



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

MEETING: **OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

TIME: 4.30pm

DATE: 14th September 2020

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

ENQUIRIES REGARDING THIS AGENDA: Adrian Scaites-Stokes

DIRECT DIAL: (01353) 665555 EMAIL: adrian.scaites-stokes@eastcambs.gov.uk

Membership:

Conservative Members

Cllr David Ambrose Smith
(Chairman)
Cllr Julia Huffer
(Vice Chairman)
Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith
Cllr Lis Every
Cllr Jo Webber

Liberal Democrat Members

Cllr Victoria Charlesworth
Cllr Mark Inskip
(Lead Member)
Cllr Christine Whelan

Independent Member

Cllr Paola Trimarco

Substitutes:

Cllr Anna Bailey
Cllr Dan Schumann
Cllr Lisa Stubbs

Substitutes:

Cllr Simon Harries
Cllr John Trapp
Cllr Alison Whelan

Substitute:

Cllr Sue Austen

Lead Officers:

Jo Brooks, Director Operations

Quorum: 5 Members

A G E N D A

1. Public Question Time

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

2. Apologies and Substitutions

3. Declarations of Interest

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

4. Minutes

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20th July 2020.

5. Chairman's Announcements

6. Motion Under Council Procedure Rule 10.4

Member Motion referred to this Committee by full Council

Local Electricity Bill

This Council:

- (i) acknowledges the efforts that this council is making to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote renewable energy;
- (ii) recognises that councils can play a central role in creating sustainable communities, particularly through the provision of locally generated renewable electricity;
- (iii) further recognises
 - that very large financial setup and running costs involved in selling locally generated renewable electricity to local customers result in it being impossible for local renewable electricity generators to do so,
 - that making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation would create significant opportunities for councils and local community co-operatives to be providers of locally generated renewable electricity directly to local people, businesses and organisations, and
 - that revenues received by councils that became local renewable electricity providers could be used to help fund local greenhouse gas emissions reduction measures and to help improve local services and facilities;
- (iv) accordingly resolves to support the Local Electricity Bill, currently supported by a cross-party group of 187 MPs, and which, if made law, would make the setup and running costs of selling renewable electricity to local customers proportionate by establishing a Right to Local Supply; and
- (v) further resolves to:
 - write to local MPs, asking them to support the Bill, and

- write to the organisers of the campaign for the Bill, Power for People, at 8 Delancey Passage, Camden, London NW1 7NN or info@powerforpeople.org.uk expressing its support.

Proposed: Councillor Mark Inskip
 Seconded: Councillor Lorna Dupré

7. **Presentation – Licensing Service**
8. **Housing and Community Advice Service – Update on Impact of COVID-19**
9. **Environment & Climate Change Action Plan and Ideas Forum Information Update**
10. **Budget Monitoring Report**
11. **Forward Agenda Plan**

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 Adrian Scaites-Stokes, Democratic Services Officer adrian.scaites-stokes@eastcamb.gov.uk by 5pm on Wednesday, 15th July 2020. If you are not able to access the meeting remotely, or do not wish to speak via a remote link, your question/statement can be read out on your behalf at the Committee meeting.
2. A live stream of the meeting will be available on YouTube at www.eastcamb.gov.uk/meetings/council-20072020 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@eastcamb.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).”



EAST
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4

Minutes of a meeting of the Operational Services Committee facilitated via the Zoom Video Conferencing System at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on Monday 20th July 2020.

PRESENT

Cllr David Ambrose Smith (Chairman)
Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith
Cllr Lis Every
Cllr Julia Huffer
Cllr Mark Inskip
Cllr John Trapp (as Substitute)
Cllr Paola Trimarco
Cllr Jo Webber
Cllr Christine Whelan

OFFICERS

Jo Brooks – Director Operations
James Khan – Head of Street Scene
Shona McKenzie – Community Safety Officer
Adrian Scaites-Stokes – Democratic Services Officer
Anne Wareham – Senior Accountant

13. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

14. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies had been received from Councillor Victoria Charlesworth.
Councillor John Trapp substituted for her for this meeting.

15. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

16. **MINUTES**

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8th June 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

17. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

18. **COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

The Committee received a presentation about the East Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership.

The Community Safety Officer explained that the Partnership consisted of representatives from the five responsible authorities, being the Police, the Fire Service, the Probation Service, the Health Services as well as councils. The Partnership had statutory duties, for example homicide reviews. The Partnership usually met twice a year and commissioned relevant work, such as the Research Group. It looked at crime rates, homicides and domestic violence and set performance standards.

Within the Partnership were two additional Groups. The Delivery Group, which met bi-monthly, agreed actions and managed the budget. The Problem Solving Group, which met monthly, managed cases and identified areas of concern. This Group included representatives from schools and was a confidential platform to report issues.

Partnership working was key in helping prevent and solve issues, which would help alleviate the pressure on other services. A lot of work had gone into encouraging as many groups as possible to join the Partnership, as this aided its early intervention aims.

Over the last twelve months a lot of initiatives had been undertaken:

- Neighbourhood office training and key contacts;
- Work on scams and frauds;
- Hate crime reporting centres, with the aim of providing one in each parish;
- 'Eyes and Ears' training, which would be rolled out across the area;
- Two community meetings had been held to draw up community plans, to encourage reporting and identify where support would be needed;
- Presentational work with schools, funded via proceeds of crime;
- Building rapport with the public;
- Dealing with cases of modern day slavery
- Obtaining funding from the Crime Commissioner.

Training for Councillors, both Parish and District, was encouraged and a toolkit was available that gave a good understanding of the issues. It was hoped that as many people as possible would become involved with the 'Eyes and Ears' initiative, which aimed to increase the reporting of crime. A 'Little Eyes and Ears' programme was also being used to engage with Year 5 pupils.

In response to the Committee's questions the Community Safety Officer stated that she was keen to work with parish councils to set up reporting hubs over the forthcoming year. If more people came forward then centres could be set up so people could report issues and be given some advice, and the information would be passed to the Police. 'Stop and Search' had started about five years ago and further information would be available after the meeting relating to the possible disproportionate effect on the Black and Minority Ethnic community. Training

could be escalated to parish Members, as they could offer advice about how to report crimes. Not much 'hate' crime was being reported, but people needed to know how this should be reported.

The Director Operations thought the work done by the Partnership was phenomenal and getting schools on board was incredible. Awareness training for all Members and parish councils would be vital and Members were asked to speak to their parish councils to encourage their participation. Although this would be about reporting crime it was also about preventing it beforehand and supporting the residents in their communities.

The Committee expressed its support for the Partnership as it was invaluable to communities and made a significant difference.

19. **QUARTER 1, 2020 PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE WASTE AND STREET CLEANSING SERVICES**

The Committee considered a report, V34 previously circulated, that provided the performance report for the delivery of the waste and street cleansing service during Quarter 1, April to June 2020.

The Head of Street Scene advised the Committee that the last three months had been unusual and very challenging. However, the service had continued to deliver an excellent and full service and had received amazing support from the residents of the district. Each service had over-achieved its targets. July's figures had not been available but would be circulated after the meeting. There had also been a substantial reduction in sickness absence. The Company's communication plan had been amended and new banners had been put on the vehicles and the media platform had been updated.

In reply to the Committee's queries, the Head of Street Scene acknowledged that it was a shame that the education plan for schools had been interrupted by the COVID pandemic. Consequently alternative methods had been considered including sending educational packs to schools and using online materials would also be considered. School tours of the Amey site had also stopped but virtual tours instead were being looked at. There had been increased numbers of reports of fly-tipping but a number of these were multiple reports for the same incident, so overall numbers had not increased.

Two years ago nobody could have predicted how well the service would have done. The service constantly wished to push itself and a review of the current targets to make them more challenging, re-purposing those targets or introducing different targets would aim to improve the service further. 17 employees had been lost for a time due to the pandemic, as they had to shield themselves. A fair number of these had been drivers, so drivers from other businesses had been employed to cover the shortfall. The last employee had returned last week so there was now a full compliment.

