the settlement views outwards are primarily to the south, with the exception of those around Sandpit Drove. Similarly views towards the settlement from the wider landscape are mainly from the south (including from the proposed Local Green Space south of Main Street – see separate Local Green Space Report for detailed discussion) or from the A142. The descriptions of the views given below are extracts from the Witchford Landscape Appraisal:

Views from the edge of the village looking south: These views are from elevated positions looking out across the wider fen landscape to the south. Views are often vistas from within the built form or from public rights of way which run close to the existing urban edge. These views reinforce the rural context and origins of the settlement and connect it to the fen landscape which forms its wider setting. Close to the historic core these views may be intermittent and channelled by vegetation due to the smaller scale field enclosure pattern which is typical of the immediate setting of the village. In contrast views from the settlement edge in the west are more open giving rise to wider panoramas.

Views from the edge of the village looking north and east: These views occur from the junction of the A142 and Sutton Road and are towards the rising land and highest point of the island on which Witchford sits (Little Hill). In these views the rising land forms an important landscape backdrop to the village. Further east the views from the A142 are in a northeasterly direction towards Ely Cathedral and the rising slopes of the main Isle of Ely. These views are memorable and noted as quintessential views and approaches to Ely. Beyond the A142 there are views from the north facing slopes looking northwards towards West Fen and Coveney.

Views towards the village from the south: From the wider landscape there are views back to the village from Grunty Fen Road and Pools Road as well as from public rights of way e.g. New Road (track). These views are from areas of lower elevation. The built edge is not prominent in these views, although housing along Ward Way is most visually prominent due to its elevated position on the edge of sloping land and use of white render. Elsewhere development is either set back away from the main slopes or filtered from view due to intervening vegetation.

Views towards the village from the north: There are no views of the village from the north and from West Fen. This is because the village is located on the south facing slopes to the south of the A142. There are however wide-ranging views of Sedgeway Business Park and Ashley Park. Whilst the single-storey buildings are not especially noticeable taller buildings stand out and appear large in scale. Their light colour material also increases visibility.

Witchford's historic core and setting

Here, buildings are predominantly historic, five of which are Grade II listed and one Grade II* listed (St Andrew's Church seen clearly from the south in Fig. 4). Settlement character here is linear but one plot deep (unlike the area to the west which comprises cul-de-sac development) and comprises terraces of cottages fronting directly onto the pavement

with no front garden plot, and large-scale housing or former farm houses set within larger plots. The WLA describes the historic core as having a “*distinctive sinuous character descending down the hill towards the former ford crossing before rising again onto the Witchford island.*” The WLA also states:

“To the south the land slopes down from Main Street to the wider fen landscape forming the southern slopes of the island on which the village sits. The enclosure pattern on these slopes reflects the small-scale strip field enclosures associated with the rear of properties. These enclosures do not survive elsewhere in the setting of the village and in the context of the Parish are rare. They are of historical interest forming a distinctive setting to the settlement and reinforce the distinction between the character of the island and wider fen landscape.”

Due to the historic interest of the small-scale strip field enclosures associated with the rear of properties on Main Street, it is important that they are retained and the Parish Council will work with landowners to encourage this. The Policy WNP LC1 – Landscape and Settlement Character specifies the setting of the historic core to be conserved and, where possible, enhanced. The Neighbourhood Plan as a whole directs development away from this area since it lies outside the development envelope and is on low lying land outside the village.

There is an important gap within the built-up boundary which affords highly valued views from Main Street southwards towards the wider fen across a paddock known as ‘the Horsefield’.

This landscape character area is identified in the WLA as highly sensitive to new development:

“Development in this area is likely to alter the relationship between the historic core of the village and its landscape setting and the small scale linear pastures which are a key characteristic immediately adjacent to the settlement edge. These qualities are tangible and easily appreciated through views from Main Street across The Horsefield and also from the public rights of way to the south of the village.”



Fig 4. View of St Andrew’s Church (part of Witchford’s historic core) from Edna’s Wood in the south, Photo taken December 2018

Witchford’s character as an island settlement

The WLA describes Witchford village as unusual for two reasons. Firstly, its proximity to Ely and secondly, its historic focus on a shallow valley which separates the wider Isle of Ely from the lower, smaller island on which the village sits. The report emphasises the importance of retaining Witchford as an island settlement and avoiding development to the north, in the Sandpit Drove Valley landscape character area or on the lower slopes as key to keeping or reinforcing local character.

5.3 Witchford Area of Separation

WNP LC 2 –Witchford Area of Separation

Development will be directed in a way that respects and retains the open and undeveloped nature of the distinctive valley topography that separates Witchford village from Lancaster Way Business Park and separates Witchford village from Ely.

Development proposals may only be supported in the Witchford Area of Separation (as shown on Map 9) where it can be demonstrated that proposals:

- Would not reduce the physical and / or visual separation between Witchford village and Lancaster Way Business Park;
- Would not reduce the physical and / or visual separation between Witchford village and Ely; and
- Would maintain or enhance the enjoyment of the Public Rights of Way network and links to the countryside.

To demonstrate the visual impact of a proposal applicants will be required to provide a landscape and visual impact appraisal.

5.3.1 Intent

To maintain this important open rural landscape between Ely and Witchford and to provide a visual and physical separation between Lancaster Way Business Park and Witchford village and Ely and Witchford village.

5.3.2 Context and reasoned justification

Keeping Witchford’s identity separate from the settlement of Ely and separate from the Lancaster Way Business Park is an essential part of maintaining sense of place and rural character in Witchford. This is a priority articulated clearly by the residents during the preparation of the neighbourhood plan.

Despite the proximity of Witchford village to the neighbouring city of Ely and the Lancaster Way Business Park and despite the fact the A142 creates a link between the village with these two destinations, Witchford village has an identity distinctly separate to that of the larger settlement of Ely. The gateway into the historic core of Witchford is on Ely Road and the A142 does not feel part of the village.

The Witchford Area of Separation covers two local landscape character areas (see Maps 2 and 7 to see the locations of the local landscape character areas). It includes part of the Sandpit Drove Valley landscape character area where this falls to the east of Sandpit Drove and between the A142 and Main Street/Ely Road. It also includes parts of the Island of Ely local landscape character area where this abuts the Lancaster Way Business

Park and reaches west towards the Witchford Recreation Ground on Bedwell Hey Lane. This local landscape character area also includes a section of land on the north side of Main Street (the higher parts of land on this side of the road).



Fig. 5 Gateway to Witchford village on Ely Road, photo taken February 2019

The defined Area of Separation reinforces sense of place and separate rural identity in Witchford in three key ways:

1. Providing a physical and visual gap between the urbanised area around Lancaster Way Roundabout and Witchford village.
2. Providing a strong rural and characterful setting to the eastern edge of the village along Sandpit Drove Local Green space
3. Reinforcing Witchford's status as an island settlement as distinct from the island settlement of Ely.

1. Providing a physical and visual gap between the urbanised area around Lancaster Way Roundabout and Witchford village

The Witchford Parish boundary starts at the western side of the Lancaster Way Roundabout. This roundabout is busy at most times of the day. It provides access to the very visible collection of buildings and industrial estate which makes up the Lancaster Way Business Park and the Witchford Recycling Centre. When travelling west from Ely, the second exit of the roundabout is Ely Road/Main Street. The eastern gateway to the village of Witchford is situated further down along this road. The third and last exit is the continuation of the very busy A142 towards Chatteris.

Between the Lancaster Way Roundabout and Witchford village there is an important gap of open countryside. This gap is located in two distinct areas. One is the triangle of land created by the A142, Ely Road/Main Street and Sandpit Drove and the second is the area of open countryside between Lancaster Way Business Park and the village edge at Witchford Recreation Ground.

The first of these is readily and visually perceived from the point of the Lancaster Way Roundabout. Here there is an open view towards the west and looking downwards and west into the settlement edge of Witchford across agricultural fields and horse paddocks. Were this gap not here, Witchford would, at this point, be perceived as continuation of the urbanised feel at Lancaster Way Business Park. The higher level ground at Lancaster Way Roundabout means that this area of open land is particularly visible. For example, the tall buildings of Witchford Village College can be seen clearly from a point further east (on higher level ground towards Ely) when looking west across to Witchford.

The physical gap of open countryside between Lancaster Way Roundabout and Witchford village is also a key contributor to sense of place and rural character when travelling from the roundabout towards the eastern village gateway along Ely Road/Main Street. If travelling by car, a rural setting is provided by the established hedgerows but also the views, provided by gaps in the hedgerows of the open landscape (comprising horse paddocks and agricultural fields) towards the north. If travelling by foot or bike along the segregated footpath and cycle way, the perception of a rural backdrop and separation between the village ahead and the urban feel of both the City of Ely and the Lancaster Way Business Park behind is stronger due to the increased opportunities for views through the trees into the countryside but also due to the contrast in levels of traffic-generated noise between Lancaster Way Roundabout and the village gateway. By the time the village gateway is reached, the traffic from the A142 is considerably quieter and the traffic along Main Street reduces its speed considerably to meet the 30mph speed limit. Along the section of Main Street which falls within the Island of Ely local landscape character area (where the land is higher), there are no views and instead the high verges of trees and hedgerows provide enclosure before opening up again at the point of the village gateway.



Fig. 6: View from Lancaster Way Roundabout looking west and downwards towards Witchford. The A142 can be seen on the right and the tall structures of Witchford Village College on the horizon.

To the south of Ely Road/Main Street the Island of Ely local landscape character area is on higher ground but the gap of open land between the Waste Recycling Centre and the village gateway is nevertheless important to reinforcing the sense of arrival at the village edge. From the village edge at Witchford Recreation Ground (off Bedwell Hey Lane), both the Witchford Recycling Centre and Lancaster Way Business Park are visible in the distance beyond the trees (perhaps made more visible due to the fact they are located on higher level ground than the Recreation Ground). The area of open land defined here

is essential in preventing further erosion in the sense of separateness between Witchford Village and Lancaster Way Business Park.

2. Providing a strong rural and characterful setting to the eastern edge of the village along Sandpit Drove Local Green space

The valley landscape in the Sandpit Drove local landscape character area provides a strong rural and characterful setting to the Sandpit Drove Local Green Space and the Broadway Allotments Local Green Space. These are popular and well managed open spaces providing visual, biodiversity and recreational value and interest. The Sandpit Drove Local Green Space is connected through safe paths along the southern perimeter of the A142 to other parts of the village including Witchford Village College and Manor Road allotments.

This rural setting to Witchford is experienced by users of the Local Green Space as well as people using the Broadway Allotments. But it is also perceived from the A142 (travelling east to west).

3. Reinforcing Witchford’s status as an island settlement as distinct from the island settlement of Ely.

From various points along the Sandpit Drove Local Green Space there are impressive, long distance views, across an open valley landscape, of Ely Cathedral, identified in the Local Plan as quintessential views. These views provide a sense of intervisibility between the two settlements, reinforcing their long-standing identity as two distinct island settlements. The open valley landscape contributes considerably to the setting of these views.



Fig. 7: A long distance view from Sandpit Drove Local Green Space across the Sandpit Drove valley landscape character area towards Ely Cathedral. Vehicles travelling along the A142 can also be seen.

The sensitivities of the valley landscape in this part of the plan area are described in more detail in the WLA – see assessment for both Sandpit Drove Valley local landscape character area and Isle of Ely local landscape character area.

The results of the Neighbourhood Plan household questionnaire of February 2018 demonstrated that there is overwhelming support among Witchford residents for retaining the physical separation of the village from Ely, as follows:

Question	Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %
The land between Witchford, the bypass and Lancaster Way business park should	68.87	15.93

Question	Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %
remain free from development		

Comments from questionnaire respondents also illustrate the support for retaining Witchford’s separation and distinctiveness:

‘Particularly unhappy with proposal to develop between Witchford, the bypass and Lancaster Way’

‘Witchford is a rural village and residents in the village on the whole want to keep it this way and not an extension of Ely making it built up’

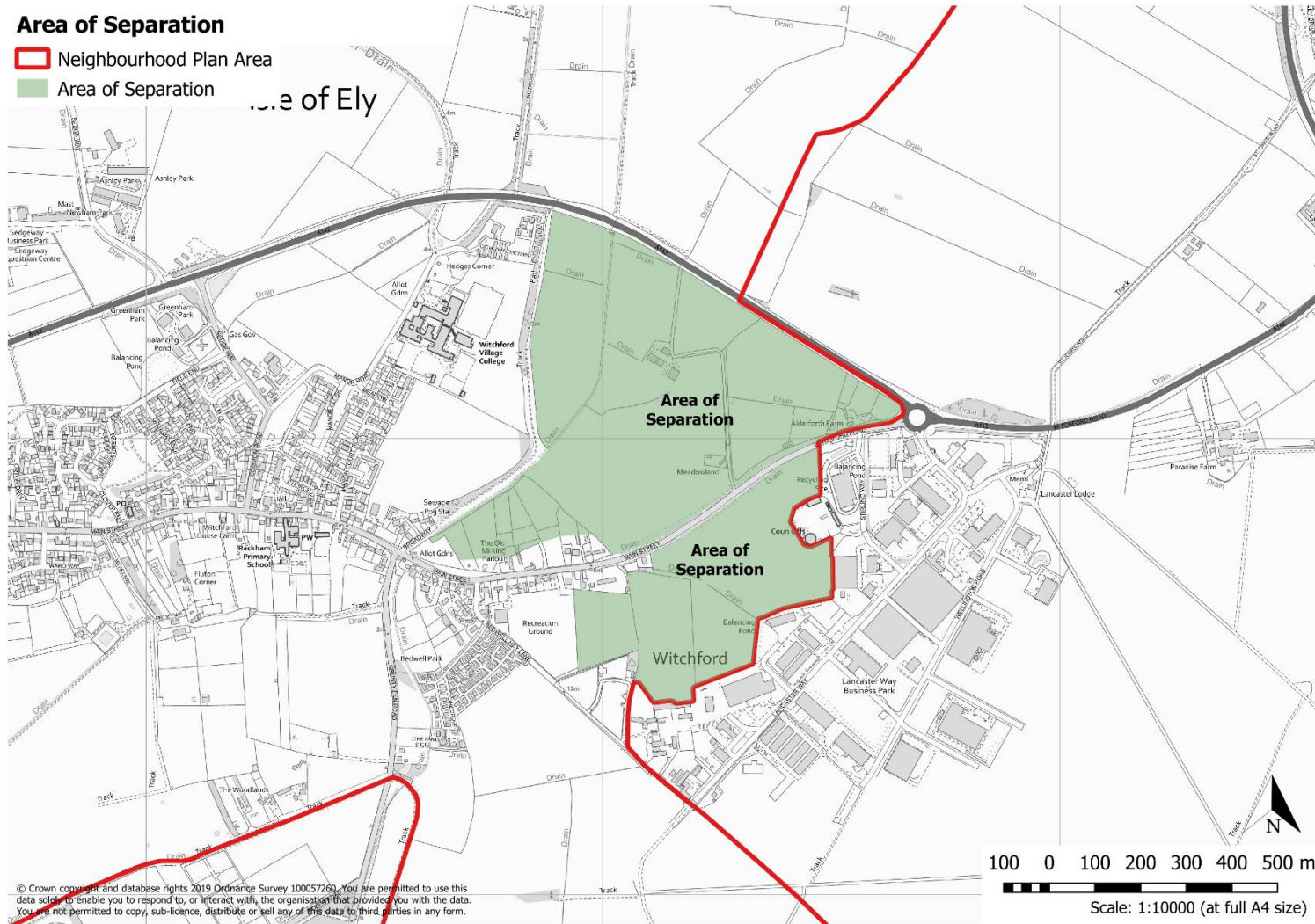
‘Keep the village as a village and not a suburb of Ely’

‘Don’t turn it into Ely overspill’

Area of Separation

 Neighbourhood Plan Area

 Area of Separation



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Policy Map 9: Witchford Area of Separation

5.4 **Green infrastructure**

The objective for green infrastructure within the parish in the Plan period is:

‘To identify, protect and enhance the green infrastructure, open spaces and valued views of Witchford and the opportunities to enjoy the Witchford countryside’.

Policy WNP GI1 – Public Rights of Way

Development proposals that will enhance or extend an existing public right of way or that will deliver a new public right of way in a suitable location will be viewed favourably.

Development proposals shall maintain or enhance the amenity value of any public right of way involved in the development.

5.4.1 **Intent**

To maintain the amenity value of the existing network of public rights of way in the parish and to seek improvements to this network.

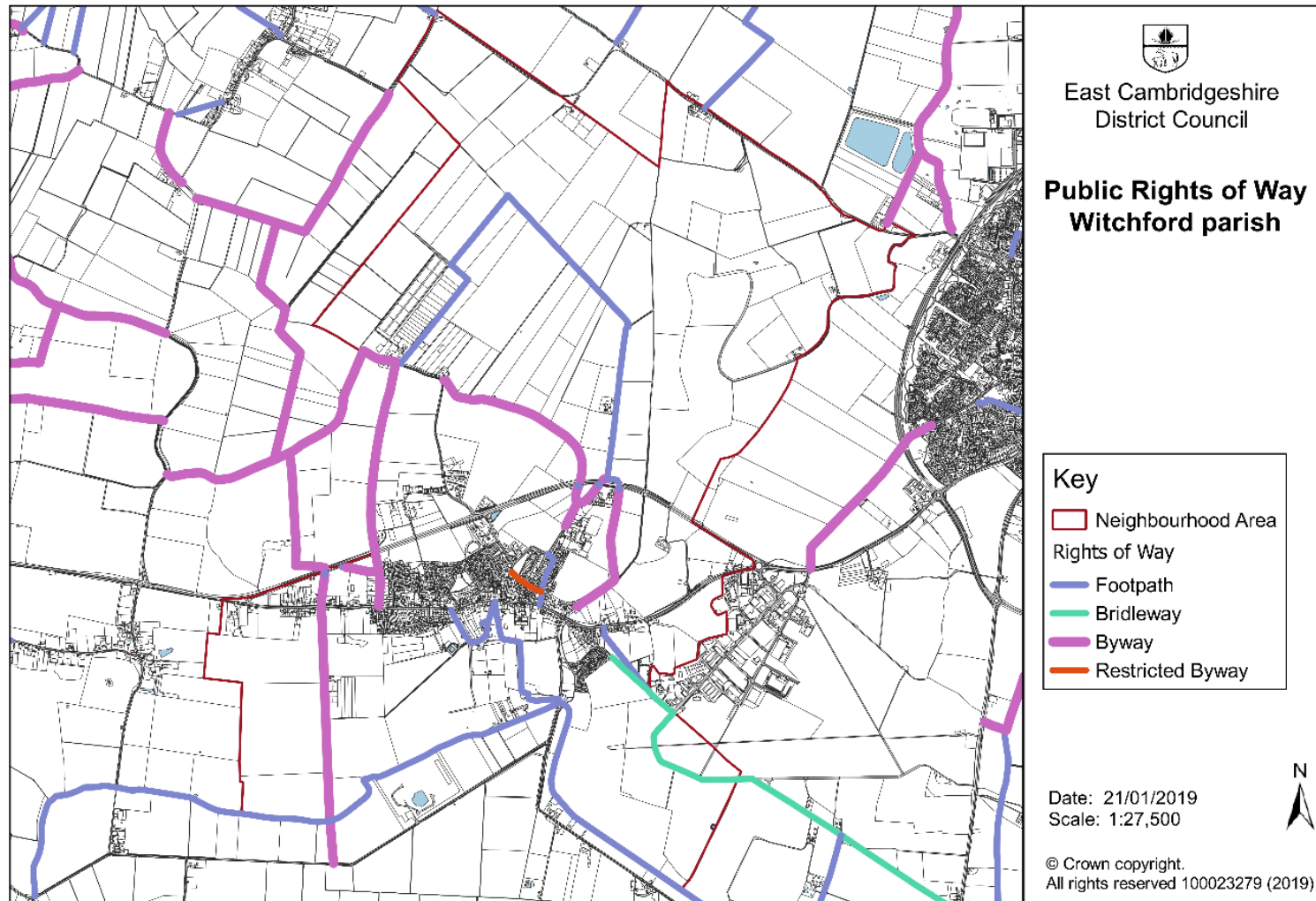
5.4.2 **Policy Context and Justification**

The network of public rights of way in the parish as shown on Policy Map 10 is highly valued, offering opportunities for outdoor recreation for ramblers, dog walkers, horseriders, cyclists and those simply wishing to get around by foot. The retention of this network is essential for the purpose of maintaining residential amenity. Public footpaths are for pedestrians only, public bridleways for pedestrians, horseriders and cyclists, restricted byways for pedestrians, horseriders, cyclists and users of non-mechanically propelled vehicles and byways open to all traffic for all classes of user.