The Company was working closer with the Council's Trading Company mainly in relation to open spaces. Each Company's employees shared information

identifying and reporting any issues as they did their normal rounds. In the future other needs within the district would be looked at.

The Committee were very appreciative of the efforts of the service and what it had achieved. It was encouraged that fly-tipping had not increased, in part due to the continuation of the service during the pandemic.

It was resolved:

That the performance of service delivery for the first quarter be noted.

20. **FINAL OUTTURN REPORT**

The Committee considered a report, V35 previously circulated, which set out details of the financial position for services under the Operational Services Committee.

The Senior Accountant advised the Committee that its end-of-year report showed an underspend of £122,421 mainly due to savings achieved through recruitment issues and no system upgrade being undertaken in the IT Department, a limit on grants made, an increase in licence fees and the contingency fund for refuse collections not being used. There had been increased spending following the Customer Services pay review and use of agency staff in the Planning Department.

The Capital underspend was due to delays in improvements to the Depot.

In response to the Committee's enquiries the Director Operations stated that the grants process would be reviewed, as there were concerns it was not easy to apply under the current system. The existing IT team had taken on the Street Naming & Numbering work until a new staff member had been recruited. Two agency staff had been employed by the Planning Department, one until September and one until January. Two posts had been advertised for permanent staff. The IT upgrades had been delayed due to recruitment problems and work was ongoing to ensure value-for-money on the depot improvements.

A Member commented that the savings from unfilled staff posts was a false economy if agency staff had been employed to cover the gaps. Those posts should be reviewed to see if they were needed.

It was resolved:

- (i) That it be noted that this Committee had ended the year with net expenditure of £5,394,350 an underspend of £122,421 when compared to its approved budget;
- (ii) That it be noted that the Committee had a capital programme expenditure of £1,053,610.

21. **FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

The Committee received a copy of its forward agenda plan.

The Director, Operations highlighted that the reports requested by the Committee at its last meeting had been incorporated into the agenda plan. In addition there would be a service presentation in future meetings with one about the Licensing Department in September, ICT in November, Planning in January and Building Control in March.

The Youth Strategy report due for September could be delayed, due to the report officers being involved in other work related to the pandemic. The Chairman requested that the Committee be kept informed.

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

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining item no. 11 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 Categories 1, 2 and 3 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

23. **EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee considered a report, V36 previously circulated, that detailed the year end financial report for the East Cambs Street Scene Business Plan for 2019-20.

The Senior Accountant advised the Committee about the actual expenditure incurred and income earned during the year. Staffing expenses were over budget, as the amount had been set two years ago and had not been updated, and staff vacancies had been covered. The vehicles insurance figures were lower this second year compared to the previous year.

The Committee asked a number of questions and replies were given in relation to other income, which covered a number of additional work undertake, such as toilet cleaning and emptying dog litter bins and the sale of wheelie bins. Only a small proportion of staff cost increases was due to the pandemic during the 2019-20 year, but it was expected to be more significant this year.

It was resolved:

That the East Cambs Street Scene budget monitoring report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 5:50pm.

Housing and Community Advice Service- Update on Impact of COVID-19

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 14 September 2020

Author: Housing & Community Advice Manager

[V58]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To receive an update on the Housing and Community Advice Service and the impacts arising from COVID-19.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

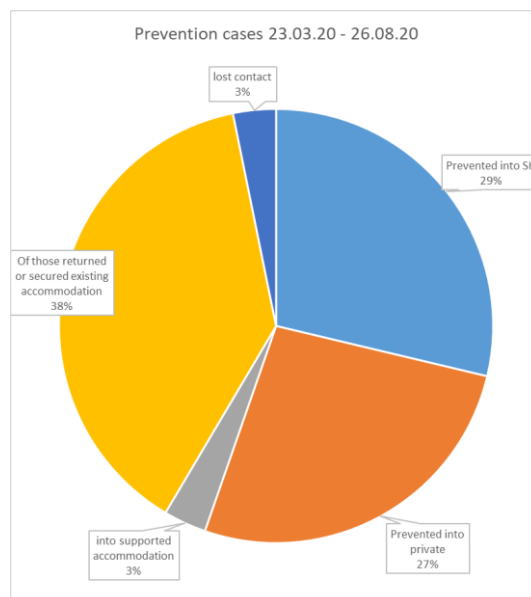
2.1 Members are requested to note the update in this report.

3.0 UPDATE

3.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the impacts of COVID-19 on the Housing & Community Advice Service since 23 March 2020 and to identify the challenges faced by the service for the foreseeable future.

Prevention

3.2 In the period running from 23 March 2020 until 26 August 2020 the service managed 94 prevention cases; 27 prevented in to social housing, 25 prevented into private rented, 3 into supported accommodation, 36 returned or secured existing accommodation and 3 lost contact.



3.3 Comparison for the same period in 2019.

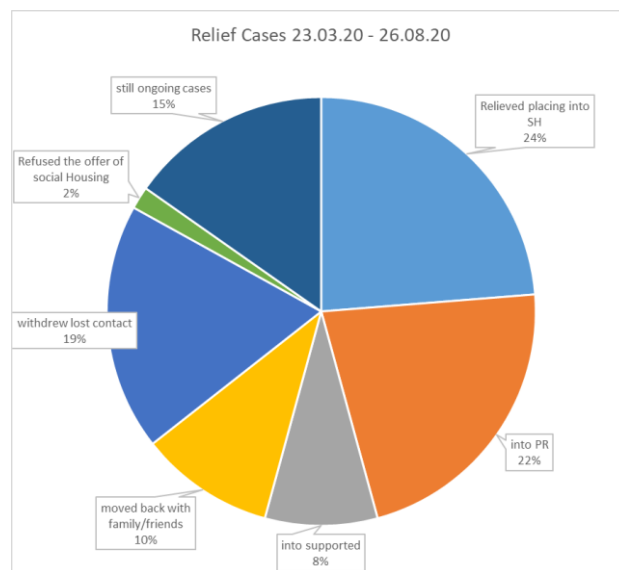
Preventions	2019	2020
	139	94

3.4 Year to year comparisons accounting for Section 21/8 evictions.

There have been no Section 21/8 evictions (section 21 or section 8 are notices issued when the landlord wants possession of their property back) from 23 March 2020 to 26 August 2020. In the same period in 2019 68% (284) of prevention cases were due to Section 21/8 cases.

Relief

3.5 In the period running from 23 March 2020 until 26 August 2020 the service managed 59 relief cases; 14 relieved placing in to social housing, 13 into private rented, 5 into supported accommodation, 6 moved back with family/friends, 11 withdrew/lost contact, 1 refused the offer of social housing and 9 cases are ongoing.



3.6 Comparison for the same period in 2019.

Relief	2019	2020
	59	59

3.7 There have been no Section 21/8 evictions from 23 March 2020 to 26 August 2020. In the same period in 2019 58% of prevention cases were due to Section 21/8 cases.

3.8 The impact of COVID-19 is yet to be fully realised in this service as the emergency legislation preventing any evictions within private and social rentals

is still in force and is not due to end until later in the month (20 September 2020). In previous years these types of cases would contribute to the need for support to be provided.

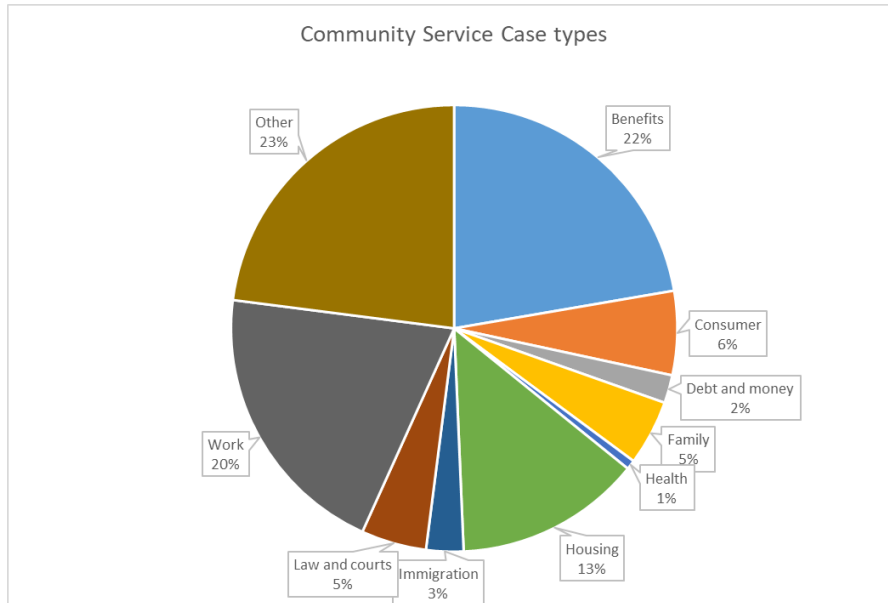
- 3.9 Prior to the 21 August 2020 the legislation required private landlords to issue 3 months notices. The 3 month notice requirement applies to all notices issued before the changes on 21 August 2020. For any notice issued after this date, six months' notice is required. This change in position will provide the service with more time to deal with cases.
- 3.10 The service is predicting that there will be an increase in Section 21/8 evictions. This is an obvious prediction when the Section 21/8 evictions come back in to force. The difficulty is trying to predict the amount of cases that the Council is likely to be dealing with once evictions resume. As the unknown is not quantifiable, the Housing & Community Advice Manager will be monitoring workloads and cases very closely to ensure that the service can cope with any additional demand.

Community Advice

- 3.11 In the period running from 23 March 2020 until 26 August 2020 the service dealt with 148 community service cases. The table below provides a summary of the nature of the cases.

We are still working with CAB and Nick Blencowe (manager of CAB) is working within our office for at least 1 day a week. This is invaluable to still be working side by side and offering support to all officers.

Case	Number
Benefits	33
Consumer	9
Debt and Money	3
Family	7
Health	1
Housing	20
Immigration	4
Law and Courts	7
Work	30
Other	34



48 of the cases were referred from Citizens Advice.

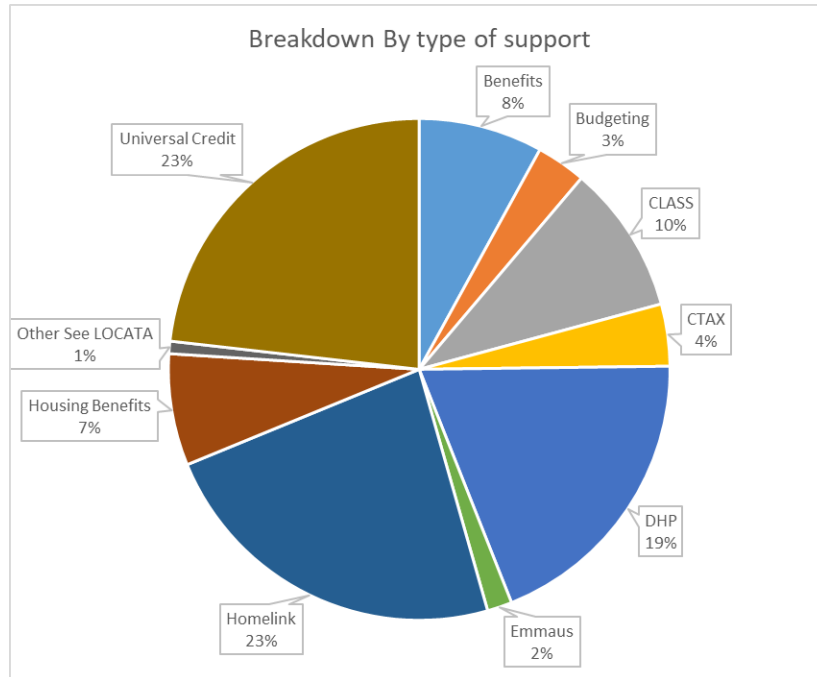
3.12 The table below identifies the caseload by month

April	2
May	7
June	13
July	74
August	52

Tenancy Support

3.13 In the period running from 23 March 2020 until 26 August 2020 the service dealt with 125 tenancy support cases. The table below identified the nature of the cases.

Benefits	10
Budgeting	4
CLASS	12
Council Tax	5
DHP	24
Emmaus	2
Homelink	29
Housing Benefits	9
Other see LOCATA	1
Universal Credit	29



9 of the cases were referred from Citizens Advice.

3.14 The table below identifies the caseload by month

April	19
May	22
June	25
July	28
August	31

3.15 It is clear from the statistics that the Community Advice and Tenancy Support Services has seen an increase in demand over the last few months. The service did prepare for the increase in advance and continues to be ready to meet further increases and provide the best possible service.

3.16 In recent months Officers have undertaken many training courses. Attached at Appendix 1 is a list of the training that has been undertaken by several members of the team.

General

3.17 The Council's Housing and Community Advice Service prides itself on being the leading voice in preventing homelessness and will continue to build and maintain the excellent working relationships with partners; both internal and external, voluntary and statutory to prepare for any additional spike in requests for assistance. The recent experience and impact of COVID-19 has only strengthened this resolve.

- 3.18 The Council is in a fortunate position in that it has not had to face many of the challenges that other local authorities have been dealing with. The Council has not needed to house people in bed and breakfasts or hotel accommodation. This places the Council in a stronger position than some, as the Council will not have to deal with trying to accommodate those in temporary accommodation as well as those facing possible evictions later on this year.

As we do not own any housing stock we rely on data from Sanctuary Housing on properties becoming available, this changes from week to week and impossible to predict. However we are still using the direct let option during this Covid-19 period to ensure smooth transitions for all of our clients that cannot stay in their current accommodation.

We currently have 11 rooms void across our temporary accommodation units in preparation for when the courts resume.

We currently have 9 cases where clients have an outstanding Section 21/8 which cannot be carried out until the courts re open.

Key Challenges

- 3.19 The key challenge in the coming weeks and months will be supporting the residents of the district in these changing times. As Members will see from the schedule at Appendix 1, the team has undertaken a lot of training to prepare for (although already actively providing advice on) a number of areas related to the changing demand on the service. The key challenge areas include, but are not limited to:

- Furlough rules
- Debt management
- Universal credit
- Mental Health
- Employment
- Housing, including eviction
- Homelessness prevention

- 3.20 The service will continue to monitor the types of cases that come through the Council and will continue to undertake the necessary training to meet the changing demand of the residents of the district.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this update.

- 4.2 An EIA is not required.

5.0 APPENDICES

5.1 Appendix 1- Training Schedule

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
None	The Grange, Ely	Angela Parmenter Housing & Community Advice Manager (01353) 616374 E-mail: angela.parmenter@eastcambs.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

Training Undertaken between May 2020 and August 2020

Date	Title	Provider	Hours	Adviser
13/5/20	Furlough rules	ACAS	1	2
21/5/20	Government Recovery Strategy	Webinar	1	2
2-3/6/20	Introduction to welfare benefits	Social Welfare Training	6	1
5,8/6/20	Covid benefit update 1&2	Social Welfare Training	6	4
9/6/20	Debt Management part 1	Community Money Advice	6	7
11/6/20	Transition from lockdown	ACAS	2	2
17-18/6/20	Universal Overview	Social Welfare Training	6	2
24/6/20	Covid benefit update 3	Social Welfare Training	3	4
25-26/6/20	Limited Capability for work: ESA & UC	Benefit Training Company	6	3
30/6/20	Universal Credit in depth	Benefit Training Company	6	2
14-15/7/20	Benefits for EEA Nationals	Benefit Training Company	6	2
22-23/7/20	Mental Health and benefits	Social Welfare Training	6	2
23/7/20	Flexible furlough	ACAS	1	2
29/4/20	Grants for the Self Employed	HMRC	2	2
11/6/20	Transition from Furlough	ACAS	1	2
29/6/20	Employment Law Update	ACAS	1	1
21/7/19	Debt management part 2	Community Money Advice	6	5
10/11/12 08/20	Interpersonal Mediation training	Mediation UK	18	1
06.05.2020	Domestic abuse	Webinar	6	2
08.05.2020	Universal Credit and income	Social welfare Training	6	2
16.06.2020	Safeguarding	ECDC E-learning	2	4

Please note this only includes training carried out during this period from May 2020 onwards.