The amenity value of a public right of way will be considered to be impacted adversely if currently valued views (see Policy Map 8) are obstructed, there is loss of open spaces which contribute to the setting and enjoyment of public rights of way or there is loss or damage to hedgerows, trees and vegetation which provide amenity value through attracting wildlife. Opportunities will be sought for the visual enhancement of the public right of way around the perimeter of the former airfield as identified in the Witchford Landscape Appraisal.

The results of the Neighbourhood Plan household questionnaire of February 2018 demonstrated that there is overwhelming support among Witchford residents for the protection of the rural feel of public rights of way, as follows:

Question	Strongly agree %	Slightly agree%
Paths and open green spaces in and around the village should keep their rural character	91.40	6.14



Policy Map 10: Public Rights of Way

Policy WNP – GI2 Local Green Space

The following sites as shown on Map 11 are designated as Local Green Spaces

- Sandpit Drove
- Old Scenes Drove
- Long Meadow
- Edna’s Wood
- Fairchild Wood
- Old Recreation Ground and Community Orchard
- Victoria Green
- Millennium Wood
- Manor Road allotments
- The Common, Common Road
- Public Open Space between Orton Drive & Wheats Close
- Broadway allotments
- The ‘Horsefield’

Development on these sites will not be acceptable other than in very special circumstances in line with national policy, or where it will enhance the function of the space (e.g. play equipment on Victoria Green) without compromising the primary function of the space as a Local Green Space.

5.4.3 Intent

To recognise the value of these sites to the local community by giving them Local Green Space protection

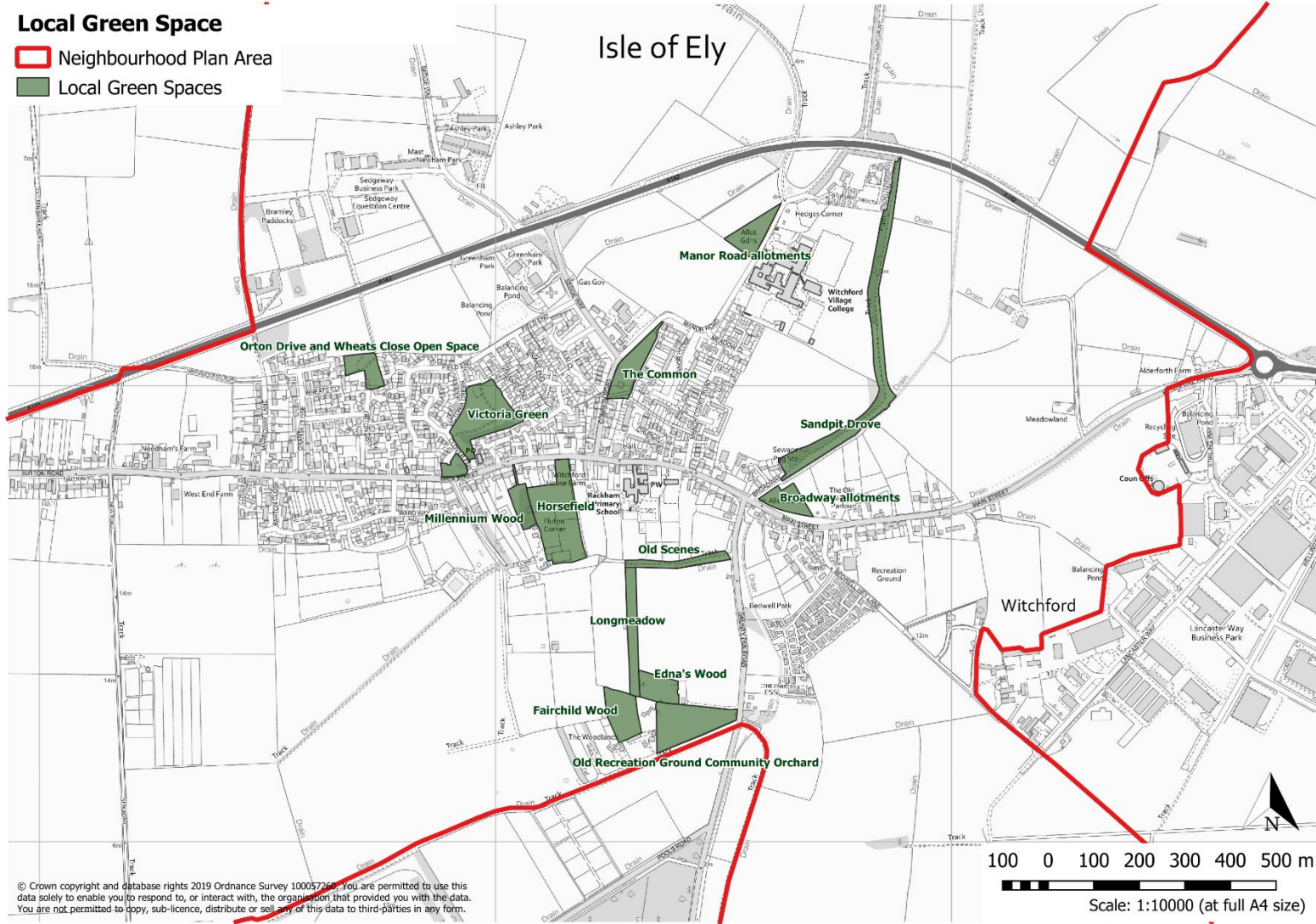
5.4.4 Context and reasoned justification

The criteria for Local Green Space designation are set out in paragraph 100 of the NPPF. This states that Local Green Space should be:

- in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- demonstrably special to the local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- local in character and not an extensive tract of land.

This policy is underpinned by the documentary evidence included in Appendix 1 and in particular by the Witchford Local Green Spaces Report (May 2019).

The Witchford Local Green Spaces Report (May 2019) contains a detailed assessment of the proposed Local Green Spaces against the NPPF criteria and a full justification for their designation.



Policy Map 11: Local Green Space

Policy WNP – GI3 Development and Biodiversity

Development should avoid adverse impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity by creating, restoring and enhancing habitats for the benefit of species. In doing so, applicants must seek to retain and where possible enhance the network of species and habitats currently present in the parish.

Development proposals are supported where they enhance biodiversity in the parish through designing in green infrastructure measures as part of the design and layout of a scheme. Such measures include:

- Trees, hedgerows, water and other habitats integrated into the development;
- Wildflower verges along roads and formal open spaces;
- Lighting designed to avoid disturbing wildlife;
- Bat roosts and bird boxes;
- Features and corridors to help invertebrates, reptiles, hedgehogs and other mammals.

Development proposals should also include measures to decrease flood risk that are in accordance with Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) principles and which will enhance biodiversity. Such measures include:

- Wildlife-friendly green roofs and walls;
- Permeable driveways;
- Swales and rain gardens enhancing landscape, connectivity and biodiversity; and
- Attenuation ponds suitable for wetland wildlife.

5.4.5 Intent

To complement the policy approach taken in the Local Plan through policy ENV 7: Biodiversity and geology. This policy is intended to complement policy H3 Housing Design.

5.4.6 Context and justification

This policy is underpinned by the documentary evidence included in Appendix 1.

A search using www.magic.gov.uk will reveal the presence of a wide range of birdlife present in the parish including a range of farmland birds, corn bunting, yellow wagtail, turtle dove, tree sparrow, lapwing and grey partridge. The parish is home to a number of local open spaces which are important wildlife habitats. This includes Sandpit Drove, the network of sites to the south of Main Street including Millennium Wood, Edna’s Wood, Fairchild Wood, hedgerows (for example, along Long Meadow, Old Scenes Drove) and woodland (for example areas of deciduous woodland to the south of Main Street along Mills Lane). Further information is detailed in the Witchford Local Green Space Supporting Information document and the Witchford Green Spaces Log.

As development proposals come forward, it is appropriate to expect measures to be incorporated which help to maintain and enhance the tapestry of species and habitats in the parish. This could be through retaining or restoring hedgerows and ponds as well as through site drainage features that benefit biodiversity (green roofs and other elements of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)).

The Neighbourhood Plan supports the recommendations set out in The Wildlife Trusts’ 2018 publication ‘Homes for People and Wildlife’. The measures which new development proposals could incorporate as a means to enhancing biodiversity in the parish are

informed by the recommendations set out in that report. Applicants are also encouraged to refer to this.

The Neighbourhood Plan household questionnaire of February 2018 demonstrated that there is overwhelming support among Witchford residents for measures to protect and enhance biodiversity, as follows:

Question	Strongly agree %	Slightly agree%
All new developments must demonstrate that they will maintain or improve wildlife habitats	81.08	14.99

5.5 Housing Policies

The objective for housing development within the parish in the Plan period is:

‘To maintain a thriving community through the provision of housing to meet the range of needs of current and future residents of Witchford’.

Policy WNP H1 – Housing Mix

Residential development that contributes to meeting existing and future needs of the village will be supported. A mix in the size and tenure of housing will be required taking into account the needs of young people looking for smaller homes as well as the needs of older residents. Where there is up to date evidence of a need for homes to be accessible and adaptable they should be built to the accessible and adaptable M4(2) standard other than where it can be demonstrated in a full financial appraisal that the application of the standard would make the development unviable.

5.5.1 Intent

New housing developments coming forward in the parish should be specifically aimed at meeting parish needs and include a range of housing types. This will help enable local people to stay in the parish at different stages of their lifetime.

It is particularly important that the stock of smaller homes is increased in the parish. The provision of housing choice will assist in ensuring a range of needs are met.

Provision of a mix of house sizes will establish successful new neighbourhoods with broad based communities. Provision of housing types for a range of occupiers will encourage activity at different times of the day (for example, retired people and younger families are more likely to enliven a place during the working day). The overconcentration of many larger homes or many smaller homes should therefore be avoided.

5.5.2 Context and reasoned justification

This policy is underpinned by the documentary evidence included in Appendix 1 and in particular by the Demographic and Socio-Economic report for the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan, which finds that Witchford’s existing housing stock is limited in terms of choice and range. The housing is dominated by owner occupation and there is little rented property available whether affordable or market. The majority of the housing

is detached or semi-detached albeit there are two mobile home parks that offer relatively low-cost accommodation.

Witchford’s population has a distinctive age profile, with a high proportion of school age children, above average levels of people aged in their 40s and normal levels of those aged 50+. However, the proportion of people in their 20s is very low, about half the county average.

In general house prices are well above average for East Cambridgeshire and there is a particularly high premium for larger properties which can be explained through a high demand from families in this location. Whilst it is recognised there is a high market demand for larger homes in Witchford village, it is very important that new housing stock also includes smaller homes which can cater for the needs and demands of older members of the community as well as younger adults and younger families.

Evidence of demand for smaller homes and bungalows can be demonstrated from the results of a survey of Ely estate agents carried out in October 2018. Four estate agents responded to the survey (three both sales and lettings, one lettings only). The surveys demonstrate an excess of demand over supply in flats, bedsits, bungalows, detached, shared and affordable housing, and an excess of demand over supply for one and two bedroom properties, in both the sales and lettings sector. Quotes from the Platinum Properties Letting Agency survey response refer to this as a strong trend:

‘We have seen demand increase massively over the last 10 years. We have a large number of migrant workers in this locality as well as younger households struggling with the affordability of purchasing’

‘Demand for 2 and 3 bedroom homes continues to increase’

‘I would suggest there is a shortage of retirement homes’

The Neighbourhood Plan household questionnaire of February 2018 asked for detailed responses on housing demand, with the following results:

Type of homes needed	Strongly Agree %	Slightly Agree %
Social housing/housing association (rental)	20.5	37.22
Affordable housing (up to £250,000)	54.29	32.52
Shared ownership housing	23.13	47.19
Flats	9.03	29.91
Bungalows	17.55	52.35
Semi-detached	34.06	55.00
Sheltered	28.17	41.08
Detached	23.27	49.69
Residential/Nursing	30.82	47.48
Park homes	6.25	27.19
Bedsits	3.47	21.77

Comments from questionnaire respondents also illustrate the range of demand:

‘More two beds bungalows to be built for downsizing to release 4 bed family homes’

'We have enough expensive detached houses in the village. We need a lot more affordable houses for young people to buy'

'Affordable homes and a variety of types of dwellings need to be built for our young people as well as older generations'

'The focus on housing has to be a complete mixture to meet the diverse needs of the population'

'Starter homes. 3 / 4 bed homes'

Policy WNP H2 Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites

Proposals for small scale affordable housing schemes on rural exception sites for people with a Witchford connection on the edge of the village are supported provided that:

- the proposed development, by virtue of their size, scale and type, will not exceed the identified local needs for affordable housing;
- the types of dwellings proposed meet the needs identified in Witchford as identified in an up to date housing needs survey;
- the homes are located within easy access to Witchford village centre,
- the affordable housing is provided in perpetuity; and
- no significant harm would be caused to the character of the village, its setting or the countryside.

5.5.3 Intent

To adopt a supportive approach to the delivery of additional rural exception sites within the parish where it can be demonstrated that the schemes will meet Witchford's specific needs.

5.5.4 Context and reasoned justification

The Demographic and Socio-Economic Review undertaken to inform this Neighbourhood Plan demonstrates clearly that house prices and rental costs for all property sizes in Witchford are challenging for low income families. The number of households with a Witchford connection on the district's housing register was 38 as at September 2019. This is likely to be an underestimate of the housing needs in the parish.

Some affordable housing units will be provided as part of the permitted and allocated sites in the parish. However, these will not be prioritised for households with a strong connection to the parish. If, however, Witchford's affordable housing need is not fully met through these schemes, it is important that the community take a positive approach towards rural exception sites - but only where it can be demonstrated that the scheme will meet Witchford-specific needs.

Paragraph 77 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs.

Adopted Local Plan policy HOU 4: Affordable Housing Exception Sites provides a district-wide policy approach towards rural exception sites. The policy allows for an element of open market housing (maximum 20%) to be provided as part of such schemes but only where it is demonstrated through financial appraisal that the open market housing is essential to enable delivery of the site for primarily affordable housing.

It is not considered appropriate for market housing to come forward as part of rural exception schemes in Witchford and the Neighbourhood Plan supports the approach taken in the Local Plan, whereby any market housing must be justified through a robust financial appraisal that demonstrates the market housing as being essential to the overall viability of the scheme.

The Witchford Landscape Appraisal provides guidance regarding edge of settlement locations where there may be capacity for small scale schemes to come forward without causing harm to landscape character or setting of the village.

Access to affordable housing featured strongly in the feedback from community consultations throughout the Plan development period, and a report detailing this is included in Appendix 1 as part of the evidence underpinning this policy.

Policy WNP H3 Housing Design

All residential development schemes will be expected to achieve high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and building. Schemes shall complement and enhance local distinctiveness and character by retaining or enhancing the special qualities of Witchford and its setting (as described in the Witchford Landscape Appraisal).

All residential development shall contribute positively to the quality of Witchford as a place. Major development proposals will demonstrate how a scheme does this through a completed Building for Life 12 assessment or a similar assessment demonstrating sustainable design.

Where affordable housing units are being provided as part of a larger market housing scheme or together with market housing, the affordable housing unit should be designed as integral to the scheme and be generally indistinguishable from open market housing.

5.5.5 Intent

To help build successful neighbourhoods which function well and integrate with the existing village. Planning applicants will be expected to refer to the Witchford Landscape Appraisal to understand the distinguishing qualities for Witchford village and its wider setting within the landscape. This policy is intended to complement policy GI3 Development and Biodiversity. This policy complements the more strategic approach taken in Local Plan policy ENV2 which states that *“Design which fails to have regard to local context including architectural traditions and does not take advantage of opportunities to preserve, enhance or enrich the character, appearance and quality of an area will not be acceptable and planning applications will be refused”*.

5.5.6 Context and Reasoned Justification

It is clearly evident from the community consultation undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan that many residents are concerned about the scale of the planned housing growth

in the village and the impact of the growth on the existing character of Witchford as well as access to amenities. The level of growth expected makes it particularly important that new schemes are well thought through in terms of design and delivery of high-quality places, to ensure a high level of residential amenity but also successful community cohesion over the plan period. It is very important that the design and layout of new development facilitates the creation of cohesive, safe and pleasant neighbourhoods where new occupants feel comfortable integrating with their immediate neighbourhood as well as the village as a whole. In order to achieve this, any affordable housing element of a scheme should be fully integrated and indistinguishable from the development as a whole.

The Witchford Landscape Appraisal (WLA) provides a useful analysis of existing character in both Witchford village and across the wider parish. Applicants will be expected to refer to this work in their own design process. The WLA identifies the following special qualities of Witchford and its setting which are relevant when considering the design and layout of residential development:

- Loose arrangement of dwellings to the west with breaks in the built form, gives rise to a rural character;
- Village edges are predominately indented and organic in character to the south;
- Remnant orchards within and on the margins of the settlement;
- Notable views out of the settlement from Main Street particularly to the south due to the drop in elevation towards Grunty Fen, reinforcing the location of the village and perceptions of a rural community;
- Key built and natural landmarks such as churches/cathedral and fen islands reinforce sense of place and orientation within the wider landscape

The landscape and settlement analysis included in the WLA notes some changes which have resulted in minor loss to the distinctive qualities of the village and identifies changes to avoid. The changes that are relevant when considering the design and layout of residential development are listed below.

Avoid:

- the location of new housing on the southern edge of the village which is visible from surrounding lower land;
- the use of inappropriate building materials and sub-urban building forms;
- high density and abrupt urban edges;
- alterations to the existing settlement gateways which weaken sense of arrival and distinctiveness even if new development is proposed;
- loss of key views to surrounding landmarks;
- loss of visual and physical connectivity between the village and wider landscape
- loss of hedgerows and remnant orchards; and
- loss of meadows/grasslands and ponds.

The WLA also includes the following development guidelines (on page 37) which are applicable when new development is being considered:

- Avoid cul-de-sac developments which do not reflect lane hierarchy and form of the settlement;
- Seek always to ensure permeability through new housing areas, connecting any new development into the heart of the existing settlement;
- Avoid extending gateways into the wider landscape where new development is proposed - avoid the development of roundabouts at the junction of the settlement with major roads which are uncharacteristic and undermine the rural 'village' character of the settlement;

- Avoid cumulative effects of small housing schemes which collectively, over time, extend the urban edge and relate poorly to one another – seek wider masterplans and visions for broader areas linking in aspirations for open space, reinforcement of rural landscape setting, views and vistas, public rights of way/circular countryside walks and recreation;
- Avoid infill development which undermines the rural character of the village or connectivity to the wider landscape setting and which affects key sequential views along Main Street and lanes.

Building for Life 12 is a government endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. The scheme includes twelve criteria that new residential schemes can be assessed against. These are grouped under three headings as follows:

Integrating into the neighbourhood

1. Connections
2. Facilities and Services
3. Public Transport
4. Meeting local housing requirements

Creating a place

5. Character
6. Working with the site and its context
7. Creating well defined streets and spaces
8. Easy to find your way around

Street and home

9. Streets for all
10. Car parking
11. Public and private spaces
12. External storage and amenity space

Further information on Building for Life 12 can be found at www.designcouncil.org.uk

This Neighbourhood Plan also supports The Wildlife Trusts' 'A New Way to Build' approach as detailed in The Wildlife Trusts' paper '*Housing for People and Wildlife*' January 2018 included in Appendix 1.

In this policy, 'major development schemes' includes all schemes of ten or more dwellings.

5.6 Site Specific Allocations

Housing Proposal WNP WFDH1B

Land is proposed for housing development off Marroway Lane for up to 40 homes. The following site-specific considerations and requirements will apply to reserved matter applications and any future applications on this site:

- The retention of landscape buffer between the village edge and the A142 as a way of maintaining separation.
- An identified need for streetscape improvements through tree planting.
- A requirement to set aside land for the delivery of a west-east pedestrian and cycle spine route from Marroway Lane to Common Road through the southern part of the site.
- Incorporation of a surface water drainage scheme for the site based on sustainable drainage principles and which delivers biodiversity benefits.

Delivery of the section of the west-east pedestrian and cycle spine route from Marroway Lane eastward to Field End.

5.6.1 Intent

Development is consented for 128 new homes in the eastern part of WFD H1 (WFD H1A) and is under construction. The western part of the site (WFD HB) has outline planning consent for the development of 40 new homes

This housing proposal is included in the plan to ensure important principles for the development are established and in place ready for the detailed consent application and, in the event of the current permissions expiring, in place ready for future applications. In this particular case, where WFD H1A is now under construction, it is important to ensure the delivery of WFD H1B is designed as an integral and logical part of the new neighbourhood.

5.6.2 Context and reasoned justification

A key aspiration of the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan is the creation of a west-east segregated pedestrian and cycle spine route through the north side of the village, from Sutton Road through to Witchford Village College but potentially extending to the Lancaster Way cyclepath. The scheme will maximise travel mode choices for residents wishing to access neighbouring residential areas, Witchford Village College and cycle routes towards Ely. Full details of the route are included in the Witchford Pedestrian and Cycle Spine Route document, adopted as policy by Witchford Parish Council in January 2019.

The WLA recommends improvements in the streetscape along Field End through new tree planting.

This housing proposal is located in the Common Side Local Landscape Character Area, as described in the WLA. The WLA advises that new development should not sit close to the A142 and that an open landscape buffer should remain between the A142 and the village edge. In this particular location, the existing gap between the A142 and the village edge is considered to be an important part of how Witchford retains its separate village identity. The WLA states that it is important that an indented village edge and sense of separation from the A142 is retained.

Housing Proposal WNP WFDH2

Land is proposed for housing development at Common Road for up to 120 homes. The following site-specific considerations and requirements will apply to reserved matter applications and any future applications on this site:

- The retention of a landscape buffer between the village edge and the A142 as a way of maintaining separation.
- Low lying land to the north of the site including the ditches to be used for land drainage and maximise potential of landscape value through sensitively designed land drainage scheme.
- Setting aside land for a west east pedestrian and cycle spine route from Common Road through to Witchford Village College.
- Incorporation of a surface water drainage scheme for the site based on sustainable drainage principles and which delivers biodiversity benefits.
- Delivery of this section of the west east pedestrian and cycle spine route from Common Road through to Witchford Village College.

5.6.3 Intent

This site has the benefit of outline planning consent. This housing proposal is included in the plan to ensure important principles for the development are established and in place ready for detailed consent application and, in the event of the current permission expiring, in place ready for future decision making.

5.6.4 Context and reasoned justification

A key aspiration of the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan is the creation of a west-east segregated pedestrian and cycle spine route through the north side of the village, from Sutton Road through to Witchford Village College but potentially extending to the Lancaster Way cyclepath. The scheme will maximise travel mode choices for residents wishing to access neighbouring residential areas, Witchford Village College and cycle routes towards Ely. Full details of the route are included in the Witchford Pedestrian and Cycle Spine Route document, adopted as policy by Witchford Parish Council in January 2019.

This housing proposal is located in the Common Side Local Landscape Character Area, as described in the WLA. The WLA advises that new development should not sit close to the A142 and that an open landscape buffer should remain between the A142 and the village edge. In this particular location, the existing gap between the A142 and the village edge is considered to be an important part of how Witchford retains its separate village identity. The WLA states that it is important that an indented village edge and sense of separation from the A142 is retained.

5.7 Infrastructure Policies

The objective for infrastructure development within the parish in the Plan period is:

‘To encourage and promote the provision of sufficient infrastructure, amenities and services to allow Witchford to retain its character as a self-sustaining, thriving community’.

Policy WNP IC1 - Witchford Infrastructure and Community Facilities

Provision of new and improved infrastructure in the plan area should be informed by the following two overriding infrastructure priorities identified by the community:

- Improving pedestrian and cycle links from Witchford to provide greater connectivity between Witchford and Ely
- Traffic management to reduce congestion and deter A142 traffic from using the village as a ‘rat run’

All development proposals in the plan area should contribute towards infrastructure priorities where it is necessary to make the development acceptable and where directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

5.7.1 Intent

This policy is intended to complement Local Plan Policy GROWTH 3: Infrastructure Priorities. This policy states that *“Development proposals will be expected to provide or contribute towards the cost of providing infrastructure and community facilities made necessary by the development, where this is not provided through the Community Infrastructure Levy. This will be through on or off site provision or through financial payments, and secured via planning conditions or planning obligations (Section 106 agreements)”*. Policy GROWTH 3 is complemented by a vision for Witchford as set out in section 8 of the Local Plan.

Through this Neighbourhood Plan, the Witchford community have identified improvements to crossing facilities at the A10 from Witchford into Ely, alongside the need to invest in traffic management measures which will reduce overall congestion, as a higher priority over other measures. It is recognised that as the A10 junction is outside the Neighbourhood Area the WNP cannot make proposals relating to it but developments can contribute to the improvement of sustainable transport infrastructure within the Neighbourhood Area.

It is not the intention of this policy to undermine delivery of necessary on-site infrastructure needs that are triggered by a particular scheme, such as on-site play and open space provision. However, where schemes are found to have impacts on village traffic congestion (for example by virtue of their size or occupier type) or where schemes raise questions regarding access to shops and services for those without access to a car, it will be deemed appropriate for such impacts to be mitigated through off-site contributions towards managing traffic congestion in the village and/or improving pedestrian or cycle connectivity between Witchford Village and Ely.

5.7.2 Context and reasoned justification

An assessment of the infrastructure priorities indicated in the Local Plan is provided below.

Local Plan Chapter 8 Priority	NP Update
1. Improvements to pedestrian/cycle routes Suggestions: Foot/cycle bridge to cross A10 from BP garage into Ely. Pedestrian path on Grunty Fen road from Main Street. Increase width of footpath/cycle paths along Ely Road/Main street and Sutton Road	This is still the top priority shared by the Witchford community
2. Improvements to sports grounds/open space Suggestions: New netball courts at Bedwell Hey Lane recreation ground. Improvements to Victoria Green Park. Improvements to Common Road play area.	The need for additional netball infrastructure is not something that has been articulated through public consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan to date. Demand for improved play opportunities was expressed in the February 2018 Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire, e.g. for wild play, skate park, updated play equipment at Victoria Green play park, outdoor gym equipment.
3. Improvements to the community/village hall	This is covered in Policy WNP IC2
4. More school places	The provision of education facilities is considered a priority when there is a need. As at spring 2019, there are no known capacity issues at either Rackham Primary School or Witchford college (secondary school). It is also recognised that previous capacity issues (created by out of catchment children coming into Witchford) were alleviated once additional primary schools had been opened in Ely and Littleport (i.e. the Isle of Ely primary school and Littleport and East Cambs Academy).

The results of the Neighbourhood Plan household questionnaire of February 2018 showed the following support for provision of facilities for young people:

	Strongly Agree %	Slightly Agree %
Increase facilities for the under-5s	28.17	51.27
Increase facilities for 5 – 11 years children	41.33	44.64
Increase facilities for 11-16 years young people	60.66	32.23
Increase facilities for 17 – 24 years young people	47.45	37.24

Future primary and secondary school expansion

5.7.3

It is acknowledged that the County Council anticipates a future shortfall in secondary school places due to an expected increase in secondary school-aged pupils in the catchment area during the plan period, together with an increase triggered by planned

development. There is capacity on the existing Witchford Village College site for any required expansion to take place.

It is also acknowledged that the County Council has identified a potential shortfall in primary school and early years places if additional development (not included as part of the Neighbourhood Plan) comes forward on sites outside the development envelope and as departures from the Neighbourhood Plan/Local Plan. However, primary school-aged pupils in the catchment area are expected to decline from 246 down to 180 by 2025/26. This means that a future deficit will depend on the extent to which planning applications on sites which conflict with the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan are approved.

The County Council has indicated that there is little or no capacity for Rackham Primary School to expand on the existing site. When there is more certainty with regard to actual demand for future primary and early years places (e.g. once the existing planning applications are determined), it will be appropriate for the position regarding capacity to be reviewed. If, at this point, there is an evidenced need for additional primary school space to be provided, then the question of where and how this comes forward can be addressed as part of a review of the Neighbourhood Plan, in consultation with resident and stakeholder involvement. At this point in time, there are two broad areas which the Neighbourhood Plan group consider could be appropriate locations for future primary and secondary school capacity, subject to evidence of need being in place and subject to further consultation on this with the community and key stakeholders. These areas of search are shown on Map 'Areas of Search for Possible Future Education Infrastructure' submitted alongside this Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council will continue to liaise with the County Council, the community and other stakeholders with regard to primary and secondary school provision as the situation evolves (see Chapter 6. Community Projects).

Policy WNP IC2 -Witchford Village Hall and Recreation Ground

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates the village hall and associated recreation ground and open space as defined on Map 12 for the provision of expanded and enhanced village hall facilities.

The following criteria apply:

- It must be demonstrated clearly how any proposed new recreation or sports facility benefits local residents (including teenagers and young adults in the parish) and promotes inclusive activities for local people and the wider community.
- The quantity and quality of the open recreation space must be retained or enhanced.
- It must be demonstrated how additional demand for car parking will be accommodated within the allocated land

The provision of serviced office space that could both support the Witchford micro economy and generate rent income for purpose of maintaining village hall facilities will be supported as part of a proposal.

In some development proposals, it may be appropriate to meet open space provision

5.7.4 Intent

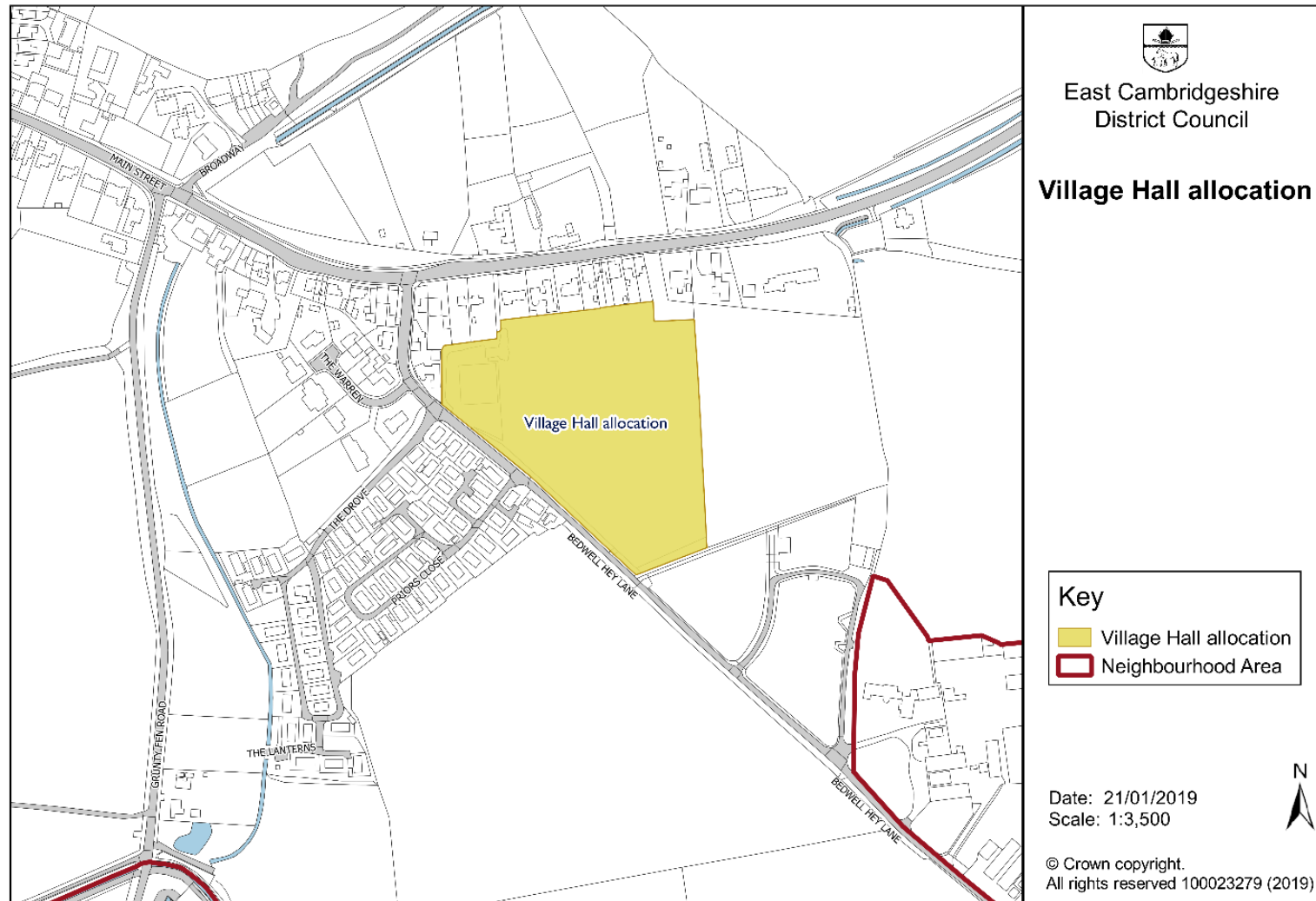
To allow for the redevelopment of the village hall during the plan period in order to create extra car parking space and better access for all users. To move the current changing rooms away from the village hall, to enable new office space to be built, extra meeting room space, and improved internal and external facilities. To enable extra land to be purchased and used to create extra playing areas.

5.7.5 Context and reasoned justification

Current usage of the hall is concentrated at evenings and weekends. It would benefit the community to create a hall which offers more to daytime users like businesses, schools, local childminder groups and the retired to use. Increasing the parking within the grounds will stop the disturbance to local Bedwell Hey Lane residents and secure the safety of users around the entrance.

The results of the Neighbourhood Plan household questionnaire of February 2018 showed the following support for measures to redevelop the village hall:

	Strongly Agree %	Slightly Agree %
The village hall should be redeveloped.	40.05	39.30



Policy Map 12: Village Hall Allocation

Policy WNP IC3 Protection of Witchford’s Community Facilities

Development proposals should not prejudice the retention of the village pub and post office/shop; rather they should help them prosper, for example through safeguarding associated parking, village centre street scene improvements, or through development of complementary uses that will generate additional footfall.

5.7.6 Intent

The Neighbourhood Plan supports the continued provision of the village shop and pub. Development proposals which will help them thrive will be supported and proposals which undermine or threaten their ability to operate will be resisted.

5.7.7 Context and Reasoned Justification

The proximity of Witchford to Ely means that residents will continue to travel to Ely for the purpose of accessing many community facilities including dentist, doctors and shops. However, the continued provision of a shop, post office and a pub is considered as essential to allow villagers to access vital community facilities without needing to leave the village, and to help maintain a lively daytime community within the village.

All customers at the village shop are important to maintaining a viable business. A proportion of people using the village shop will travel by car and the off-street parking provision to the side of the shop off Victoria Green allows customers to park up easily. This parking amenity is regarded as a complementary use to the shop.

The results of the Neighbourhood Plan household questionnaire of February 2018 showed the following support for measures to protect existing village facilities:

	Strongly Agree %	Slightly Agree %
Businesses that are important for the community (e.g. post office/garage) should be protected from a change of use to residential development whilst those businesses remain economically viable.	88.75	6.11

WNP IC4 - Flooding

All development proposals involving new build and situated within those areas in the parish at risk from surface water flooding (as documented in the most up to date Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Management Plan) shall be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment.

Such development proposals shall:

- be accompanied by a Surface Water Drainage Strategy;
- ensure all surface water is appropriately managed through the use of sustainable drainage systems and include detailed proposals for future maintenance of these; and
- be designed and constructed to reduce the overall level of surface flood risk to the use of the site and elsewhere when compared to the current use;

For all locations, Sustainable Drainage Systems are the preferred method of surface water disposal and should be incorporated unless demonstrably unfeasible to do so. Systems that benefit Witchford’s biodiversity and wildlife will be preferred over systems that do not.

5.7.8 Intent

This policy is focused on addressing surface water flood risk as opposed to fluvial flood (from rivers) and sea risk. National and local planning policy is considered to adequately address the risks associated from fluvial water flood risk. For example, all residential developments of 10 or more dwellings are required to provide a site-specific flood risk assessment regardless of their flood zone. This policy is intended to complement East Cambridgeshire Local Plan Policy ENV8 Flood Risk.

Areas of the parish do have specific issues when it comes to surface water flooding and the intention behind this policy is to flag this up as an important policy consideration. New development coming forward in the parish should not lead to additional surface water flooding in the parish and opportunities to reduce overall flood risk in the parish should be realised.

5.7.9 Context and reasoned justification

Parts of the parish, including parts of Witchford village, fall within fluvial flood zone 3. The adopted Local Plan includes policies on development which may impact on fluvial flooding and it is not necessary to include a similar policy in the Neighbourhood Plan. However, parts of the built-up area of the village as well as land adjacent to the village fall within areas that are also susceptible to surface water flooding.

As the Lead Local Flood Authority, Cambridgeshire County Council is responsible for the managing of surface water flooding across the district. In 2014, the County Council commissioned an update to the 2014 county-wide Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP). The SWMP looks in detail at surface water flood events across the district during the period 2011 to 2014 and establishes flood management priorities for the future through reference to the Environment Agency maps which inform the County Council’s work in this respect. This risk of surface water flooding should be recognised and development proposals coming forward on affected land should seek to reduce overall risk of surface water flooding to new development as well as properties adjacent or close to the site. The Neighbourhood Plan supports the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems as detailed in the *Sustainable Drainage Systems explanatory note* April 2019 listed in Appendix 1.