EUSS

ECDC has been registered and authorised by the Home Office to act as one of their Centres to assist the EU citizens in applying for settled/pre-settled status. The service is free however we will receive payment of £25 per completed appointment. Currently we have 3 advisers registered as allowed to offer this limited immigration service (Aneta Sharp, Suleman Salim and Nick Wyatt). The deadline for applications is the end of June 2021. First appointments have been booked and we will aim to reach as many EU citizens living in the region as possible.

Debt advice

Our Advice Service is able to offer Debt Advice to the customers. All members of the Housing and Advice Team did basic debt advice training; Suleman Salim, Nick Wyatt, Sarah Burton, Louise Duffield and Aneta Sharp completed part 2 and passed the Debt Advice exam. Louise Duffield and Aneta Sharp will continue their training and after gaining experience will do Debt Advice part 3 training

TITLE: ECDC ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN – AN UPDATE

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 14 September 2020

Author: Richard Kay, Strategic Planning Manager

[V59]

1.0 **ISSUE**

- 1.1 On 8 June 2020, Operational Services Committee approved the Council's first 'Environment Plan', which provides a strategy and action plan to deliver on the commitments of the Climate Change Motion approved in October 2019.
- 1.2 At the same meeting, Committee also agreed that it was important for regular updates to be presented to this Committee on progress with the Plan. This agenda item is the first of such updates.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 That the Committee:
 - (A) Notes the progress made to date with delivering on the Environment Plan commitments.

3.0 **BACKGROUND/OPTIONS**

- 3.1 On 16 October 2019, Full Council approved a wide-ranging Motion relating to climate change matters and which, in short, had the effect of this council declaring that there is a climate emergency.
- 3.2 On 8 June 2020, Operational Services Committee approved the Council's first 'Environment Plan'.
- 3.3 This agenda item reports on progress since the adoption of the Plan some 3 months ago, and sets out some upcoming actions being progressed.
- Funding Secured**
- 3.4 On 23 July 2020, Finance and Assets Committee also welcomed the Plan, and approved an annual budget of £100,000 to help deliver it. This funding will help deliver the 20 actions identified by the Committee (where existing resources were not previously available), as well as secure additional officer support to help coordinate and deliver on activities.

Progress on the 'Top 20 Actions'

- 3.5 Committee will recall that the Environment Plan included a 'Top 20' of actions intended to be achieved over the course of the year to June 2021. Attached at Appendix A is a summary table setting out what those Top 20 actions are, together with commentary on progress and future milestones.
- 3.6 To pick out a few highlights from that table:
- We quickly secured a new electricity contract in late June, meaning from October 2020 (the earliest date possible) the Council moves to a 100% renewable energy 'green' tariff, at very minimal additional cost. (Note: offsetting our gas usage is more challenging, with options to be explored).
 - We are now confident that we can replace all our street / car park lighting to LEDs, and are targeting to do so by the end of the year.
 - Staff business mileage has dropped dramatically since March, by approximately 75%, arising from the covid-19 related restrictions. The challenge now (as per Action 3) is to see if we can continue a lower level of car business mileage as the economy opens up and staff slowly return to more office based work and greater site visits.
 - We are making good progress on establishing where and how we could transform some of our own land assets into more biodiversity rich areas (as per Action 11), and hope to be able to report on a programme of activity over winter/spring.
 - Supplementary Planning Documents on Nature and Climate Change continue to be progressed (as per Action 12), with the aim of taking items to Finance and Assets Committee on 24 September.
 - Three Parish Councils have expressed an interest in assisting us with Action 15, which seeks to establish a template action plan which all parishes can use, should they wish to do so.
 - Palace Green Homes have commenced drafting a new 'sustainability policy' (Action 20), which is hoped to be published this Autumn.
- 3.7 Overseeing progress on the Plan is a Project Group comprising the Director of Operations, various Service Leads and myself. That group tracks progress and approves day-to-day activities.

Ideas Forum - Update

- 3.8 At the last meeting, Committee received a summary report of 'ideas' received from the public, up to the cut off point for preparing the Environment Plan. Many such ideas helped in the formulation of the Plan itself. However, Committee requested that a little more information be provided in terms of how we have taken forward those ideas, and which ones we have not.
- 3.9 As such, that summary report has been bolstered by providing an additional box under each theme of ideas received, which sets out what was done. That report has been published on our website at:
<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/content/climate-change-ideas-forum>.

3.10 Ideas continued to be received, and these are being logged separately and will help formulate new actions for next year (unless something urgent is submitted which can be quickly and easily addressed).

Upcoming events

3.11 A further update to Committee on progress will be provided in January, together with (as requested by Committee) a separate paper setting out the issues and options in relation to a citizens assembly.

3.12 Over the next three months, the following activities, amongst others, are aimed to be progressed (see also Appendix A for other activities planned):

- Establish which ECDC owned sites have potential for tree/meadow planting, and establish a programme of delivering it.
- Consult on a new climate change Supplementary Planning Document
- Replace all street and carpark lights to LED
- Undertaken an energy audit of The Grange and E Space North
- Established a framework for a district wide Environment Plan, including baseline data, so that we can commence engagement with the public on what actions the district as a whole can target.
- Consider what headline interim targets could be set, for 2025 and 2030, and bring these to Committee for discussion in January.

4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

4.1 This agenda item is for information only, though Committee views on progress would be welcome..

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/ ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 There are no implications arising from the recommendation.

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 Appendix A: Table of Top 20 Actions and Progress on them

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

Appendix A : Progress Table of Top 20 Actions (information up to date as at 26/8/20)

	20 Commitments for 2020/21:	Lead Officer	Comments	Resources / Budget	Overall Progress	Completed Dates
						Target dates
1	Review its entire electricity and gas contracts, and, where practical to do so, will seek to amend to 100% renewable electricity tariffs and 100% carbon off-set gas tariffs as soon as possible.	Spencer Clark	<p>Work underway.</p> <p>Electricity: Critical deadline of 30 June 2020 to make a decision for Oct 2020 supply.</p> <p>Gas: current contract does not have a tariff option for offsetting gas emissions. Alternative offsetting to be explored. Preliminary options below:</p> <p>----</p> <p>CUPSE, LNP and partners exploring potential of setting up a local carbon offset fund and delivery programme.</p> <p>National and international offset mechanism already exist.</p>	<p>100% renewable elec is 0.075pkwh 'premium'. Total est annual premium cost = aprox £500.</p> <p>Contract does not allow a gas offset option, so alternative offset options needs exploring, and cost/vfm determined. Estimated at £1,000+.</p>	Underway	18/6/20– Green tariff for electricity confirmed, for 1 Oct 2020 start.
						<p>25/6/20 - preliminary meetings with CUPSE.</p> <p>Autumn/winter – options for offsetting gas put to Ctte</p>
2	Appraise the impact of its streetlights and consider the options to move to LED lighting, if feasible, taking account of the carbon savings, financial savings and public	Spencer Clark	Existing database of street lights exists, and only in need of check to bring up to date.	Likely an 'invest to save' option i.e. upfront capital, future revenue saving.	Replacement of lights to LEDs on going.	Ongoing – approx. half of all our lights now LED.
						31/12/20 – replaced all lights with LED