East Cambridgeshire District Council have prepared a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) which looks at both fluvial and surface water flood risk for the purpose of informing planning policy in the district. Appendix D to the SFRA report provides maps of the district showing extent of surface water flood risk. Figs. 8 and 9 below are extracts from this document and illustrate well the level of surface water flooding in and around Witchford village.

Fig. 8: Extract from Appendix D of East Cambridgeshire District Council SFRA showing the western extent of Witchford village.

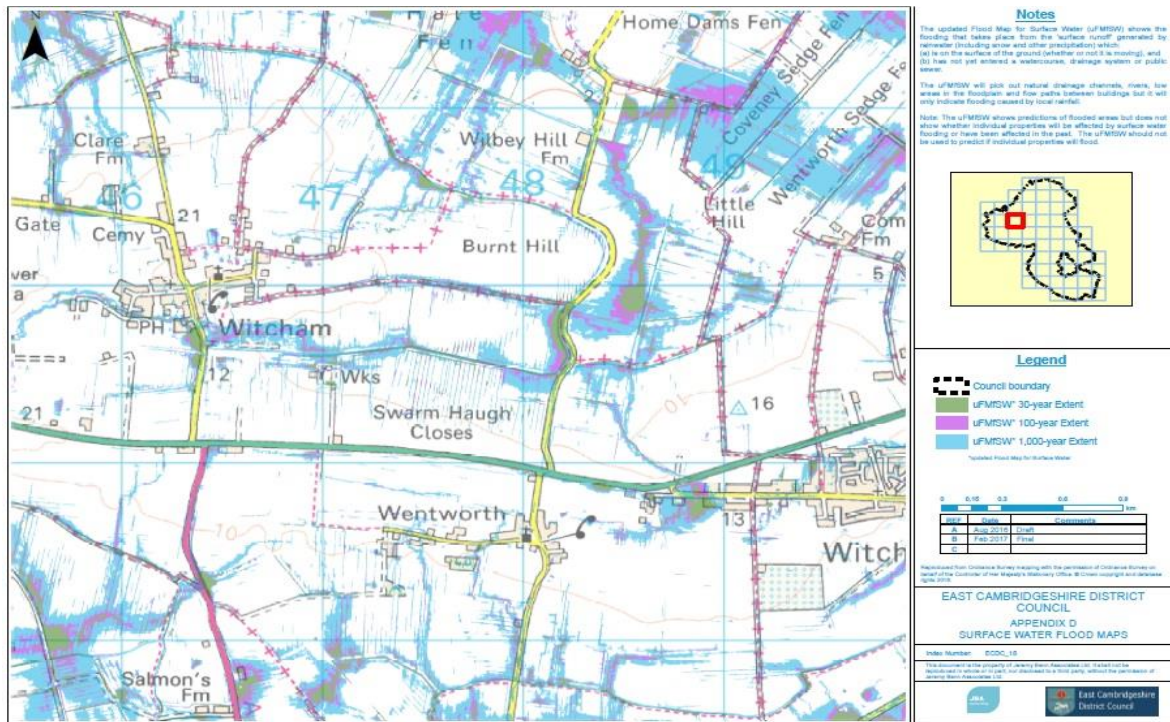
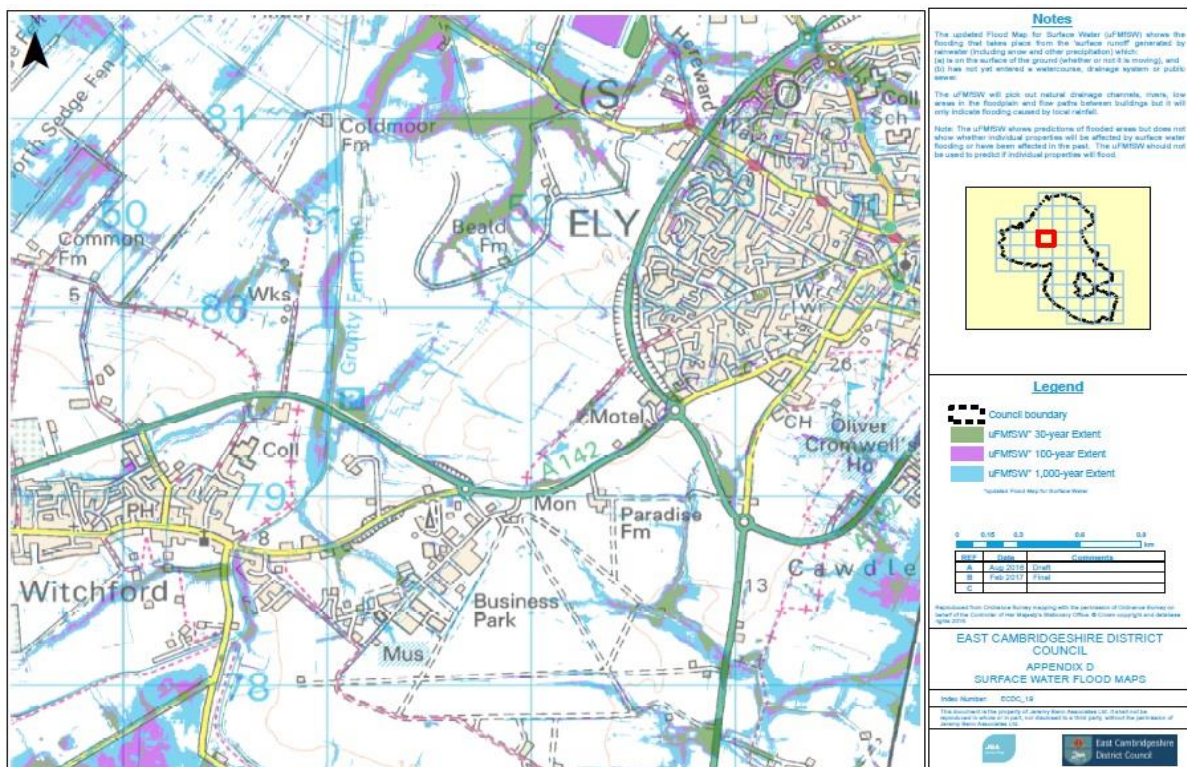


Fig. 9: Extract from Appendix D of East Cambridgeshire District Council SFRA showing the eastern extent of Witchford village.



5.8 Village Traffic Policies

The objective for traffic management in Witchford within the parish in the Plan period is:

'To address issues relating to the speed and volume of traffic through the village, and create attractive and usable opportunities for pedestrian and cycle access within Witchford with the aim of reducing in-village car use

Policy WNP T1 – Getting around the village

Development proposals which help to create a more walkable neighbourhood in the village will be supported. There should be good permeability through housing areas ensuring they are well connected via walking and cycling routes to neighbouring plots, key services including Witchford Village College, Witchford Primary School and shops and services located on Main Street.

Opportunities will be sought through development proposals to:

- improve existing pavements serving the development to make them more accessible for all users including children and the disabled;
- allow for pedestrian and cycle connectivity to neighbouring plots fitting in with existing connections on developed plots and allowing for future connections to undeveloped plots;
- implement the pedestrian and cycle spine route stretching from Sutton Road to Marroway Lane, Marroway Lane to Common Road, from Common Road to Witchford Village College and from Witchford Village College to Lancaster Way; and
- implement local transport improvements related to and necessary for the development as required by the Parish Council in its Local Transport Plan.

In all Major Development where necessary to achieve a good quality and accessible walking and cycling environment to meet the needs of the users of the development and where directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development, contributions towards these initiatives will be sought.

5.8.1 Intent

To ensure all new development designs in good pedestrian and cycle connectivity so that people are encouraged and able to make village journeys by foot or bicycle instead of the car.

5.8.2 Context and reasoned justification

Pedestrians and cyclists need to be given more priority within the street scene through the installation and improvement of footpaths and cycle routes. The WLA notes that some of the modern housing developments in Witchford are poorly connected with one another reducing permeability. One of the five development guidelines presented in the report is to *Seek always to ensure permeability through new housing areas, connecting any new development into the heart of the existing settlement.*

Pavements within the village require improvements to make them more accessible for all users, including children and the disabled, helping to meet the sustainability aspirations of the Neighbourhood Plan vision and objectives. Crossing points at key locations within the village would provide safer routes for residents – particularly the young and the

elderly. Funding and delivery of public realm improvements will be achieved by using contributions from new developments within the Parish as well as utilising other funding streams.

Residents within Witchford are impacted negatively by speeding cars passing regularly through the village. New development will undoubtedly increase traffic flows / congestion through the parish. As such this policy seeks to obtain appropriate contributions towards the delivery of these works where it can be demonstrated this is required. Care must also be taken to ensure that appropriate measures are introduced that do not 'urbanise' the village.

Data from Automated Traffic Counts commissioned by Witchford Parish Council in November 2016 and from regular Speedwatch sessions underpins this policy, as well as regular anecdotal instances raised on the village Facebook page. Appendix 1 contains more information about the evidence base for this policy.

Witchford Parish Council has developed an initiative for the planning and delivery of a west-east Witchford Pedestrian and Cycle Spine Route. The spine route stretches from the north west fringe of residential areas through existing and proposed residential areas, via Witchford Village College and finally to the Lancaster way roundabout to link up with the A142. In recognition of the daily traffic congestion issues experienced by residents and visitors, its aim is to provide a safe route segregated from traffic for pedestrians and people on bikes and mobility scooters.

The results of the Neighbourhood Plan household questionnaire of February 2018 demonstrated that there is overwhelming support among Witchford residents for measures to provide alternative means for travelling around the village, as follows:

Question	Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %
Provide an improved network of paths linking existing and new residential areas with village facilities	63.03	30.27

Traffic issues featured strongly in the feedback from community consultations throughout the Plan development period, and a report detailing this is included in Appendix 1 as part of the evidence underpinning this policy.

The Neighbourhood Plan household questionnaire of February 2018 showed the following support for measures to address traffic problems in the village:

	Strongly Agree %	Slightly Agree %
Make Main Street safer and less attractive for through traffic.	77.64	13.76

5.9 Witchford and Ely Connectivity Policies

The objective for connectivity in the Plan period is:

'To support proposals to improve infrastructure for safe and easy travel by cycle, on foot and by public transport to Ely and to Ely train station.'

Policy WNP C1 – Connecting Witchford and Ely through sustainable and safe cycle and pedestrian routes

The creation of a sustainable and safe segregated cycle and pedestrian route towards Ely within the Neighbourhood Area is strongly encouraged. It should feature as part of any future upgrade to the A142 highway network.

Where necessary to deliver sustainable development and where directly, fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development, off-site contributions will be secured to achieve the pedestrian and cycle route from Witchford towards Ely.

5.9.1 Intent

The current highway network presents a difficult obstacle for those wishing to access Ely city centre, train station or Ely Leisure Village by foot or cycle. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks contributions to be secured towards infrastructure solutions which help to address this connectivity barrier between Ely and Witchford.

5.9.2 Context and reasoned justification

The provision of a safe cycle and pedestrian route between Witchford and Ely has long been an aspiration of the Parish Council and as development increases the need for a safe sustainable transport route increases. The Neighbourhood Plan and developments within Witchford can contribute to the delivery of this route and policy WNP C1 seeks to achieve that.

The A10 and its junction with the A142 Witchford Road is an obstacle in realising a safe route and a segregated crossing point over the A10 would be the preferred solution. Indeed the Parish Council has a policy supporting the provision of a bridge over the A10 into Ely from Witchford 'as it not only meets all the objectives but also provides a truly attractive and usable route which we feel will encourage more journeys via sustainable modes of transport'.

This crossing point does not fall within the Witchford Neighbourhood Area and as such the Neighbourhood Plan cannot directly make proposals in respect of such a crossing. However as this is a key project in delivering safe and sustainable transport routes serving the Witchford area the Parish Council includes this as one of the 'Projects' aimed at delivering the vision and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan set out in Appendix 2.

The Parish Council will work with Cambridgeshire County Council, East Cambridgeshire District Council and the City of Ely Council to ensure development proposals within Witchford contribute to the provision of a safe and segregated sustainable transport route towards Ely.

Fig. 10 Projected increases in traffic flows 2011 – 2031. Source Transport Strategy for East Cambridgeshire



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 Figure 4: Changes in highway link flows in the morning peak between 2011 and 2031. Source: East Cambridgeshire Local Plan Transport Test (October 2012).

5.10 Supporting Witchford’s Micro-economy Policies

The objective for sustainable economic development within the parish in the Plan period is:

‘To support existing local businesses and to encourage increased economic activity appropriate to the rural nature of the parish’.

Policy WNP E1 – Support for small business development

Development proposals that help to encourage and support small businesses in the village will be viewed favourably where they are consistent with other priorities in this plan and where they do not trigger or contribute to problems associated with on-street parking. This could include:

- housing design that facilitates home working; and
- new accommodation, including serviced offices, that is suitable for micro businesses

5.10.1 Intent

The focus of this policy is not business development at existing employment areas, such as the Sedgeway Business Park, but is intended to apply to proposals in the village. The policy aims to contribute to sustainable development by:

- encouraging the development of local jobs and reduce outward commuting.
- encouraging the retention and expansion of local service businesses to meet local needs and helping the village centre to thrive.

5.10.2 Context and reasoned justification

The evidence from the Demographic and Socio-Economic Review undertaken to inform this Neighbourhood Plan and the database of Witchford based businesses compiled during the Plan process demonstrate that there is a healthy micro-economy of small-scale employment in Witchford, which this policy seeks to encourage and reinforce. Whilst the largest employment sectors in Witchford are education and ‘administrative & support service activities’, with Witchford Village College, the Rackham Primary School and Pre-school being major employers, the business database includes a significant proportion of small and home-based businesses.

Increasing Witchford based employment will help to reduce the projected increase in traffic volume on the A142 and A10 (see Fig.10) and will help the village retain a sense of community and daytime vitality, in line with the overall Vision for this Plan to ‘protect the rural character and community spirit of Witchford’.

The Neighbourhood Plan household questionnaire of February 2018 demonstrated that there is overwhelming support among Witchford residents for measures that promote working from home, as follows:

Question	Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %
Policies that promote working from home should be supported.	58.27	34.81

The questionnaire also demonstrated support among Witchford residents for new accommodation that is suitable for micro-businesses, as follows:

Question	Strongly agree %	Slightly agree %
Dedicated space for networking, workspace and business development is needed.	26.07	44.11

A survey of Witchford-based businesses was carried out in July 2018. A small majority favoured the provision of more office space and flexi-working space in Witchford.

Policy WNP E2 – Employment and Commercial Development

Development proposals for employment and business uses at the Sedgeway Business Park within the allocated area WFD E1 shown in Map 13 will be supported where they protect and utilise opportunities to reinforce landscape character. Proposals should have regard to the landscape guidance notes for the Common Side Local Landscape Character Area as provided in the Witchford Landscape Appraisal.

5.10.3 Intent

To ensure commercial development conserves and where possible reinforces landscape character in Witchford Parish

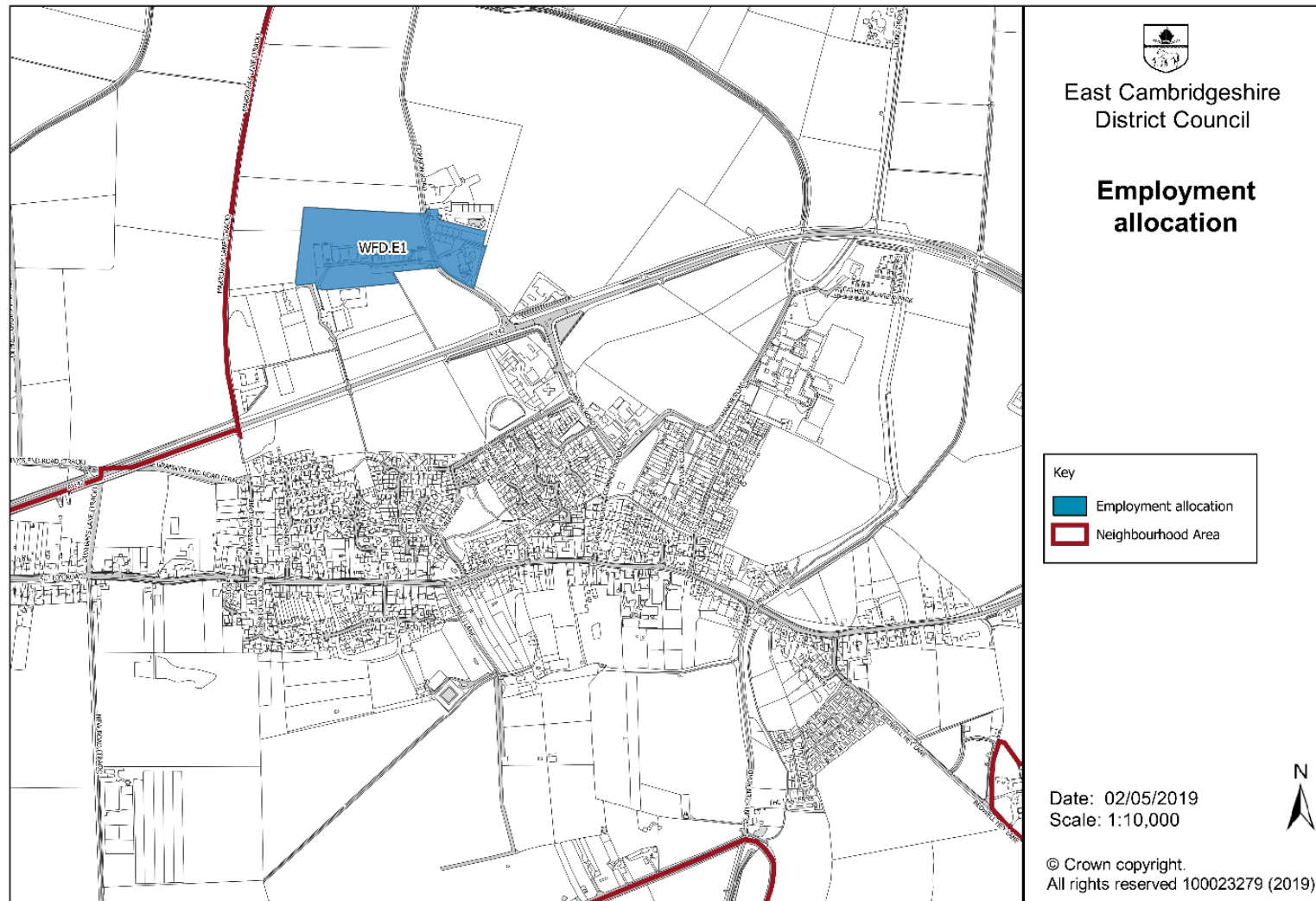
5.10.4 Context and reasoned justification

There is one key area of employment development in the Neighbourhood Plan area; the Sedgeway Business Park north of the A142. This falls in the Common Side Local Landscape Character Area. The WLA states there is limited scope for additional commercial development associated with the existing business parks due to visual sensitivity of the north facing slopes. The WLA provides the following guidance for commercial development:

- ensure new commercial development delivers new hedgerows/tree planting to build up overlapping lines of vegetation on the northern slopes, filtering views to development associated with existing business parks and reinforcing the distinction between island and wider fen.
- seek removal of non-native planting around business parks and replace with native woodland

The Lancaster Way Business Park is a designated Enterprise Zone outside of the Plan area. The WLA describes the Isle of Ely local landscape character area which covers the Lancaster Way Business Park as well as the south eastern part of the Plan area. The WLA states that there is little/no further opportunity for development but does provide guidance for the ongoing development of the Enterprise Zone.