	opinion of doing so, including consideration as whether dimming of lights is practicable and safe during certain low-use hours (note: most street lights are not under the control of ECDC).		Some lights already use LEDs.	Costs / savings unknown, but likely very limited in 2020/21, and from existing resources.		
3	Embed a greater culture of home working (to reduce commuting) and less business travel (eg for site visits), taking advantage of lessons learnt during the Covid-19 lockdown, with the aim of encouraging staff to undertake less, and more coordinated, site visits and meeting attendance.	HR / CMT	Chief Executive-led surveys of service leads undertaken in June and July, to help establish lessons learnt from COVID working practice, and what elements can be maintained permanent.	Likely some costs (mostly IT equipment upgrade), though such spend is COVID related rather than for environmental reasons. Potential to save revenue costs (business mileage claims). Overall, aim to be cost neutral.	Lessons still being learnt / evaluated. 'Virtual' meetings likely to continue long term, saving mileage.	Business mileage (i.e. for site visits) down approximately 75% during April-July 2020. Summer 2020 – evaluation of benefits arising from COVID enforced working practice Autumn/winter – continue to monitor business mileage claims, to see changes pre-Covid / lockdown / recovery stages.
4	Undertake a thorough appraisal of the potential to expand electric car charge points.	Sally Bonnett	CP Combined Authority (CA) undertaking research on this, which we should feed into and get results from.	Nil, other than staff time for the appraisal. Will need funding for implementation.	CA work ongoing. Update due w/c 3 Aug. Spencer Clark also evaluating options for increased charging points in our own carparks.	CA research underway TBC – CA report finalised TBC – options for progressing in ECDC
5					Not started	Late 2019 – CIA process commenced

	Roll out further guidance and training for staff in relation to the recently introduced 'Carbon Impact Assessment' procedure – a new assessment which requires all Council decisions to be assessed for the carbon implications of the decision being made.	Richard Kay	CIA process in place, but very limited guidance. Also relies on a single point of supervision and sign off (RK)	Nil, other than additional staff time.		25/8/20 - survey of service leads on CIA process to date 31/10/20 - Greater CIA guidance issued to service leads, following appraisal of CIA process to date.
6	Work with ECTC and ECSS, the Council's wholly owned companies responsible for matters such as waste collection, street cleansing and maintaining public open spaces, conclude a review into alternative options for its vehicle fleet, and set out a programme of how its vehicle fleet will become less carbon intensive, plus review our waste collection methods to determine whether more efficient route collections can be secured, thereby reducing vehicle fuel consumption (and consequently reduced CO2 emissions).	James Khan	ECSS is already committed to review options, as and when fleet needs replacing, but there is no guarantee suitable vehicles are available to cover the full range and specification of current vehicles at this time. The aim is to change the waste collection vehicles, in line with the Governments Waste and Resource Strategy, to ensure vehicles are not changed unnecessarily early. Next level of Govt consultation for the strategy is due winter 2020. Smaller vehicles, which electric versions are more widely available, are not due for	Capital costs will be significant to cover the additional cost of carbon neutral vehicles. Additional cost will be needed to implement sufficient charging infrastructure. But, some revenue (fuel) savings could materialise in the short term. Nil additional resource for 2020/21	Work on-going (though partly dependant on Government progress with its waste strategy)	Autumn – Work on establishing route efficiencies to be intensified. Winter – review Government waste strategy.

			replacement until 2027/28.			
7	Complete an energy opportunity assessment for The Grange to identify measures that can be taken to reduce consumption and/or generate renewable energy and deliver at least one of the measures identified within a year.	Spencer Clark	Other local authorities in the local area have done similar work, which can be used as a template.	Survey cost = est £3,000 Implementation of recommendations = TBC.	Brief being drafted	Autumn 2020 (provided ability to do so) - instruct surveyors 31/12/20 - survey results 31/3/21 - implement at least one recommendation
8	Complete an energy opportunity assessment for E-Space North to identify measures that can be taken to reduce consumption and/or generate renewable energy and deliver at least one of these.	Spencer Clark	Other local authorities in the local area have done similar work, which can be used as a template.	Survey cost = est £3,000 Implementation of recommendations = TBC.	Brief being drafted	Autumn 2020 (provided ability to do so) - instruct surveyors 31/12/20 - survey results 31/3/21 - implement at least one recommendation
9	Develop a Customer Access Strategy, which at its heart will enable customers to undertake activities with the Council without the need for physical attendance at Council Offices.	Annette Wade	COVID lessons learnt can help develop this strategy Pre-COVID, approx. 1,500 customers per week accessed reception. We are now trying to understand in more detail how those customers are accessing the services they want (whilst reception closed) and what could be improved (eg website) so customers don't have to come to	Costs/savings unknown. Hopefully net neutral cost, with some upfront costs (e.g. website /online capability) offset by reduced 1-2-1 customer contact costs.	Project commenced.	31/10/20 Draft Customer Access Strategy circulated to Corporate Management Team.

			reception in the long term.			
10	Finalise the Council's bus, cycling and walking review (which commenced over winter 2019/20), and work with a wide variety of partners to try to implement its findings, taking advantage of new Government funds, linked to Covid-19 recovery, to boost cycling and walking infrastructure.	Sally Bonnett	Public consultation ended on 31 st May, feedback is currently being analysed. The aim is to identify priority routes and seek funding to deliver these.	Likely other funds utilised rather than ECDC.	Consultation ended 31 May. Results being analysed. Working Parties to review results in Autumn	Comprehensive public consultation completed 31 May 2020 Autumn - Working Parties set up to review results / consider options.
11	Undertake a thorough appraisal of the Council's land assets, and determine whether a programme of tree planting and/or meadow planting can take place on any of it. If so, commence that programme during the 2020/21 winter and spring planting season.		Significant public pressure on this action. Some willingness for community groups to deliver and manage sites themselves (though that has issues of safety and insurance etc).	Commission expertise to advise on most appropriate sites and what could be planted = £5,000. Budget to implement findings = TBC, but establish budget of £5,000 for 2020/21, and review for future years.	Project commenced	17/8/20 – In principle agreement to progress with WT as extension to existing SLA 14/9/20 - prepare map of land assets 14/9/20 – brief for the work established / commissioned 30/11/20 - finalised programme of candidate sites and actions 31/3/21 – commence delivery of some/all sites
12	Prepare, consult and adopt two Supplementary Planning Documents, one on the Natural Environment and the second on Climate Change.	Richard Kay	Natural Env SPD aiming for adoption in Sept (earlier is not possible due to legal restrictions relating to hard copy inspection not being possible at present). Climate change SPD	Nil, other than staff time, from existing budgets.	Part underway.	31/3/20 - Draft Nature SPD consulted upon 24/9/20 - Nature SPD to ctte for adoption 24/9/20 - Draft climate change SPD to ctte Oct/Nov - consult 31/3/21 - Climate change SPD adopted

			commenced – draft due at ctte in Sept			
13	Identify / develop a training course for all staff and Members on climate change issues, minimisation, mitigation, adaptive measures, and key environmental policies (possibly Open University's Environment: treading lightly on the Earth). Aim for all staff and Members to have completed training by 2021. All new starters from 2021 to complete training within 2 months of start date.	HR	OU course being trialled on a few staff – positive feedback to date. Need to nominate a HR lead for climate change / environment matters	Nil, other than staff time. (OU course is free, and takes 1-2 days to complete)	Early stages. Volunteers being sought to trial OU course	30/10/20 – training course agreed. 31/12/20 – 10% of staff and Members completed training. 31/3/21 – 50% of staff and Members completed training 31/12/21 – 95% of staff and Members completed training.
14	Put in place arrangements, by April 2021 (including a district wide partnership forum), to facilitate the preparation of a district wide Action Plan ('District-EnvPlan'). This Action Plan, which is prepared in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders, will set out how we can cut our carbon emissions and boost the natural environment collectively across the East Cambridgeshire area.	Richard Kay		This will require 0.5fte staff resource, not presently available. In addition, may require, for robustness, external expertise to audit results (eg Carbon Trust). Assume £5,000.	Early drafting of structure being established, and preliminary data collection.	31/12/20 – draft structure and baseline data established. 31/1/21 – community engagement agreed and commenced.
15	Work with a willing Parish Council, to prepare a template parish-based Action Plan ('Parish-EnvPlan'), and subsequently encourage all Parish Councils to come up with their own targets and projects.	Richard Kay	Burwell and Sutton PC already approached us.	Nil, apart from staff time	Very early stages	June 2020 – preliminary discussions with 2x PCs underway August 2020 – third PC also now interested 31/3/21 - publish a template action plan for PCs to use.