The Witchford Neighbourhood Plan policies do not apply to proposals outside the Plan area but Witchford Parish Council will seek to secure the above guidelines into proposals at the Lancaster Way Business Park.



Policy Map 13: Employment Allocation

6. **Projects**

- 6.1 A number of projects have been directly derived from the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaires, which invited respondents to comment and highlight issues that particularly concerned them.
- 6.2 These projects are not directly related to the development and use of land therefore cannot form part of the Neighbourhood Plan, but complement the planning policies in the Neighbourhood Plan. They will help achieve the overarching Vision of the Plan:

'To value and protect the rural character and community spirit of Witchford, ensuring that future development meets local needs'

- 6.3 The list of projects is set out at Appendix 2 at the end of the Plan.
- 6. The Parish Council will liaise with the County Council, the primary school, stakeholders, landowners and the wider community with regard to future primary and secondary school provision in the plan area. Once it becomes apparent that additional land for new facilities will be required the Parish Council will look to safeguard sites (as part of a revised Neighbourhood Plan) for future provision. Possible sites for future safeguarding include those shown on 'Areas of Search for Possible Future Education Infrastructure', a map submitted alongside this Neighbourhood Plan. Education provision will be considered at the first review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

7. **Monitoring and Review**

Witchford Parish Council will have responsibility for providing the leadership for the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council will closely monitor new development through the planning process to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan policies are adhered to. Each Annual Meeting of the Parish Council after the Plan's implementation will include a detailed report on the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan on the previous year, and the likely impact of the Plan for the forthcoming year. The Parish Council website www.witchfordpc.org will carry an up to date report on progress with the Plan during its lifetime. The Parish Council intends to hold four-yearly (one Parish Council term) reviews of the effectiveness of this Neighbourhood Plan, to be carried out by community-based steering groups. These will hold the Parish Council to account for their stewardship of the Neighbourhood Plan, and will consider if there is any need to review or amend the Plan.

Appendix 1

Documentary evidence used in the production of Witchford Neighbourhood Plan

Copies of the documents or the relevant weblinks are on the Witchford Parish Council website www.witchfordpc.org.

1. General Plan production

Witchford Demographic, Social and Economic Review November 2017 CambsACRE
East Cambridgeshire Local Plan April 2015 East Cambridgeshire District Council
Neighbourhood Plan SWOT analysis November 2017 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Witchford Village Plan 2008 Witchford Parish Council
Witchford Village Vision Consultation Responses July 2011 East Cambridgeshire District Council
Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire November 2016 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Report on first village questionnaire January 2017 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire February 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Report on second village questionnaire March 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Report on Neighbourhood Plan drop-in session March 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Witchford Landscape Character Assessment December 2018 Alison Farmer Associates

2. Landscape and Character

Witchford Landscape Character Assessment December 2018 Alison Farmer Associates
National Character Area Profile No46: The Fens Natural England
Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire February 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Report on second village questionnaire March 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Supporting Evidence Paper for Policy WNP LC2 Witchford Area of Separation September 2019 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

3. Green Infrastructure

Witchford Landscape Appraisal December 2018 Alison Farmer Associates
Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire February 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Report on second village questionnaire March 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
CPERC database CPERC
Definitive Map of public rights of way Cambridgeshire County Council
Database of Witchford green infrastructure July 2018 Witchford Parish Council
Witchford Walks leaflet Witchford Parish Council
List of Tree Protection Orders for Witchford East Cambridgeshire District Council
Witchford Local Green Space Report May 2019 Witchford Parish Council
Witchford Local Green Space questionnaires August 2018 Witchford Parish Council
Summary of Witchford Green Spaces Facebook Posts
Witchford Local Greenspace: Supporting Information Open Spaces Group October 2018

4. Housing

Witchford Demographic, Social and Economic Review November 2017 CambsACRE
Ely Estate Agents Survey October 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire February 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Report on second village questionnaire March 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Building for Life 12 January 2015 Design Council
A New Way to Build Open Spaces Group April 2017
Housing for People and Wildlife January 2018 Wildlife Trusts
Sustainable Drainage Systems explanatory note April 2019
Witchford Housing Standards Evidence Report East Cambridgeshire District Council September 2019

5. Infrastructure

Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire February 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Report on second village questionnaire March 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Community Facilities Audit May 2013 East Cambridgeshire District Council
Play Areas Audit 2013 East Cambridgeshire District Council
0-19 Education Organisation Plan 2018-2019 Cambridgeshire County Council
Cambridgeshire County Council response to planning application for land at 27-39 Sutton Road (19/00966/OUM) July 2019
<https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>

6. Traffic

East Cambridgeshire Local Transport Strategy December 2016 Cambridgeshire County Council
Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 3 July 2014 Cambridgeshire County Council
Witchford Parish Council Transport Plan September 2018 Witchford Parish Council
Witchford Pedestrian and Cycle Spine Route Policy January 2019 Witchford Parish Council
Witchford Automatic Traffic Count data November 2016 Witchford Parish Council
Witchford Village College Travel Plan March 2017 Witchford Village College
Speedwatch Data 2017 – 2019 Witchford Parish Council
Local Highways Improvement Fund supporting evidence 2017-2018 Witchford Parish Council
Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire February 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Report on second village questionnaire March 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Witchford Landscape Character Assessment December 2018 Alison Farmer Associates

7. Connectivity

A10 Pedestrian and Cycle Crossing Policy January 2019 Witchford Parish Council
East Cambridgeshire Local Transport Strategy December 2016 Cambridgeshire County Council
Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 3 July 2014 Cambridgeshire County Council
Ely Masterplan 2010 East Cambridgeshire District Council

8. Supporting Witchford's Micro Economy

Witchford Demographic, Social and Economic Review November 2017 CambsACRE
Database of Witchford businesses June 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Witchford business questionnaire July 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire February 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Report on second village questionnaire March 2018 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Appendix 2

Complementary Projects List

CIL Funded Project List.

There are a range of community amenities and projects that are identified which can be wholly or partly funded by CIL contributions to the Parish. These are outlined below.

- Village environment, e.g. flower displays, seating on footpaths, litter bins. Suggestion for a community garden will be brought to the Parish Council for consideration whether to add to CIL123 projects list.
- Community facilities e.g. Village Christmas tree, coffee club (assist with capital costs), youth club (assist with capital costs), non-land-use related improvements to village hall
- Play facilities e.g. skate park, wild play spaces, village trim-trail, orienteering course, football/basketball cage
- Small scale highways works such as bollards and signage to improve safety at rights of way crossings on A142

Other Schemes

Other schemes not deliverable by Witchford Parish Council but which the Parish Council will support or lobby for:

- To improve General Practitioner facilities in the Parish.
- To improve broadband and mobile phone network coverage in the area through proactive discussions with existing and potential operators.
- To improve public transport provision in Witchford.
- Improvements to public rights of way crossings over A142.
- Improved crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists at the A10/A142 junction.

COVID 19 UPDATE

Committee: Council

Date: 21 May 2020

Author: Corporate Management Team

[V5]

1.0 **ISSUE**

1.1 Update on the Council's response to COVID 19.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 Members are requested to note the report and further instruct officers to provide July Council further updates, specifically:

- (i) Impact of COVID 19 on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy including specific recommendations arising from the revisions to the ECTC and ECSS Business Plans 2020/21.
- (ii) Implementation of the Council's recovery plans in line with Government guidance.
- (iii) Revisions to the agreed 2019/2023 Corporate Plan in light of the impact of COVID 19.

3.0 **BACKGROUND/OPTIONS**

3.1 The Council has amended, in response to the COVID 19 crisis, to:

- To support the local community to respond and ameliorate the impact of COVID 19.
- To support businesses to ameliorate the economic impact of COVID 19.
- To work effectively with Government, our partners and the Local Resilience Forum to meet our obligations.
- To maintain 'business as usual' as practicably possible and consistent with public health guidelines to protect staff and customers.
- To provide support to maintain the well-being of staff and ensure the ongoing resilience of the organisation.
- To adopt appropriate governance processes and procedures to ensure open and effective decision making.

3.2 The Council acted promptly and effectively to respond to the COVID 19 crisis; adopting new ways of working, reorganising the Council to focus on the objectives outlined in paragraph 3.1 and making necessary governance and financial decisions consistent with our constitutional obligations.

4.0 EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL RESPONSE

4.1 **BUSINESS CONTINUITY**

All Service Leads, including ECTC and ECSS, together with the Corporate Management Team (CMT) have come together to establish the Business Continuity COVID-19 Group and this work is led by the Chief Executive.

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 level of service, which is reported to Members on a weekly basis and informs the Councils communication response to COVID 19.

An updated Business Continuity Statement of the current status of Council Services together with a decision log will be tabled at the meeting. The Business Continuity Group will lead the Councils COVID 19 Recovery Plan.

4.2 **COMMUNITY**

From the outset the Council wanted to ensure that everything was being done that could be done to assist all of the different work streams that were happening across the district to reach the vulnerable community.

In response to the crisis the Council set up the Community Group which is led by the Director Commercial with support from the Housing & Community Safety Manager, Environmental Services Manager, Markets Officer, Customer Services Manager and the Communities & Partnership Manager. These Officers also represent the Council on various external groups that support partner agencies and the community.

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 councils, community groups and the third sector to ensure that every settlement in the district has access to help and advice.

Key areas of work:

- Assessing which communities had an established support network
- Working with the Community Reference group to assist Community Groups that needed support and advice
- Written to over 8,100 residents that were identified as vulnerable
- Ensuring the website provided sufficient information to assist those who were in need of help and those who wanted to help
- Setting up specific COVID inbox, monitored by the Housing Team, to ensure that people received support during this crisis

The majority of calls and emails to the Council were from residents who required assistance with shopping and collection of medication.

The Council acted as a link between those needing help and those wanting to help. Where assistance could not be provided by a Community Support Group or where there was an emergency, the Council deployed its resources accordingly to support those in need. The level of queries has reduced over time which was expected as people became more aware of the support that was available outside of the Council.

Looking forward Officers will continue to provide the assistance needed and will work with the relevant bodies to ensure that support is ongoing particularly when the recovery phase commences.

4.3 **BUSINESS**

The Council received £15,808,000 from Government to distribute to the 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 to ensure timely payment of the grants comprising ECDC Officers and representatives from Ely Markets and ARP.

An updated schedule of payments will be reported at Annual Council.

On 1st May 2020 the Government announced that it would provide Local Authorities with additional funding to support businesses that are not eligible for the current grant schemes. At the time of writing, the exact amount of funding the Council will receive and guidance for administering the funding had not been published. Although Local Authorities will have some discretion in how this funding is allocated, Government has requested that grants to the follow types of business be prioritised:

- Small businesses in shared offices and other flexible workspaces
- Regular market traders who do not have their own business rates assessment
- Bed and Breakfasts
- Charity properties in receipt of charitable business rates

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.

4.4 GOVERNANCE

Due to the introduction of restrictions on gatherings of people by the Government due to the Covid-19 outbreak, s78 Coronavirus Act 2020 provided that regulations could be made relating to 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 these were the regulations flowing from s78 and apply to meetings taking place before 7th May 2021.

New legislation was necessary as the existing primary legislation requires local authorities to hold annual meetings in the period March to May and that meetings must be in person, requiring attendance of all members at a place together. This is not currently possible in the light of the recent lockdown. Key changes under the Regulations include the “place” where the meeting is held is not confined to the Council building, document “open to inspection” include posting on the Council’s website, Members are considered as attending a meeting if they can hear, and where practicable see, and be heard, and where practicable, be seen by other members of the public, meetings can be held by remote means including via telephone conferencing, video conferencing, live webchat and live streaming, local authorities may make standing orders about remote meetings in relation to voting, access to information etc. and remote attendance to members counts for other purposes, such as the 6 month rule and allowances.

The Council’s Monitoring Officer set up a Remote Meetings Group to implement the Regulations and held its first meeting on Monday 6th April. The Group’s main aim was to ensure provisions were put in place to hold Committee meetings remotely as soon as possible, with its first focus being the setup of a remote Planning Committee meeting on 20th April 2020.

In addition to the Monitoring Officer, the group consists of the Deputy Monitoring Officer, colleagues from ICT, Democratic Service and the Information Officer to ensure procedures were GDPR compliant. Outcomes of the first meeting highlighted a need for ICT to test Zoom as a chosen platform for the remote meetings with the Lead Officer to act as host for the meeting. The host can then control the meeting and ensure Zoom will focus on who is speaking at any one time. The ICT Manager and Information Officer formulated guidance on the use of Zoom for remote meetings, together with undertaking a Data Impact Assessment for GDPR purposes.

ICT contacted all Planning Committee members to check both their ICT and training needs in relation to Zoom and training was provided where needed. The Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer produced a

supplementary Council Procedure Rule 30 to cover Remote Meetings, which was circulated and agreed on 16th April 2020 under the Chief Executive's urgency powers in the Constitution. These include, for example, that voting will be via recorded votes. At the time of writing, further supplementary Council Procedure Rules are being produced in relation to Annual Council, testing has been carried out in relation to the "Polling" function on Zoom to facilitate a secret ballot in relation to election of Chairman/Vice Chairman and any members not on Planning will be contacted to ascertain their ICT and training needs ahead of Annual Council shortly.

4.5 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.

The Council, through its Leader and Chief Executive, represents the Council on a number of liaison forums organised by Government, Local Government Association, District Councils Network and the Combined Authority.

Appendix 1 summarises the internal and external arrangements in operation during the crisis.

4.6 BUDGET IMPACT

As with many district councils the pandemic is not having a significant impact on the costs of the Council, but is having a major impact on the income we collect. To date the Council has incurred around £35,000 of additional cost, much of this in relation to IT to enable more / the majority of staff to work from home. In relation to income, fees and charges are reducing as a consequence of reduced requests in Planning, Building Control, Land Charges and Licencing. Car parking income has reduced by 90% and we expect that the management fee we get from GLL for the Leisure Centre to also be reduced. It is hard at this point to say the full cost of these, as the length of the "lockdown" is unclear.

In relation to Council Tax and Business Rates, it is again too early to say how these will be impacted over the coming months, but they are expected to be significantly reduced. For 2020-21 we are required to pay our preceptors (including ourselves) the full value agreed in the budget, regardless of what is collected, so in revenue terms this will not impact this year. However any shortfalls in the Collection Funds will cause us short-term cashflow issues in 2020-21 and will need to be covered by reduced precept payments in 2021-22. This is particularly true on Business Rates, where the additional relief awarded by Government after the budget was set, for retail, hospitality and leisure will make a significant dent in the amount collected. It is expected that Government will cover this cost, but at the time of writing, the exact process behind this was not clear.

Also with regard to cashflow, ECTC has stopped building on two of its sites, which is having an impact on its cashflow and subsequently will impact on when the Company will be able to repay the loans it has received from the Council. Originally these were due to be fully repaid by March 2021, but this is now considered unlikely, with work continuing to determine a more likely repayment schedule.

This will be reported directly to July Council together with an assessment of other financial impacts on ECTC and ECSS.

The Government has awarded two tranches of £1.6 billion to Local Government to assist the sector through the pandemic, the Council's share of these was £43,432 in the first tranche and £894,826 in the second.

The Finance & Assets Committee will monitor the ongoing financial impact of the crisis and make recommendations to Council, where appropriate.

4.7 NEXT STEPS – 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.

Whilst the Business Continuity Group will continue to ensure that services operate smoothly they will now also consider what recovery measures are required for the medium to long term. Service Leads have been asked to carry out an evaluation of current working practices that were put in place at the start of the pandemic to consider whether they have been successful and therefore should be kept. For example video conferencing has cut back on unnecessary travel, officers and Members have benefited and welcomed weekly updates and formal Committee meetings have been able to continue via video conferencing. This started with the highly successful Planning Committee which was transmitted via video conferencing and was streamed on YouTube.

Officers continue to engage daily with external partners and meetings are now being set for the foreseeable future to discuss the recovery process in the short, medium and long term across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough following steer from Government.

Many agencies including East of England Local Government Association, Community groups, District Council Network, District and County Councils' and emergency planning groups including the Local Resilience Forum are in regular contact with Corporate Management Team, all with one purpose in mind; to discuss the next steps.

At the Council, Officers are also considering how to get staff back into the workplace safely and to progress work on recovery plans, in line with Government Public Health Guidelines, that will be introduced to ensure that our

staff, communities, residents and businesses are supported and can thrive once more.