16	Prepare a second Council-EnvPlan by June 2021 (ie a review of this document), setting out progress over 2020/21, and proposals and targets for 2021/22.	Richard Kay		Nil, apart from staff time. First version required 0.4fte for 3 months, plus wider staff input. Estimate similar resource, for 2 months in 2021.	Not started	30/11/20 - update energy use data for 2019/20 31/12/20 - review of all 2020/21 targets; drafting of 21/22 targets 31/1/21 - cut off for Ideas Forum 31/3/21 - reflect on recommendations arising from (17) below.
17	Work proactively with the Combined Authority, as part of its recently launched Climate Change Independent Commission	Richard Kay	Commission launched in early June	Nil, other than staff time from existing resource.	CA engagement with ECDC not yet commenced	30/11/20 - CA draft report due 28/2/21 - CA final report due
18	Support Cambridgeshire County Council in its delivery of its recently adopted Action Plan.	All	Final version adopted June 2020	Resources depends on degree we are able to assist. May require limited additional staff resource.		Ongoing
19	The Council also acknowledges that in recognising there is a climate emergency, the actions needed to be taken are not all about mitigating the impacts, but also adapting to the inevitable changes of climate change. As such, the Council also commits to commence preparation of a Climate Adaptation Plan over the next 12 months.	Richard Kay	PCC and County doing similar work, which we can use as a template.	The Plan itself should be nil cost other than additional staff time. In the medium term, it could lead to costs depending on actions it proposes	Not started	30/12/20 - draft Adaptation Plan 30/4/21 - final adaptation plan
20	Work with Palace Green Homes (PGH), the Council's commercial property and development company, to establish a new sustainability policy for the company; this will then	Richard Kay / Rebecca Saunt (plus	Most development companies have these, so templates available	Policy drafting itself should be nil, and probably from existing staff resource. Implementing what it	Commenced	May 2020 – preliminary conversations with PGH 31/10/20 - final sustainability policy

	inform how it can progress its development schemes in the most sustainable, yet viable, way.	Phil Rose from PGH)		says could have viability issues for PGH (positive or negative) in future years.		
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TITLE: BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 14th September 2020

Author: Finance Manager

[V60]

1. ISSUE

- 1.1 This report provides Members with details of the financial position for services under the Operational Services Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATION (S)

- 2.1 Members are requested to note that this Committee is currently projected to end the year with a revenue underspend of £57,000, when compared to its planned budget, of £5,593,903.
- 2.2 Members are further requested to note that the Committee has a projected capital programme outturn of £3,750,436. This is an overspend of £10,000.

3. BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

- 3.1 Under Financial Regulations each policy committee is required to consider projections of financial performance against both its revenue and capital budget on a quarterly basis.
- 3.2 This is the first quarter report for the 2020/21 financial year and details actual expenditure incurred and income received as at 30th June 2020 and current projections as to the year-end position.
- 3.3 The revenue budget for each service that falls under the stewardship of this Committee has been reviewed with appendix 1 detailing the current variance and forecast outturn for each service line.
- 3.4 The significant variances of actual spend compared to profiled budgeted spend at the end of June, where no variance is forecast for yearend, are detailed in the table on the next page:

Service	Variance £	Explanation
Homelessness	(£549,350)	There is a roll forward of unspent Government grant funding from 2019/20
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	(£79,203)	CIL transactions are treated as a revenue income or expense, but any balance on the account at yearend will be transferred to reserve
Community Safety	(£32,595)	Rolled forward income from 2019/20 (PCC & Community Safety) will be used to pay for these activities in 2020/21
Marketing & Grants	(£10,484)	Funding committed, but unspent in 2019/20 has been rolled forward and will be spent this financial year

- 3.5 The net revenue expenditure for this Committee at yearend is forecast to be £5,593,903. This reflects a forecast £57,000 underspend when compared to the approved budget. Explanations for the forecast yearend variances which make up this balance are detailed in the table below:

Service	Variance £	Explanation
Community Projects and Grants	(£47,000)	Saving from the decision to bring homelessness support, previously undertaken by the Rural Cambs Citizens Bureau, in-house to be funded from the Homelessness Grant provided by MHCLG
Customer Services	(£10,000)	The apprentice post remained vacant during the first quarter of the year, as a consequence of the COVID-19 situation. This will be addressed in the second quarter.

- 3.6 The revised capital budget for this Committee stands at £3,740,436; including £311,110 of slippage brought forward from 2019/20.
- 3.7 The current forecast is that capital spending will be overspent by £10,000 at yearend, meaning the total expenditure for the year will be £3,750,436.

Project	Variance £	Explanation
Waste – Wheelie Bins	£10,000	This relates to the purchase of wheeled bins. It was originally anticipated that the purchase and distribution of these would be actioned via East Cambs Street Scene, but as these need to remain as an asset of the Council, it is now felt appropriate that the cost be charged to the Council’s capital budget.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The current forecast is that the Committee’s net revenue expenditure will come in £57,000 under budget at yearend.
- 4.2 Equality Impact Assessment (INRA) not required.
- 4.3 Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) not required.

5. APPENDICES

- 5.1 Appendix 1 – Revenue budget monitoring report – 30th June 2020.
- 5.2 Appendix 2 – Capital budget monitoring report – 30th June 2020

Background Documents

Budget Monitoring Report
Preparation Documents

Location

Room 104
The Grange
Ely

Contact Officer

Ian Smith
Finance Manager
Tel: (01353) 616470
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OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - JUNE 2020

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

CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2020/21

Capital	Published Budget 2020-21 £	Slippage from 2019-20 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2020-21 £	Actual at 30th June 2020 £	Forecast Outturn £	Variance between Revised Budget & Forecast Outturn £
<u>OPERATIONAL SERVICES</u>							
Conservation Area Schemes - 2nd round		27,506		27,506		27,506	0
Refuse & Cleansing Vehicles	1,882,077			1,882,077		1,882,077	0
Waste - Wheelied Bins					8,272	10,000	10,000
Depot	745,950	100,000		845,950		845,950	0
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants	697,299	94,417		791,716	-152,725	791,716	0
Empty Properties, Discretionary DFGs, Minor Works, Home Repair Asst.	75,000			75,000	-2,746	75,000	0
Vehicle Etc. Replacements	29,000	89,187		118,187		118,187	0
Total	3,429,326	311,110	0	3,740,436	-147,199	3,750,436	10,000

SOURCES OF FINANCING	Published Budget 2020-21 £	Slippage from 2019-20 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2020-21 £	Variances £	Forecast Outturn £
Operational Services						
Grants / Contributions (DFG)	526,577			526,577		526,577
Revenue Contribution		89,187		89,187		89,187
Capital Receipts	245,722	94,417		340,139		340,139
Borrowing - Waste	2,628,027	100,000		2,728,027		2,728,027
Section 106 / CIL	29,000	27,506		56,506	10,000	66,506
Capital Funding Total	3,429,326	311,110	0	3,740,436	10,000	3,750,436

OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Lead Officer: Jo Brooks, Director, Operations

FORWARD AGENDA PLAN

Democratic Services Officer: Adrian Scaites-Stokes

16th November 2020 4:30pm		18th January 2021 4:30pm		22nd March 2021 4:30pm	
Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed	Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed	Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed
Report Deadline:	4 th November 2020	Report Deadline:	6 th January 2021	Report Deadline:	10 th March 2021
Quarter 2 Waste Performance	James Khan (Street Scene Manager)	Environment & Climate Change Action Plan Update	Richard Kay (Strategic Planning Manager)	Year End Service Delivery Performance Updates & New Service Delivery Plans ❖	Jo Brooks (Director, Operations)
Citizens Assembly Options Appraisal for Environment & Climate change	Richard Kay (Strategic Planning Manager)	Quarter 3 Waste Performance	James Khan (Street Scene Manager)		
Community Services Grant Review	Lewis Bage (Communities & Partnership Manager)	Effects of COVID-19 on Housing & Community Services	Angela Parmenter (Housing & Community Advice Manager)		
Service Presentation - ICT	Karen Wright (ICT Manager)	Service Presentation – Planning	Rebecca Saunt (Planning Manager)	Service Presentation – Building Control	Nigel Harper (Fire Safety & Commercial Advisor)
Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Democratic Services Officer)	Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Democratic Services Officer)	Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Democratic Services Officer)

- ❖ Building Control
- ❖ Communities & Partnerships
- ❖ Customer Services

- ❖ Environmental Services
- ❖ Housing & Community Safety
- ❖ Information Technology

- ❖ Licensing
- ❖ Performance Management
- ❖ Planning

- ❖ Public Relations/Communications
- ❖ Waste Services

AGENDA ITEM NO. X



EAST
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Operational Services Committee facilitated via the Zoom Video Conferencing System at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on Monday 14th September 2020.

PRESENT

Cllr David Ambrose Smith (Chairman)
Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith
Cllr Victoria Charlesworth
Cllr Lis Every
Cllr Julia Huffer
Cllr Mark Inskip
Cllr Paola Trimarco
Cllr Jo Webber
Cllr Christine Whelan

OFFICERS

Jo Brooks – Director Operations
Stewart Broome – Senior Licensing Officer
Richard Kay – Strategic Planning manager
Angela Parmenter – Housing & Community Advice Manager
Adrian Scaites-Stokes – Democratic Services Officer
Anne Wareham – Senior Accountant

24. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

25. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no apologies nor substitutions for this meeting.

26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

27. MINUTES

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20th July 2020 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

28. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chairman's announcements.

29. LOCAL ELECTRICITY BILL

The Committee considered a Motion passed from full Council relating to the Local Electricity Bill.

The Proposer of the Motion reminded the Committee that it had been nearly a year since the Council had declared a Climate Emergency. The Motion as proposed back in July related to the Local Electricity Bill which was another step that the Council could take to help address the challenges of climate change and the goal of zero carbon. In the context of community scale energy which had a huge potential to help towards zero carbon and would benefit the local economies. That was being blocked by the current energy market and legislation. Anyone wishing to buy electricity from local renewable sources cannot and it was only available from utility companies or via the national grid. Becoming a supplier of energy for local consumers would have huge set up costs and had added complexities. The idea behind the Local Electricity Bill was to solve those problems by making the costs and complexity of selling local energy proportionate for local communities. So it would give energy generators the right to become local suppliers and make it financially viable. The Bill aimed to set up a new mechanism via Ofgem to ensure local suppliers faced proportionate costs. Ofgem were to consult with experts and stakeholders to create agreements to move forward with this. If successful local councils and community groups could get involved in renewable energy generation projects that work in the local community.

The Bill had cross-party support with over 200 Members of Parliament in support. Other local authorities had passed similar motions in support and this Council was being asked to do the same, as it would be consistent with the Council's previous decisions. This would allow a lot of community groups to look at getting involved.

In making comments about the Bill, a Member pointed out that although the Bill had many merits there were also some concerns. The principal of requesting resources and powers for local authorities would be helpful and could be supported, as those authorities would be reducing carbon emissions locally. However, the proposal to not allow carbon offsetting would be opposite to this Council's and the County Council's commitments. It was unlikely to achieve zero carbon emissions so there would be a need to offset in some way, through planting trees throughout the area. Fortunately, some local growers are already supplying trees in the district with plans to make Soham a demonstration town of their trees and this is to be encouraged. The Bill suggests many international carbon offset schemes were not working, though there are local schemes that were doing good work. The County Council was working to set up a local carbon offsetting scheme for local businesses to invest in local community infrastructure. The Bill would limit the opportunity for local businesses to invest in future green energy projects.

Within the body of the Bill there was no more carbon offsetting, so no companies would spend money in tree planting or replacing trees as there would be no incentive nationally or internationally. Pressure needed to be kept on, particularly internationally, to get other countries to do more. The Bill would undermine that

and remove the incentive to do that. The impact on communities had to be discovered as, if the Bill was supported as it was, then there would be no going back to change it.

It was therefore proposed that the following amendments be made to the Motion: Under part (v) the first bullet point be amended to read: "write to local MPs, asking them to provide information on the impact of the Bill and if appropriate support the Bill" and the second bullet point to read "following a response from local MPs bring a report back to this Committee and then decide if East Cambridgeshire District Council wishes to write in support of the Bill." This was duly seconded.

Another Member revealed that Soham Town Council were in support of the Bill but was unsure about what impact planting trees would have. It should be possible to have both. The District Council should support town councils in projects they are interested in.

The Proposer was confused about the amendment, as the Bill did nothing to discourage offsetting so it should not be a concern. The Bill was about the supply of energy, its regulation by Ofgem and about enabling local community generators being able to get schemes off the ground. Ofgem did not regulate carbon offsetting but many organisations were taking part in offsetting schemes already. Offsetting should not be used to delay the original motion, as matters had already been delayed since July. If the motion was supported it could be 'on the table' when Parliament debated the Bill again, otherwise if the amendment was passed this would delay matters until November and the Council's view would be left behind. The Bill had cross-party support so this Council so proceed to support the Bill. Other initiatives, relating to offsetting, could be brought back to this Committee for consideration, so this matter should not be delayed.

The amendment was then put to the vote and the results were:

For (5): Councillors C Ambrose Smith, D Ambrose Smith, L Every, J Huffer and J Webber.

Against (4): Councillors V Charlesworth, M Inskip, P Trimarco and C Whelan.

The amendment was therefore agreed.

As no Member wished to speak on the new Substantive Motion, it was put to the vote and agreed unanimously.

It was resolved that this Council:

- (i) acknowledges the efforts that this council is making to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote renewable energy;
- (ii) recognises that councils can play a central role in creating sustainable communities, particularly through the provision of locally generated renewable electricity;
- (iii) further recognises
 - that very large financial setup and running costs involved in selling locally generated renewable electricity to local

- customers result in it being impossible for local renewable electricity generators to do so,
- that making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation would create significant opportunities for councils and local community co-operatives to be providers of locally generated renewable electricity directly to local people, businesses and organisations, and
 - that revenues received by councils that became local renewable electricity providers could be used to help fund local greenhouse gas emissions reduction measures and to help improve local services and facilities;
- (iv) accordingly resolves to support the Local Electricity Bill, currently supported by a cross-party group of 187 MPs, and which, if made law, would make the setup and running costs of selling renewable electricity to local customers proportionate by establishing a Right to Local Supply; and
- (v) further resolves to:
- write to local MPs, asking them to provide information on the impact of the Bill and if appropriate support the Bill;
 - following a response from local MPs bring a report back to this Committee and then decide if East Cambridgeshire District Council wishes to write in support of the Bill.

30. PRESENTATION – LICENSING SERVICES

The Committee received a presentation by the Senior Licensing Officer on the work of the Council's Licensing Department.