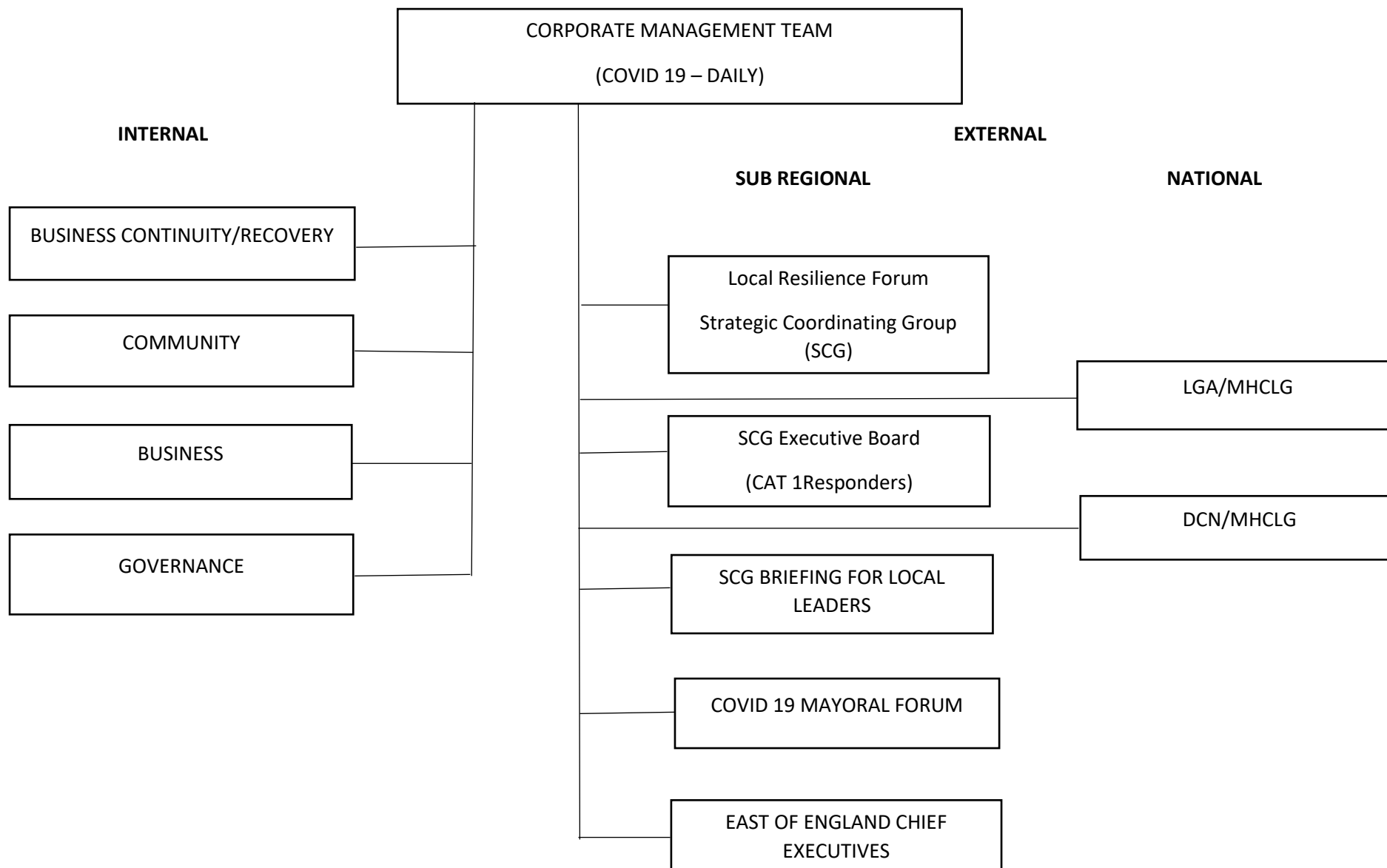
5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The financial implications are outlined above and Members will be updated on a regular basis

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix 1- COVID 19 Revised Arrangements (Internal/External)

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
	Room 103 The Grange Ely	John Hill Chief Executive (01353) 616271 E-mail: john.hill@eastcambs.gov.uk



SERVICE UPDATES FOR ECDC, ECTC AND ECSS

Service	Key Activity	Headlines	Current Risks/Challenges	Mitigation	Financial Impact
Building Control	<p>Contributing to Business Continuity/Recovery.</p> <p>Maintaining current service to the community/business in a managed and risk aware environment</p>	<p>Ensuring statutory functions and timescales are met</p> <p>5 staff WFH</p> <p>1 staff in office (essential tasks that cannot be done from home)</p>	<p>Carrying out site visits in a safe way for staff and the customers</p>	<p>All vulnerable staff are not carrying out site visits.</p> <p>Risk assessments are carried out prior to undertaking a site visit</p>	<p>Longer term reduction in application fee income</p>
Communities & Partnership	<p>Community engagement and liaison with parish councils, community groups, voluntary organisations and a range of agencies to support work of local COVID-19 Community hub</p> <p>Gathering of information to inform development of ECDC COVID-19 webpages and local Hub communications, including community and agency contact information and development of pro-formas for site users to complete</p> <p>Gathering and review of datasets and engagement with COVID-19 County Co-ordination Hub Lead to support joint efforts</p> <p>Directly responding to volunteer enquiries and signposting accordingly</p> <p>Mapping of volunteer capacity and ongoing demand for support</p> <p>Working with Community Group and Business Continuity/Recovery Group</p>	<p>Maintaining current service to the community</p> <p>All staff WFH</p>	<p>Loss of volunteers (if there are any that will return to work as restrictions ease)</p>	<p>Working with the community groups to establish the likelihood of this risk and will inform future work with community groups for a contingency plan</p>	<p>None identified</p>
Customer Services	<p>Providing frontline service to the public</p> <p>Supporting Council services, ECSS, ECTC and ARP to deliver essential services</p> <p>Working with Community Group and Business Continuity/Recovery Group</p>	<p>Reception closed to public. All other services running as normal.</p> <p>All members of Customer Services can now work from home.</p> <p>Skeleton staff working at The Grange on a rota basis to take payments and complete essential tasks</p>	<p>Staff sickness/self-isolation/planned leave</p>	<p>All staff have the ability to work from home and staff are multiskilled to assist in different areas of the service</p>	<p>None identified</p>
Democratic Services	<p>Maintaining current services to Councillors, Officers, community and interested parties/stakeholders, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Constitutional advice and guidance - Member support - Electoral Registration Services - Virtual Meetings Group - Business Continuity/Recovery Group 	<p>Minor amendment to Constitution- addition (xvi) to 'Proper Officer Functions' for Environmental Services Manager relating to Coronavirus Regulations</p> <p>Supplementary Procedure Rules for Remote Meetings agreed by Chief Executive under the urgency delegation in Full Council Terms of Reference</p> <p>Minor amendment to Constitution of Operational Services Officer Delegations to issue Prohibition Notices and Fixed Penalty Notices under Coronavirus Regulations</p> <p>Elections Team assisting Business Group</p> <p>All staff working from home and only coming to the office to carry out essential tasks</p>	<p>None identified</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>	<p>None identified</p>
Economic Development	<p>Assisting the Business Support Group</p>	<p>Liaising with businesses affected by the current coronavirus situation</p>	<p>High volume of enquiries regarding Business Grants/financial advice in general</p>	<p>Signposting to government websites and agencies that can assist.</p>	<p>Loss of income from eSpace (North and South)</p>

		<p>Signposting to information, responding to business enquiries</p> <p>Communicating key government schemes</p> <p>The e-space (North and South) are closed, but centres remain open to tenants who are essential/key workers.</p> <p>All staff working from home</p>		<p>Ensuring grant relating queries are dealt with 'centrally' by the Business Group.</p>	
Ely Markets	<p>Member of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Group - Business Group - Business Continuity/Recovery <p>Leading Markets Recovery Group</p>	<p>Markets currently suspended.</p> <p>Market trader rents suspended for April, May & June.</p> <p>Set up virtual Ely Markets online and via social media to promote traders offering remote ordering/delivery of essential goods.</p> <p>Regular contact with traders with information and support to maintain Ely Markets community.</p> <p>New Ely Markets website launched with 'Home Deliveries' page for traders offering remote ordering.</p> <p>Markets Recovery Plan- Limited to food produce markets in June, accommodating Health & Safety and Social Distancing</p> <p>All staff able to work from home. One member of staff coming to the office three days a week.</p>	<p>Maintaining Ely Markets community of traders, i.e., support to remain in business and to return to market</p> <p>Maintaining support of the public, i.e., shoppers and visitors to return to the market when it is open</p>	<p>Signposting market traders to business support and grants available</p> <p>Promoting businesses remaining open and able to offer remote ordering/delivery service</p> <p>Social media activity and website</p> <p>Responding to traders' and public enquiries</p>	<p>Loss of income whilst the market is closed and recovering</p>
Environmental Health	<p>Linking with community groups providing information and assistance as part of the East Cambs Community Hub</p> <p>Ensure statutory services are maintained – dealing with service requests relating to all areas of work.</p> <p>Responding to planning/contaminated land consultations. Continuing to approve DFG's and deal with any emergency repairs</p> <p>Enforcement of The Health Protection (Coronavirus,Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020</p> <p>Involvement in Track and trace at a local level.</p> <p>Working with Community Group and Business Continuity/Recovery Group</p>	<p>All areas of work being dealt with</p> <p>Contractors back on site to undertake Home adaptations where possible</p> <p>Increased nuisance complaints (noise/bonfires)</p> <p>Information/guidance been provided to landlords/tenants of HMO's regarding social distancing and social isolation</p> <p>All officers set up to work from home</p> <p>Occasionally officers come into the office to print off letters and deal with Land search enquiries.</p>	<p>Increased enquiries relating to businesses premises and Enforcement of The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020.</p> <p>Relaxation of lockdown rules causing tension</p> <p>Unsure at present on resource required for contact tracing. Areas of concern migrant population/gypsy and travellers</p>	<p>Working with Local Police to manage situations and in contact with business premises.</p> <p>Updating information links to government guidance for businesses that are re-opening.</p> <p>Working with CCC/HPU/District Councils on process</p>	<p>Cost of clearance of fly-tips less enforcement reduced income from FPN/prosecutions.</p>
Financial Services	<p>The main focus for the Finance Team is the payment of grants to small business.</p> <p>Business Rate reliefs have now been applied to all eligible businesses and so has the additional £150 reduction in Council Tax to all LCTRS clients. The decision to do both of these was made on the grounds of urgency by the Chief Executive.</p> <p>Member of the Council's Business Continuity Group and Business Continuity/Recovery Group</p>	<p>Processing Business Grants.</p> <p>Maintaining normal service including the payment of contractors and the collection of income.</p> <p>Undertaking the closedown process to prepare the 2019-20 statutory accounts. Government have delayed the statutory timetable for this.</p> <p>All staff able to work from home and coming in to the office to carry out essential tasks (e.g. BACS)</p>	<p>Key risk is the payment of grant to small businesses, and the potential fraud involved in this, when we are trying to get a large number of payments out in such a fast timeframe to businesses we have not paid previously.</p>	<p>Best efforts applied to avoid any fraud, asking businesses to confirm all of their details before payments are made, and have used third party information to send the proforma to the businesses in the first instance.</p>	<p>The expectation is that all the costs of the grants and the reliefs will be covered by Central Government, we have already received cash for the business grants and the Council Tax reliefs and received notification from Government that grant will be paid monthly during the year to cover an initial assessment of the cost of</p>

					<p>the Business Rate reliefs scheme.</p> <p>In relation to the overall finances of the Council, we are reviewing Council Tax and Business Rates levels and there is likely to be an impact on fees and charge especially in relation to things like planning, building control, car parking and the management fee payable from GLL in relation to the Leisure Centre.</p>
<p>Housing & Community Advice</p>	<p>Officers are in regular contact with all clients especially those who are vulnerable. All officers are providing advice on employment and benefits of which we have seen a big increase since Covid 19 outbreak as well as all other areas of advice.</p> <p>Currently managing the Covid19 mailbox and signposting residents to the relevant support in their area.</p> <p>Member of the Countywide Community Reference Group – conference meetings once a week.</p> <p>Daily calls for Covid 19 Co-ordination Hubs with all district council leads.</p> <p>Daily calls with community hub place co-ordinator for ECDC.</p> <p>Member of internal Community Group and Business Continuity/Recovery Group</p>	<p>Currently maintaining a full service for housing and community advice; providing advice and assistance via telephone interviews and have provided a contact number and email address for direct enquires.</p> <p>All officers are working from home.</p>	<p>Not interviewing face to face can present challenges on officer's determination of priority need. It can be a longer process as we have to have id, bank statements scanned and emailed.</p> <p>Risk assessments for temporary accommodation have to be completed over the phone and sometimes waiting on police checks.</p> <p>Preparation for impending court re opening, will have an influx of homelessness from private rented accommodation.</p> <p>Housing associations are now working on their void properties and move on from our temporary accommodation is now happening.</p> <p>Risks of staff becoming unwell as we have a statutory duty under homelessness law.</p>	<p>Time management for officers, ensuring they have enough admin time between interviews. The whole team are covering all queries that come in regardless of their roles.</p>	<p>None at present. Must be mindful of requirement to accommodate rough sleeps which could have financial implications for the Council</p>
<p>HR</p>	<p>Providing advice and guidance on COVID-19 to staff and Members.</p> <p>Acting as liaison between Council and Unison on related issues.</p> <p>Monitoring % of staff off sick and self-isolating for reporting purposes.</p> <p>Membership of the EELGA COVID-19 HR Manager's group.</p> <p>Member of Business Continuity/Recovery Group</p>	<p>Normal Service operation</p> <p>All staff working from home</p>	<p>No access to paper based HR files which are stored securely at The Grange.</p>	<p>Access to staff details remotely via iTrent and contracts and variation letters are saved electronically on the shared drive which we can access.</p>	<p>None identified</p>

ICT	<p>Remote Meetings and Business Continuity/Recovery Group</p> <p>Enable the business to work Remotely and providing supporting officers moving to remote working</p>	<p>Of 160 Officers 5 have been identified as not being able to carry out the job at home</p> <p>Currently 98.7% have been either issued with equipment and set up for remote working or just set up for remote working Customer Services are now all set up and working from home.</p> <p>The ICT Team have tested and setup Virtual Meetings (using the Zoom Platform to host), successfully hosting 2 planning committees and a Full Council including Secret Voting and Members being able to raise Point of Order and Point of Personal Explanation is planned for Thursday 21st May 2020.</p> <p>8 of ICT Staff working fully from home. 2 currently in the office most days, for testing, equipment issues, deliveries of equipment.</p>	<p>Failure of ICT equipment and Servers Power Failure Internet Failure</p>	<p>Helpdesk running as normal and staff attending office periodically</p> <p>Servers being monitored by ICT Staff</p> <p>UPS in place with backup generator contract in place</p>	<p>Approximately £45,000 for equipment</p>
Infrastructure & Strategic Housing	<p>Assisting the COVID-19 Business Support Group with the processing of the government business support grants.</p> <p>Member of Business Continuity /Recovery Group.</p>	<p>CIL/S106 and Strategic Housing maintaining current service to the community/businesses.</p> <p>All staff working from home with an officer coming in once a week for printing and post</p>	<p>High volume of enquires re the Business Grants</p>	<p>Business Grants being prioritised over other work where possible. Other teams (e.g. PA's, Elections Team) assisting.</p>	<p>Delay in receiving CIL/S106 funding due to liable parties being unable to pay as a result of COVID-19. (Payments will be delayed, not written off).</p>
Legal Services	<p>Lead Member of Remote Meetings Group</p> <p>Member of Business Continuity/Recovery Group</p>	<p>Legal Services – Prosecutions - car parking enforcement cancelled and review future prosecutions. All other services operating as normal.</p> <p>All staff Working from Home</p> <p>Legal Services Manager in the office on Wed as CMT representative and at any other time to sign and seal documents and check post.</p> <p>Available for Member enquiries via email as normal.</p>	<p>Legal Services - Staff sickness/self-isolation/planned leave</p> <p>Legal Services – Prosecutions – risk that offences become stale (out of time) before action can be taken</p>	<p>Legal Services - Tim Driver, ex Planning Lawyer, could be called in to assist with planning law queries if needed</p> <p>Remote Meetings – Information Officer is part of the Remote Meetings group to advise on data protection issues arising from remote decision making</p> <p>Prosecutions – court advised today that all Council prosecutions will be moved to a court date after 30/6/2020</p>	<p>None identified</p>
Leisure Services	<p>Member of Business Continuity/Recovery Group</p> <p>Regular communication with GLL, partner trusts and other strategic partners to support voluntary sports sector and plan for resumption of activities when appropriate</p> <p>Social media and email communications with 'Let's Get Moving' client groups, including numerous older participants</p>	<p>Services (leisure centres, Let's Get Moving direct delivery, voluntary sports sector) remain suspended from 20th March. Discussions beginning on potential limited re-openings, but no details in place</p> <p>Financial impacts on leisure providers, and viability of some local facilities, under discussion</p> <p>Successful outcome of Public Health lifestyles services tender - including continuation and development of Let's Get Moving service – now confirmed. Contractual details and scope and timing of services resumption to be discussed further</p> <p>All staff working from home</p>	<p>Financial risk to leisure providers</p>	<p>Government grants to some smaller providers (but not to the larger centres, which are ineligible at present)</p> <p>Sport England support for small community provision under discussion with County Active Partnership (Living Sport).</p> <p>Potential for some direct support to trusts through</p>	<p>Financial impact arising from GLL must be continuously monitored.</p>

				existing ECDC SLA grants programme Evaluation of trust positions, and discussions with operator of Hive (GLL), continuing	
Licensing	Member of Business Continuity/Recovery Group	Increased complaints around licensable activity in certain premises All staff working from home and coming to the office to carry out essential tasks	Arranging hearings if necessary Increased activity on licensed premises and associated relaxation in lockdown measures	Arrange remote hearings Ensure that interpretation of guidance cannot be challenged, work with police/EH to manage situation.	Fee income reduction
Open Spaces & Facilities	Facilities are supporting all groups and departments Grounds maintenance / maintenance ready to support any logistics Spencer Clark representing East Cambs on the following working groups : Excess deaths, Incident cell, PPE Group & District PPE sub group, Recovery group and TCG where required Member of Business Continuity/Recovery Group and Markets Recovery Group	All areas are maintaining current services to the community/business. With the grounds maintenance focusing on contractual obligations, prioritising on the grass cutting of POS. Public toilets remain open at Littleport, Fordham and Soham, reduced from 4 toilets down to 3 in Ely. This is to protect consumables and keep a rota in place with reduced staffing level. Facilities are operating their core administration, whilst supporting many other areas within the Council	Future risks relate to availability of staff if there is an increase in staff self-isolating staff. ns	Across all work areas staff will be redeployed to give priority to essential work areas. Social distancing / remote working / changed working patter	Need to be mindful of open space contracts with Schools and other customers- no issues at present
Palace Green Homes	Membership of Business Continuity / Recovery Group Progressing key projects where possible during crisis (e.g. Paradise / MOD New build applications) Construction taking place at both sites (working within government and industry guidance)	Sites re-opened on 11 th May 2020 Planning to recommence property viewings at Ely from start of June 2020 Work on planning applications continuing 3 staff remain 'furloughed', 4 have been brought back to work Office based staff continuing to working remotely and only attending sites / office if absolutely essential	Delays to construction will have an impact on the assumptions set out in the business plan	Currently reviewing these assumptions and working on options.	Full impact on business not yet known – much depends on length of crisis
Planning	Business Continuity/Recovery Group Reviewing Remote Planning Committee procedures and guidance	Team working remotely – aside from printing of letters, running weekly list and some officers to facilitate Planning Committee. Site visits and the erection of site notices are now being carried out again as of 28 April. Officers told not to enter anyone's house and to carry out a risk assessment for each site. Ideally should be viewing from public land, but if not possible will be making arrangements to access where they can whilst maintaining social distancing. Continue to issue decisions on those applications where all necessary consultations have taken place. Continuing to submit appeal statements and questionnaires. Will hold third remote Planning Committee on 3 rd June and continue to review feedback from meetings and looking at ways to improve where necessary. All staff are working from home. 1 support officer going in each Monday to print letters which cannot be done from home and run necessary reports. Some officers in office to	Site visits, site notices and sending letters out – being able to determine applications	Officers requesting photos and other contextual analysis to be sent to see if they can assess site's from these, as well as street view and photos we have on record if unable to safely access the site. Support officer going in once a week to print letters, so a delay in some being sent out, but managing to ensure we are still sending letters out so we can progress with applications. Weekly list has to be generated in the office so this is being done on a Monday now instead of a Friday when relevant member of staff in the office.	Possible reduction in planning application and pre-application fees

		<p>help facilitate Planning Committee. Officers come into office to pick up site notices and files when necessary.</p> <p>Decisions still continue to be issued and documents that the Planning Inspectorate require are still being sent to help appeals progress.</p>		Part of a working group on remote Planning Committee, reviewing processes and procedures and feedback to ensure continues to work well.	
PR	<p>Supporting national government, CPLRF and local partner comms messages via social media</p> <p>Creating reactive statements to national and local developments for the council</p> <p>Creating press releases on developments within the services or a local response to county or national developments</p> <p>Providing up to date information from services to residents via social media</p> <p>Point of contact on weekly CPLRF comms calls</p>	<p>Communications team fully functional</p> <p>Telephone numbers used by journalists active and forwarding to mobiles</p> <p>Social media posts averaging between five-six per day</p> <p>Activity last week included continuing localised messaging on the reopening of Witchford HWRC, housing & community advice service and updated government guidance on open spaces</p> <p>Some graphics with the new government slogan have been provided but we have been pushing i.e. every mind matters, wash your hands don't have updated graphics so we are using different tactics to still get the messages out there.</p> <p>All staff working from home.</p>	Staff sickness, self-isolation and planned holiday	Team big enough to cope if there is illness/holiday. This is reviewed regularly	None identified
Reprographics	<p>Supporting the community/business groups; printing, postage, etc.</p> <p>Remote support for Planning/ BC indexing</p> <p>Member of Business Continuity/Recovery</p>	<p>Continued support of Street Scene current projects.</p> <p>Co-ordinate printing of the district wide Community Hub Newsletter.</p> <p>Preparing to deliver video viewing capability of properties for Palace Green Homes.</p> <p>6 staff remote working - 3 DMS; 3 Reprographics.</p> <p>In the office: Reprographics & DMS – minimum of 2 members of staff daily.</p> <p>Required to keep the printers running and office functioning.</p>	Loss of staff who are at present remote working. Would have an impact on how we deliver the Planning and Building Control Document Management index and print.	Staff who can remote work are managing.	<p>Potential loss of commercial income</p> <p>Costs for postage of 8000+ community letters and printing community magazine, £10,000</p>
Strategic Planning	<p>Input into COVID-19 Business Continuity Group as required.</p> <p>Maintaining current service to the community/businesses.</p>	<p>Maintaining current service to the community/businesses.</p> <p>Staff all working remotely.</p>	Delay in construction industry could have an impact on five year land supply and housing delivery test	Monitor and make recommendations to Council as soon as practicable	None identified
Waste	<p>Business Continuity/Recovery Group</p> <p>Maintaining current service to the community</p>	<p>Week commencing 25th of May scheduled services:</p> <p>All collection services running as normal Street cleaning running as normal Bulky collections running as normal</p> <p>Due to the bank holiday on Monday the 25th, collections will be running a day later than normal, concluding with Friday the 29th collections happening on Saturday the 30th</p> <p>Waste disposal streams all operating as normal.</p> <p>9 operational employees self-isolating due to living in households with high risk individuals, down from 10 as of last week's update.</p>	<p>Loss of staff</p> <p>Loss of vehicles due to 3rd party suppliers and parts suppliers.</p> <p>Change in legislation that enforces additional social distancing measures.</p> <p>Loss of waste processing plant</p>	<p>Services may have to be reduced if the required resources to deliver them are unavailable.</p> <p>Due to skill restrictions and demand and if feasible, a skeleton street cleansing operation will constantly run. This will be targeting high profile litter bins and dog bins as there are currently still seeing heavy use.</p>	<p>Additional sanitising produces have had to be ordered to meet the increase in demand and to meet the delay in deliveries. Any additional supplies will continue to be used after COVID-19 as they form part of standard practices.</p> <p>Increase in staffing costs to cover self-isolating employees and additional agency staff to cover to</p>

		<p>4 office based employees working from home. VPN set up for ECSS employees to allow full access to servers while working from home.</p> <p>Additional social distancing measures put in place including operatives only coming into the office when absolutely essential. All operatives going straight to their vehicles and drivers keeping responsibility of the keys. Delivery of additional hand sanitiser delivered and issued to all staff.</p>		<p>Regular updates are provided by Amey covering the operational status of their waste processing plants.</p> <p>Additional talks are in place with Amey to discuss secondary options if any of the processes were to be disrupted due to COVID-19.</p>	<p>continue full service provisions.</p>
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DECISION LOG FOR ECDC, ECTC AND ECSS

DATE	ACTION LOG	AUTHORITY
13.3.20	Cancellation of Elections – May	Government
17.3.20	Cancellation of Committees	JH
17.3.20	Dependant leave – payment	JH
17.3.20	Enhanced sick pay – ECTC/ECSS	JH (ECTC/ECSS)
17.3.20	Self-isolating due to dependant illness (Covid-19) – payment of salary	JH
17.3.20	Investment remote access – licences/laptop	EG
17.3.20	Prosecutions - car parking cancelled and review future prosecutions (ALL)	MC
18.3.20	Close reception	CMT
18.3.20	ARP – non chasing of Council Tax	IS
18.3.20	Licensing – stage payments for taxi renewals	LK
18.3.20	Programme Food Inspections – now stopped	LK
18.3.20	Care & Repair – stopping face to face meetings – except by exception	LK
18.3.20	Domestic – reviewing contract with Wood Green – accept dogs?	LK 20/03/20
18.3.20	Change of counting arrangements (referendum)	JH
18.3.20	Decision for market payment holidays – April/May	EG (ECTC)
18.3.20	Planning team: – Highly vulnerable people prioritised working from work from today;	RS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reviewed processes to enable majority of staff to work from home. - Minimum of 2, maximum of 4 in the office from Monday onwards – will include 1 team leader, 2 planners, 1 support – will leave a calendar so can see who is in and when; - Office phones diverted to work mobile or landline; - Rebecca in some days, will forward rota when complete; - Duty planner meetings cancelled, encouraging people to email in – notice being put on web page; - Business as usual, apart from face to face meetings. 	
19.3.20	Issuing refunds on season tickets at Angel Drove	EG
19.3.20	The e-space receptions (North and South) will be close on Friday evening for the foreseeable future, but the centres remain open to tenants.	SB
20.3.20	Community Hubs cancelled and unit for temporary accommodation ready for any isolation cases	AP
20.3.20	No serving of Enforcement Notices or Planning Contravention Notices at present	RS
20.3.20	The Hive Leisure Centre closed	Government
24.3.20	<p>Care and Repair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All contractors undertaking adaptations work (DFG's) to make site safe and stop work until further notice. - All clients to be contacted to explain situation/standard letters to all other cases - Carry out emergency works only 	LK
24.3.20	Close playgrounds	Government
24.3.20	Building Control- Not undertaking site visits as they are not necessary. Continue to attend dangerous structures	NH
24.3.20	Cancel Ely Markets	JD
24.3.20	Staff in the office only to carry out essential tasks	CMT
24.3.20	Closure of Palace Green and Ship Lane Public Toilets	SC

24.3.20	Reduce grass-cutting in amenity areas and focus on Parks/Large Spaces	SC
24.3.20	Riverside/Moorings Patrols ceased	SB
24.3.20	Post to be left for 72 hours before it can be opened.	AD
25.3.20	Close construction sites in Haddenham and Ely	PR
25.3.20	CIL payments to be deferred for 1 month, if liable party inform they are unable to pay on due date.	SB
26.3.20	Planning – Officers are no longer undertaking site visits All of Planning are now working remotely with one support officer going in every Monday to print neighbour letters to send out	RS
27.3.20	Not taking orders for street naming plates	KW
30.3.20	Decision to pay casual staff who cannot be redeployed – Payment based on an average in the last three months	JH/EG
1.4.20	Addition of (xvi) to ‘Proper Officer Functions’ in Council Constitution relating to Coronavirus regulations	MC/LK/TC
2.4.20	To reduce Council Tax bills by £150 or more for residents receiving LCTRS	JH/IS
6.4.20	Decision to not issue fixed penalties in free car parks	EG
7.4.20	Decision to cancel invoice for River Trips as they cannot operate their business during lockdown	LB
3.4.20	Set up Remote Meetings Group to ensure provisions are put in place to hold Committee meetings remotely as soon as possible – MAC as CMT lead	CMT
7.4.20	Decision to ‘furlough’ seven employees of Palace Green Homes who are unable to work at the present time due to the temporary closure of site and sales operations	PR
14.4.20	First remote Planning Committee being held on 20 th April	RS

17.4.20	Demand in Bulky Waste has decreased therefore collection will be one day per week instead of two. This decision will be reviewed if demand increases	JK
21.4.20	With the decision made to allocate Hardship Relief to Council Tax payers on the LCTRS in line with Government guidelines, a balance in the amount allocated to us by Government has been left unallocated. Further decision made to hold this unallocated amount to provide similar relief to the expected increase in claimants during the remainder of the year.	IS
28.4.20	Officers to start to carry out site visits and the erection of site notices again, carrying out risk assessments for each site and maintaining social distancing. Officers will not enter people's houses.	RS
29.4.20	Agreement for a temporary increase to the bandwidth for the internet from 2gb to 3gb as a partner of the EastNet Partnership due to the increase of users working remotely.	KW
29.4.20	The bulky waste demand has increase for next week and will be reverting to normal service levels.	JK
30.4.20	The Army have requested the use of the Hive Car Park from tomorrow morning to set up mobile testing – this will be for 4 days.	SC
7.5.20	Palace Green Homes sites at Ely and Haddenham will re-open on 11/05/20. The company will be working within current Government guidelines and CLC Site Operating Procedures.	PR
7.5.20	The first remote Annual Council meeting will take place on 21 May 2020 at 6 pm.	MC
20.5.20	The Grange will be closed Friday 22 nd May for a deep clean.	SC
20.5.20	Re-opening Ship Lane public toilets from Saturday, 23 rd May.	SC
20.5.20	Care and repair work is being undertaken in clients properties. Covid- 19 letters being sent to client regarding works on site. a signed client permission required and to check prior to works starting that nobody is displaying any symptoms. A full risk assessment to be completed prior to works proceeding with consent from all parties involved. Contractors are submitting their COvid-19 risk assessment and Health and safety plans.	LK
21.5.20	CIL payments from developers with an annual turnover of £45 million or more are no longer being deferred, as per guidance form Government issued on 13th May	SB

ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ON THE GROUNDS OF URGENCY

Committee: Council

Date: 21 May 2020

Author: John Hill, Chief Executive

[V6]

1.0 **ISSUE**

1.1 To note the action taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of urgency.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 That the action taken by the Chief Executive on grounds of urgency be noted.

3.0 **BACKGROUND**

(a) Supplementary Council Procedure Rules

3.1 S78 of Coronavirus Act 2020 provided that regulations can be made relating to requirements for local authorities in relation to holding meetings, requirements on timings and frequency of meetings, the place at which meetings must be held and the way in which people may attend, speak and vote.

3.2 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 and make provision for remote attendance at, and remote access to, council meetings held on or before 7th May 2021. These are the regulations flowing from s78.

3.3 The Regulations provide for local authorities standing orders (procedure rules) about remote attendance at meetings and accordingly, the Council's Monitoring Officer and Deputy Monitoring Officer have drafted a new Council Procedure Rule 30 to be added to the Constitution to cover the regulation of proceedings at remote meetings.

3.4 The Council's first remote Planning Committee meeting took place on Monday 20th April 2020.

3.5 In accordance with Part 3(4) paragraph 4.1, of the Constitution, the Chief Executive consulted the Leader of Council prior to the delegated decisions. The Chairman of Council and the Leaders of the Liberal Democrat and Independent Groups were subsequently notified of the delegated action taken.

3.6 In accordance with paragraph 4.1 of the Constitution, the urgent actions are being reported to Council for information.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 There are no additional financial implications.

4.2 Equality Impact Assessment (INRA) not required for the purposes of this report.

5.0 APPENDICES

None

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
East Cambridgeshire District Council Constitution: Part 3, Page 4, Paragraph 4.1 Urgent Action Memos dated: 16 April 2020	Room 103 The Grange Ely	John Hill Chief Executive (01353) 665555 john.hill@eastcambs.gov.uk



EAST
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Agenda Item x

Minutes of the Meeting of East Cambridgeshire
District Council facilitated via the Zoom Video
Conferencing System at The Grange, Nutholt
Lane, Ely on Thursday 21 May 2020 at 6.00pm

PRESENT

Councillor Christine Ambrose-Smith	Councillor Bill Hunt
Councillor David Ambrose-Smith	Councillor Mark Inskip
Councillor Sue Austen	Councillor Alec Jones
Councillor Anna Bailey	Councillor Daniel Schumann
Councillor Ian Bovingdon	Councillor Joshua Schumann
Councillor David Brown	Councillor Alan Sharp
Councillor Charlotte Cane	Councillor Amy Starkey
Councillor Victoria Charlesworth	Councillor Lisa Stubbs
Councillor Matthew Downey	Councillor John Trapp
Councillor Lorna Dupré	Councillor Paola Trimarco
Councillor Lavinia Edwards	Councillor Jo Webber
Councillor Lis Every (Chairman)	Councillor Alison Whelan
Councillor Simon Harries	Councillor Christine Whelan
Councillor Julia Huffer	Councillor Gareth Wilson

Prior to the formal commencement of the meeting, the Chairman announced the recent death of former District Councillor Colin Fordham, Independent Member for Soham from 1999 to 2007 and 2011 to 2015.

Councillor Bill Hunt had the pleasure of knowing former Councillor Fordham in three different capacities, as a Councillor, through business and as a friend, all things he excelled at. He first met him through the former Care and Repair agency in Soham, which was responsible for aiding people to adapt their homes. Colin Fordham was always keen to help, doing repairs throughout the area. He spent his time on the Council as an Independent Councillor and owned Soham Joinery. He was a real craftsman, a Soham man through-and-through, very kind and generous and would be greatly missed.

Councillor Joshua Schumann echoed the comments made and declared Colin Fordham was like a stick of rock, if you checked inside you would find that Soham ran through him. He was greatly involved in the local community, was the heart-and-soul of the Soham Carnival, and was very active in many other projects to support the community. Soham mattered a great deal to him and he would often put its point of view across. He would be sorely missed and our thoughts went to his family due to his sad passing.

Councillor Gareth Wilson stated that Colin Fordham was a very ardent Councillor working for Soham. He would be sorely missed by his friends, family and the community of Soham. He had been an excellent Councillor.

There then followed one minute's silence, observed as a mark of respect.

1. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

The following questions had been submitted previously by Virginie Ganivet and were presented on her behalf by Conrad Lawrence.

- What are you doing to help eligible SEC residents with their Settled Status applications?
- What do you plan to do in the future,
- What have you done and what will you do to ensure eligible residents who are not registered to vote are aware of the necessity to apply, of the deadlines for doing so, and of any help available? We are particularly concerned about the elderly, carers, people receiving care, and people who are generally isolated.
- What can you do against the effects of the hostile environment, xenophobia and discrimination within our communities?

Mr Lawrence then explained the background to the questions, which related to the Government's intentions regarding the Settled Status of non-UK residents. Current residents would have to make a new application to remain in this country and until that was applied for they could not get a mortgage and could end up in limbo for ten months. Pre-settled status would not automatically convert to full status, so certain requirements could not be accessed and would make life more difficult. Settled Status letters would be issued but this related to people being on the electoral register, so it had to be ensured that the register was up-to-date.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Anna Bailey, thanked Ms Ganivet for questions and, in response, stated that the Council worked with the Rosmini Centre and Community and Housing Advice to register people and to provide services. It was hoped to bring some of that service in-house, as one member of staff had already been trained and it was expected that others would too. The electoral registration process for these people was the same for everyone. This involved getting people to apply to go on the electoral register, and several attempts were made to encourage this. Information about this was available via the Council's website. An Annual Canvass was also undertaken to update the register and some lengths were taken to achieve that. When elections were due to be held the deadlines for people to register were always published and the Electoral Services team would always assist with any queries.

With regard to the fourth question, the Council was heavily involved in tackling those issues. It promoted both national and local campaigns, held parish conferences, inviting the Police and Crime Commissioner and Police representatives to attend, to raise issues. The Council had adopted a vulnerable people strategy so it could respond to issues raised. The Think Communities

programme was also driven locally, to help communities. The Council would review its single equalities scheme, was also involved with the Community Safety Partnership, would promote the 'Eyes and Ears' campaign with parish councils, would help train its partners so a consistent approach would be taken and it also supported inter-faith initiatives. So there was a lot going on.

2. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 2020/21**

Councillor Lis Every was duly nominated and seconded as Council Chairman for 2020/21. There being no other nominations:

It was resolved:

That Councillor Lis Every be elected as Chairman of East Cambridgeshire District Council for the municipal year 2020/21.

Councillor Every then read out the Declaration of Office for Chairman of Council.

3. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

No apologies for absence were received.

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of Interests were made by Councillors.

5. **MINUTES**

Councillor Bailey clarified the information under minute 56, in that although the Council was committed to keeping the Housing Recycling sites open, the District Council did not own them, and pointed out a minor typographical error on page 29. It was agreed to revise the minutes to make those amendments.

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2020, as amended, be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

6. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN 2020/21**

Councillor Alan Sharp was duly nominated and seconded for the office of Council Vice-Chairman for 2020/21. In being nominated it was stated that he would be very able to support the Chairman and would do a fantastic job as he was a statesman and gentleman.

Councillor Gareth Wilson was also duly nominated and seconded for the office of Council Vice-Chairman for 2020/21. In being nominated it was explained that the people of East Cambridgeshire would expect the Councillors from all parties

to work together and electing a Vice-Chairman from another party would be a symbol of that. The nominee had excellent qualities and would do a good job.

A secret ballot was then held in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 9.2.1, resulting in Councillor Sharp being duly elected.

It was resolved:

That Councillor Alan Sharp be appointed as Vice-Chairman of East Cambridgeshire District Council for the municipal year 2020/21.

Councillor Sharp then read out the Declaration of Office for Vice Chairman of Council.

The Chairman looked forward to working with the new Vice-Chairman and thanked the previous Vice-Chairman, Councillor Sue Austen, who was one of the best Ward Councillors ever. They had worked well together and it had been a really good partnership.

7. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Chairman announcements.

8. **PETITIONS**

No petitions had been received.

9. **NOTICE OF MOTIONS UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 10**

Rebuilding from the Coronavirus Pandemic

In proposing the Motion, as set out in the agenda, Cllr Charlotte Cane acknowledged and agreed to amend it in line with the amendment by the Conservative Group, which had been previously circulated, in accordance with Council Constitution rule 12.6.1.

Revising the original motion to the amendment circulated previously would be a way of encouraging cross-party working, via the setting up of a working party, for the benefit of the district.

All had been affected by COVID-19 and sympathy was offered to those who had lost family, friends or their livelihood because of it. Thanks were given to those people who had offered services during the pandemic, including the Council staff and the parishes.

Businesses were facing their toughest challenge and the Council should ensure community hubs survived. Some pubs had offered take-aways, some delivered and there had been one 'pop-up' shop to aid their communities. The Council also needed to ensure that quality housing was provided, so it must now invest

in, and increase the amount of, social housing in the district to attract new businesses to the area.

The environment also had to be protected and enhanced, by encouraging cycling and walking schemes in consultation with disabled groups. The green environment had to be improved, as the natural environment had benefited during the pandemic, so that people could continue to exercise, enjoy the green spaces and wildlife would benefit.

The Council had to capture all the benefits it could, including the community spirit engendered during this time. There had been an awful lot of community engagement and the Council must help that continue.

The working party and Council had to come up with answers and must work cross-party for a sustainable area.

In response, the Leader thanked Councillors Cane and Inskip for bringing this motion forward, applauding the spirit of co-operation when accepting the amended motion.

A lot of work was already going on to aid the recovery from this pandemic. Social recovery was being led by the County Council and the economic recovery led by the Combined Authority. Positives had emerged during this period and the Council had to enhance these. It would be good to build on the community spirit, including a well co-ordinated response from parish councils and community groups, which had to be supported. The Council had continued to run its day-to-day services, despite the massive changes that had been required.

The Council had to be realistic when considering cycling and walking schemes, and it was already noted that traffic levels had already increased recently. There was a massive opportunity to do something about this and the current transport consultation would help provide solutions. Funding would be available across the Combined Authority area for suitable schemes. With regard to house building, costs could expect to rise but appropriate infrastructure would still need to be delivered.

Other Council Members also appreciated the acceptance of the proposed amendments to the motion, as it reflected how the community had stepped up to support its more vulnerable members. The Council should endeavour to utilise this impetus to continue the good work done. A great deal of energy at grass roots level had been generated in the midst of this crisis, which could last a long time.

Bus services were already being looked at and some had already adapted to the current situation. The Council was keen to recognise what had been done and to build on it for the future. Caution was urged when requesting information on this issue, so Council officers did not get swamped. The Bus Working Party was a good example of how the different political groups should work together to better good results. Clearly working together would enable the Council to help

see us all out of the current situation. Social distancing and working from home had helped.

Councillor Mark Inskip, in seconding the amended Motion, explained that it had been brought forward as it was important to look ahead so the Council could help deal with the worst world health emergency in living memory and its impact on the economy. Sympathy was expressed for those who had been affected by deaths of family or friends. Gratitude was offered to the key workers, including Council staff, who had maintained services during this period. It was astonishing and pleasing to see the reaction of local communities, which had generated a great community spirit. The Council needed to work together to make a difference, including looking at the services available. Last October the Council had acknowledged a climate emergency, so it also needed to consider how traffic reduction had benefited air pollution. The amended Motion suggested some areas that a working party could look at and consider how to engage with community groups. There would be more challenges ahead for housing and the rural area.

It was resolved:

That the Motion, as amended, be agreed.

10. **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

Questions were received and responses given by the Leader of the Council as follows:

Questions from Councillor Charlotte Cane:

Background:

In the ECDC Covid-19 Update on 15 May we were informed that:

“Risk assessments have been produced for both sites by our independent H & S advisers”. (Referring to Palace Green Homes’ sites at Haddenham and Ely).

We were further informed that on 7 May the Corporate Management Team and the Service Leads had logged their decision that:

“Palace Green Homes sites at Ely and Haddenham will re-open on 11/05/20.”

Questions:

1 - What are the legal implications of ECDC’s H&S advisers producing Risks Assessments for work to be carried out by ECTC Limited T/A Palace Green Homes?

2 – What are the legal implications of ECDC’s Corporate Management Team and the Service Leads taking decisions about when ECTC Limited T/A Palace Green Homes will re-open its sites?

3 – In particular, are our legal advisers confident that we have not put ourselves at risk of being seen to have impaired ‘the veil of incorporation’ by actively

engaging in the provision of advice and the decision making for ECTC Limited T/A Palace Green Homes?

Response from Leader of the Council:

It was confirmed that the H&S advisers had not provided any risk assessments, but the Trading Company had taken advice before proceeding. This decision was taken by the Trading Company and not by the Council. The Briefing did not make this clear, so in the future it was to be made apparent who was making the decisions.

Question from Councillor Mark Inskip:

Question to the Leader of the Council:

Prior to the COVID-19 office working restrictions, how many members of staff had been given permission under the Home Working Policy to work from home? And in the light of the successful experience of working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic, will the Council review its current Home Working Policy to encourage more staff to take advantage of the option to work from home some or all of the time?

Responses from Leader of the Council:

Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak the opportunity to work from home had been offered to all staff members but only 89 staff members sought and were granted permission, though not all took up the opportunity. Since the pandemic 98% of staff were now working from home. The Chief Executive and Service Managers were looking at this, to consider extending the scheme.

Question from Councillor Alison Whelan:

Eleven months ago at the special full council meeting held on 19 June 2019, the Council resolved that "the Chief Executive be instructed to bring forward proposals to increase the level of affordable housing above statutory Planning requirements for Phase 2 of the MOD site, Ely."

Could the Leader of the Council update the Members on the progress towards developing these proposals and confirm when they will be presented to members for review?

Responses from Leader of the Council:

Up to now the focus had been on Phase 1, but the Trading Company was working on proposals for Phase 2 including the planning process. The Section 106 Agreement aimed to secure more than 30% social housing, but this would have to show 'additionality' to achieve the higher percentage. Once the planning application had been achieved then discussions would take place with a proposal coming to full Council.

Question from Councillor Christine Whelan:

Mayor and the Citizens' Advice office

What communication has taken place between ECDC officers and/or members and the Mayor, Combined Authority officers and/or members in the last twelve months regarding the use or occupation of the premises used by Citizens Advice Rural Cambridgeshire in Market Street, Ely?

What is the current state of discussions between the district council and the Combined Authority regarding these premises?

Responses from Leader of the Council:

No formal discussions had taken place, though an informal enquiry had been made by the Mayor of the Combined Authority. The Council would market the site and would inform the Combined Authority.

11. **LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, GROUP LEADERS AND DEPUTY GROUP LEADERS**

Council considered a report V1, previously circulated, that detailed the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council; Political Groups; and Group Leaders and Deputies for the forthcoming year.

It was resolved:

That the details of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council; Political Groups; and Group Leaders and Deputies for the forthcoming municipal year, as reported at the Annual Council meeting be noted.

12. **POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY**

Council considered a report V2, previously circulated, that detailed the political balance of the Council and the implications for the allocation of seats on Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member Bodies.

No alternative proposals were made, therefore

It was resolved:

That the details of the political balance of the Council as set out in Appendix 1 be noted and the allocation of seats on Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member Bodies as set out in Appendix 2 be approved.

13. **MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEE (INCLUDING SUBSTITUTES) AND OTHER MEMBER BODIES 2020/21**

Council considered a report, V3 previously circulated, setting out appointment of Members and Substitutes to Committees, Sub-Committees and to other Member bodies for 2020/21.

It was resolved:

That the membership of Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member bodies for 2020/21 attached at Appendix 1 be approved.

14. **CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY – MEMBERSHIP AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS**

Council considered a report, previously circulated, setting out the list of appointments to be made to the Combined Authority for 2020/21.

The Democratic Services Manager advised the Council that notification about the memberships had been received from the Combined Authority but there were some discussions continuing about the overall proportionality of that Authority. This could affect some of the membership places and was expected to be resolved at that Authority's June meeting. If any changes resulted from that then it was recommended that the Chief Executive be authorised to make any necessary amendments to the Council's membership, in consultation with Group Leaders.

Members questioned the overall proportionality of the Combined Authority, as Independent Members had been excluded from the calculations and main opposition parties from other areas had also been excluded.

It was explained that the exclusion of Independent Members was due to legal processes and a ban on some other parties.

As the report stated that a second Substitute Member was permitted for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Liberal Democrats Group would notify the Council at its next meeting who their second Substitute would be.

It was resolved:

- (i) That the Leader of Council be appointed to act as the Council's appointee to the Combined Authority and the Deputy Leader to act as the substitute member;
- (ii) That Councillors Alan Sharp and Lorna Dupré be appointed as members to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Councillors David Ambrose Smith and Charlotte Cane be appointed as substitute members, for their relevant parties, to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

- (iii) That Councillor David Brown be appointed as a member to the Audit and Governance Committee and Councillor David Ambrose Smith be appointed as the substitute member, for their relevant party, to the Audit and Governance Committee;
- (iv) That the Chief Executive be authorised to make any amendments to the appointments to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Audit and Governance Committee in consultation with the Political Group Leaders, if the political balance is amended by the Combined Authority between now and the next Council meeting.

15. **COMBINED AUTHORITY UPDATE REPORTS**

- a. **Mayoral Decision-Making Meeting 25th March 2020**
- b. **Overview & Scrutiny committee 24th April 2020**
- c. **Combined Authority Board 29th April 2020**

Council received reports on the activities of the Combined Authority from the Council's appointees.

It was resolved:

That the reports on the activities of the Combined Authority from the Council's appointees be noted.

16. **THE MAKING (ADOPTION) OF THE WITCHFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Council considered a report, V4 previously circulated, the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan for formal adoption as part of the Development Plan for East Cambridgeshire.

Council Members offered congratulations and expressed their support for the Plan which had been achieved by the work and hard effort of the people of Witchford. Mr Ian Allen was complimented on the volume and quality of work achieved, for which Witchford should be proud. The need for a General Practitioner and dentist was agreed. Witchford residents were encouraged to respond to the bus and walking strategy consultation, which could prove very useful for the village.

The Plan was an excellent document though the mention of the failure to control land supply and delivery of housing was actually something this Council could not control and was a matter of circumstance. The Council had given permission for over 7000 houses throughout the district which had yet to be built. Although the Council could not make developers build houses it also had a duty to stop uncontrolled development.

The Plan had identified traffic issues and funding had been achieved to update the roundabout at Lancaster Way, via a small upgrade. Further improvements

would be championed, including the roundabout at the A10/A142 junction being part of the A10 upgrade. Funding for this had received support in the Chancellor's budget. There was also the possibility that the A10 could be re-aligned to take traffic away from that area.

To achieve affordable housing for young people, it was urged that the Community Land Trust be resurrected, so it could re-look at that provision.

The Plan gave the community the opportunity to develop the village and gave other ideas for initiatives. The Council needed to encourage other parishes to undertake their own Plans.

Appreciation was expressed to the Council's Elections department for conducting the Plan Referendum under very difficult circumstances. This had allowed Witchford residents to show their support for the Plan. The turnout was good and 90% of those voting had approved the Plan.

It was resolved:

- That Witchford Parish Council be congratulated on its preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan and a successful referendum outcome, becoming the third parish council to do so in East Cambridgeshire;
- That the Witchford neighbourhood Plan (as attached at Appendix 1) be formally made part of the Development Plan for East Cambridgeshire with immediate effect.

17. **COVID 19 UPDATE**

Council considered a report, V5 previously circulated, updating the Council's response to COVID 19.

The Chief Executive advised the Council that the report did not really do justice to the amount of work undertaken by the Council and its staff. Paragraph 3.1 of the report outlined the work done, with paragraphs 4.1 to 4.5 providing more details. Some of the issues were complex and an attempt had been made in the Appendix to summarise these. Paragraph 4.7 set out details of the recovery process.

The Infrastructure & Strategy Manager advice the Council that 1321 businesses had been identified to receive a grant, with £12million paid out to local businesses. New funding was now available and details would be circulated before being paid out.

A Member questioned what the Council had 'amended, in response to the COVID-19 crisis', whether the procedures for aiding parish councils would be reviewed and whether the performance of the Anglia Revenue Partnership (ARP) would be reviewed given its poor response to requests from businesses for action. The response from the community had been excellent but at the

start of the crisis businesses had difficulty in getting a response from ARP, although it had been slow to start with its performance had improved. Remote meetings did have advantages, as it cut down on lots of long journeys, and should be retained to keep its benefits.

In response, the Leader advised that 'amended' should read 'worked'. ARP were late in receiving data from some businesses, due to their details not being up-to-date, e.g. premises details or old tenants still being listed. So this took ARP some time to get this sorted out and the Council had asked ARP to prioritise businesses. The Infrastructure & Strategy Manager and her team had done a magnificent job in supporting business, though it was never going to be 100%. Other local authorities had issued pay outs without concluding a verification process but this Council had, as it involved public money. Looking forward, technology guidance or a funding scheme could be offered for smaller businesses and capital grants from the Combined Authority could become available.

Cambridgeshire had rallied massively and had fared fairly well. Its citizens had responded very well but they needed to be encouraged to continue carrying on with fortitude. This was a truly unprecedented situation and the Council staff had risen to the challenge. The Council had kept its services running, had got grant payments out and were supporting the vulnerable.

This Council was significantly financially better off than some other authorities. It had a sound financial base, with a balanced budget over the next two years, and did not have problems with rough sleeping/homelessness or drops in car parking income. However, some matters could become an issue, such as less income from business rates or a decrease in planning and licensing fees. More details would be proved at the next Council meeting.

Other Members warned that the pandemic was far from over. Returning to work would be a slow process, as experienced by other countries. The Government expected people who could to continue to work from home.

Members asked when the Council would produce a 'road map' for recovery and share it with Members. The Council's trading companies were separate entities, so why were they included when considering Council's business continuity?

In response, the Council was informed that the Council was following Government guidelines and were starting to prepare its plans. This would include looking at accommodating staff in the Council offices and communal areas so people could operate safely. The offices were also to undergo a 'deep clean'. Once a plan had been drawn up it would be shared with Members. It was considered appropriate to include the trading companies in all discussions to ensure a consistent approach.

It was resolved:

- (i) That the impact of COVID 19 on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy including recommendations arising from revisions to the ECTC and ECC Business Plans 2020/20 be noted;
- (ii) That the implementation of the Council's recovery plans in line with Government guidelines be noted;
- (iii) That the revisions to the agreed 2019/2023 Corporate Plan in light of the impact of COVID 19 be noted.

18. **ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ON THE GROUNDS OF URGENCY**

Council considered a report, V6 previously circulated, setting out the action taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of urgency.

It was resolved:

That the action taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of urgency be noted.

The meeting concluded at 7:56pm.

Chairman.....

Date

Date of Publication of Decision List: 27 May 2020

FOR INFORMATION ONLY – THESE DECISIONS ARE NOT SUBJECT TO CALL IN

COUNCIL – 21 May 2020

DECISION LIST



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Agenda Item No.	Report Ref.	Item	Issue	Decision	Action by
1.	-	Public Question Time	To answer questions from members of the public	A Question was received from Ms Gavinet relating to assistance to European Community residents of the District seeking Settled Status. The Leader responded outlining the work the Council was doing regarding the issues.	
2.	-	Election of Chairman 2020/21	To elect a Chairman for the District Council for 2020/21	It was resolved: That Councillor Lis Every be elected as Chairman of East Cambridgeshire District Council for the municipal year 2020/21.	
3.	-	Apologies for Absence	To note any apologies for the absence of Members	There were no apologies for absence.	
4.	-	Declarations of Interest	To note any declarations of Interests from Members	There were no declarations of interest.	
5.	-	Minutes – 20 February 2020	To confirm the minute of the previous Council meeting	It was resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2020, as amended, be confirmed	

Agenda Item No.	Report Ref.	Item	Issue	Decision	Action by
				as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.	
6.	-	Election of Vice Chairman 2020/21	To appoint a Vice Chairman for the District Council for 2020/21	It was resolved: That Councillor Alan Sharp be appointed as Vice-Chairman of East Cambridgeshire District Council for the municipal year 2020/21.	
7.	-	Chairman's Announcements	Announcement of items of interest	There were no Chairman's announcements.	
8.	-	To Receive Petitions	To receive public petitions	No petitions had been received.	
9.	-	Notice of Motions Under Procedure Rule 10	Rebuilding from the Coronavirus Pandemic	It was resolved: That the Motion, as amended, be agreed. [See end of Decision List for full agreed motion]	Chief Executive Democratic Services Manager
10.	-	To answer Questions from Members	To receive questions from Members of Council	The Leader of Council responded to questions from Councillors Cane, Inskip, A Whelan and C Whelan.	

11.	V1	Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, Group Leaders and Deputy Group Leaders	To note the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council; Political Groups; and Group Leaders and Deputies for the forthcoming year.	<p>It was resolved:</p> <p>That the details of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council; Political Groups; and Group Leaders and Deputies for the forthcoming municipal year, as reported at the Annual Council meeting be noted.</p>	Democratic Services Manager
12.	V2	Political Proportionality	To consider the political balance of the Council and the implications for the allocation of seats on Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member Bodies.	<p>It was resolved:</p> <p>That the details of the political balance of the Council as set out in Appendix 1 be noted and the allocation of seats on Committees, Sub-Committees and other Member Bodies as set out in Appendix 2 be approved.</p>	Democratic Services Manager

14(b).	-	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority – Reports from Constituent Representatives on the Combined Authority	To consider reports on the activities of the Combined Authority from the Council's appointees.	<p>It was resolved:</p> <p>That the reports on the activities of the Combined Authority from the Council's appointees be noted.</p>	
15.	V4	The Making (Adoption) of the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan	To consider the formal adoption of the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan to become part of the Development Plan for East Cambridgeshire.	<p>It was resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That Witchford Parish Council be congratulated on its preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan and a successful referendum outcome, becoming the third parish council to do so in East Cambridgeshire. • That the Witchford neighbourhood Plan (as attached at Appendix 1) be formally made part of the Development Plan for East Cambridgeshire with immediate effect. 	Strategic Planning Manager

16.	V5	COVID 19 Update	To consider the Council's updated response to COVID 19.	<p>It was resolved:</p> <p>That the contents of the submitted report be noted and officers instructed to provide a further update to the July Council meeting, specifically on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) the impact of COVID 19 on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy including recommendations arising from revisions to the ECTC and ECC Business Plans 2020/21; (ii) implementation of the Council's recovery plans in line with Government guidance; (iii) revisions to the agreed 2019/2023 Corporate Plan in light of the impact of COVID 19. 	Chief Executive
17.	V6	Action Taken by the Chief Executive on the Grounds of Urgency	To consider the action taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of urgency.	<p>It was resolved:</p> <p>That the action taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of urgency be noted.</p>	

AGENDA ITEM NO. 9 MOTION, AS AMENDED

Rebuilding from the Coronavirus Pandemic

Council notes the Coronavirus pandemic is the worst health emergency in over a century and is predicted by the Bank of England to lead to the largest annual contraction in UK GDP for more than three centuries. The impact at national, international and local level is unprecedented in recent history.

Council recognises that the Coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on many people's health and well-being and has caused many deaths across our district. We offer our sympathy to all the people affected.

We also express our gratitude to the medical and care staff, and other key workers who have kept core services going, and to those Council staff in East Cambridgeshire who have maintained services to the public throughout the crisis. We are also grateful to our Parish Councils and the many community groups which are supporting residents across the district with shopping, gardening, prescription collection, pet care and many other imaginative initiatives.

As well as continuing to deliver services and support to assist our communities in their response, we recognise the challenges ahead that we face including:

1. The Bank of England predicting a 14% fall in GDP impacting many of our residents' lives and the local economy;
2. Likely continuing restrictions on retail and leisure providers including pubs, restaurants and businesses dependent on tourism;
3. Lord Deben, as chair of the UK Independent Committee on Climate Change, stating "the actions needed to tackle climate change are central to rebuilding our economy".

We need to focus the Council to address the challenges we face for the district's recovery and its longer-term resilience.

We also welcome new opportunities, notably:

1. To build on the community spirit demonstrated across the district by seeking to accelerate the partnership work already begun by Cambridgeshire County Council through the Think Communities approach;
2. To continue to support community support groups across our district that have provided essential support to residents;

3. To retain as far as possible the new enthusiasm for cycling, walking and the reduction in vehicle journeys and the consequent environmental improvements, whilst noting that currently people are being asked by the Government to avoid using public transport where possible.

This Council therefore resolves as a first step to set up a working party, modelled on the successful Bus 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.

Amongst the initiatives the working party should consider, but not be limited to, are:

1. A business survey, whether that be a new survey or seeking to utilise those already being undertaken, to fully understand the needs and concerns of our business community, including sector specific needs, together with opportunities taken to change/improve, and represent our district in discussions with the Combined Authority;
2. A parish council and community groups survey, to fully understand their needs and concerns and their capacity to assist with the recovery;
3. Alongside the collation of the results of the Bus, Walk, Cycle consultation, consideration of options for experimental transport initiatives which can be promoted to the Combined Authority and the County Council for speedy implementation to promote active modes of travel to and within economic centres within the district;
4. Engaging ECTC and the wider developer community to continue to maximise the delivery of affordable and social housing on sites across the district cognisant of economic viability;
5. Exploring further opportunities to facilitate working from home and remote locations throughout the district through the deployment across the district of initiatives such as 5G and ultrafast broadband infrastructure.