The Senior Licensing Officer advised the Committee that the Department consisted of only three officers, who dealt with 1822 live records. Most of these related to hackney carriage or private hire licences, with other licences such as for alcohol selling, animal welfare, breeding and boarding establishments, gambling and lottery collections were also amongst those handled. Since July this year there had been extra work involved around temporary pavement licences, which was due to end in September 2021. The Department also registered street traders, which enabled control of potential rogue traders in the district, and looked after scrap metal dealers' sites and the Licensing collectors.

The purpose of all licensing activities was to balance all factors to prevent harm to the community and this was the main consideration when deciding on granting permissions. The Licensing Committee was involved in setting policies, licensing conditions and charges, with due respect to the relevant legislation. There were also two Sub-Committees which dealt with different licensing issues, although these could be referred to the main Committee.

The Council's licensing policies aimed to guide applicants, holders and the Council in relevant matters but also have to adhere to the appropriate legislation, statutory guidance and codes of practice. Legislation and regulations could

change very quickly, potentially generating grievances. The Department had developed good relationships with the trade and Councillors and aimed to assist businesses to cope.

The Committee were very appreciative of the work done by the Department, how accessible it was, its relationships and clear processes which were of huge value. The team had impressed when having to deal with recent legislation that had been published 20 minutes before coming into force and had done an excellent job under difficult circumstances. The small hard-working team had worked wonders this year during the pandemic and were an extraordinary team.

31. HOUSING AND COMMUNITY ADVICE SERVICE – UPDATE ON IMPACT OF COVID-19

The Committee considered a report, V58 previously circulated, which updated the Committee on the Housing and Community Advice Services and the impacts of COVID-19.

The Housing and Community Advice Manager advised the Committee that the Department had still continued to provide its services, by conducting interviews by telephone. Face-to-face interviews would be re-started soon. The number of cases being dealt remained steady with only nine Section 21/8 cases currently. The situation regarding those notices had been reviewed by Government and landlords would have to issue six-month notices to quit as from August 2021.

The number of community advice cases and tenancy support had increased, with enquiries also up. Officers had received extra training during the lockdown period so can now deal with a range of topics, including the settlement of European Union citizens.

COVID-19 had not impacted that much so far, but the Department was preparing for when the furlough scheme ends, so officers were ready for the expected influx of cases. The Department was also liaising with other organisations to get the community hubs up and running.

The Committee were impressed by the amount of training that had been undertaken and were mindful of the potential increase in demand on services due to evictions, the delay in the COVID-19 impact and the expiry of the mortgage 'holiday'. It appreciated the work being done alongside the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Questions were asked about the European Citizens and their pre-settled and settled status and whether there was enough available accommodation to cope with homeless residents.

In response, Members were informed that the department had taken steps to inform relevant citizens, via advertisements, the Rosmini Centre, information sent to local factories and building information on the Council's website. Direct letting with private and social landlords had continued throughout the pandemic and a number of bids had been made to Sanctuary. Temporary accommodation was still available in Burwell, Ely and Littleport. Attempts were always made to

accommodate people near family or work or school where possible, though some people have had to move to more rural areas. Those people were given continuous support, including regular visits and checking they were getting the support they needed. It was hoped that bed-and-breakfast accommodation would not be needed.

It was resolved:

That the update in this report be noted.

32. ECDC ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN - AN UPDATE

The Committee considered a report, V59 previously circulated, which updated the Committee on the progress of the Council's 'Environment Plan'.

The Strategic Planning Manager reminded the Committee that the Environment Plan had been agreed in June. Appendix A attached to the report set out the targets and these were on track to being met, though some matters had progressed more than others. Paragraph 3.6 of the report set out a few highlights, such as securing a new electricity contract and replacement of street lighting. A Supplementary Planning Document would be going to the Finance & Assets Committee about Nature and Climate Change.

Responses from the Ideas Forum had been published online and a paper would be presented at the November meeting of this Committee on a Citizen Assembly. The January update report would be a discussion on interim targets and these would be incorporated in the June 2021 Action Plan. Councillors David Ambrose Smith and Julia Huffer had signed up to the Open University environment course and Members of the Committee were encouraged to do the same.

The Committee acknowledged that it was important to receive regular updates on progress and on the Ideas Forum, which had generated a lot of public interest in climate change ideas. It was looking forward to the Citizens Assembly report, as it would bring in the wider community and help build enthusiasm for the work to be done. The results of a recent survey on cycling and walking would add in to this, but when would the report be received as the consultation ended in May? There was some danger that the Council could miss out on the County Council and Government initiatives. When would the result of the bus survey be considered by the relevant Working Party?

The Ideas Forum had also highlighted tackling idling motor vehicles but would this be extended to other vehicles? This affected children's ability to learn so something similar near schools should be considered.

The Government had announced the first tranche of grant funding for home insulation but did this Council make a bid for any of that? The scheme had made money available and there were properties in this district that would need it. Although some ideas for renewable energy were outside the powers of this Council was there more it could be doing to encourage energy initiatives?

In relation to transport, the Council should do better to provide more electric charging points, rather than just the two at The Hive. What plans were there to install further charging points before 2025? There was some funding available to create an infrastructure for electric vehicles.

How was the new assessment on Council decisions going to be different?

The Strategic Planning Manager responded by stating he was not aware that a bid had been made for grant insulation funding, as he thought the criteria set was not a totally open process. The Council had so far focussed on what it was doing as an organisation first, before considering wider issues to promote climate change ideas. There was a need to pick up a district-wide plan, which would be made separately and in conjunction with other organisations. There was an action point already included to increase the number of electric vehicles charging points within its own assets. The Combined Authority were already doing work across Cambridgeshire and this Council was already involved. Reports to Council and committees would include a Carbon Impact Assessment to help understand if there would be a carbon impact following Council's decisions. Service Leads had been approached to see how this was working and whether it could be improved. It would be difficult to enforce drivers to stop their vehicles idling, but this might be an initiative of a district-wide plan.

It was resolved:

That the progress made to date with delivering the Environment Plan commitments be noted.

33. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Committee considered a report, V60 previously circulated, which provided details of the financial position for services under the Operational Services Committee.

The Senior Accountant advised the Committee that this was the first quarter budget for 2020-21. So far there had been a lot of underspend, mostly due to the rolling forward of grants that had not been spent the previous year. The forecast for the year end was an underspend on the revenue budget. Some savings had been made by not filling a customer services employee post during lockdown. The Committee was informed that this was due to people working from home and training of a new recruit being very difficult and there was not should a need during the lockdown period. Now that the Council was opening up again appointments were being taken.

It was resolved:

- (i) To note that this Committee was currently projected to end the year with a revenue underspend of £57,000, when compared to its panned budget of £5,593,903;
- (ii) To note that the Committee had a projected capital programme outturn of £3,750,436. This was an overspend of £10,000.

34. FORWARD AGENDA PLAN

The Committee received a copy of its forward agenda plan.

A question was raised about the Youth Strategy report being missed off the agenda plan. It was disappointing to see that the Youth Advisory Board had been delayed and nothing had happened since last January. When the report finally was considered it would be out-of-date so the Board should be set up as soon as possible.

In response, the Director Operations agreed that the situation was disappointing but a survey had been carried out, work with schools had been undertaken and the County Council had been starting to set things up when COVID-19 hit. The County Council had decided not to pursue the Youth Advisory Board during the height of the pandemic but this Council had still continued to work on it. The County were now reviewing this and the Youth Strategy would be coming back to this Committee early next year. Although this Council was ready to go it needed to wait for the County Council and the Board.

The Committee was then informed that the County Council had to go into the schools to identify Board representatives and this had started and would go ahead. The Board would have money to commission services that it identified and which sat alongside the Youth Strategy.

The meeting concluded at 6:12pm.

Date of Publication of Decision List: 16th September 2020



EAST
CAMBRIDGESHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – 14th SEPTEMBER 2020
DECISION LIST

ITEM NO.	Ref.	Item	ISSUE	DECISION	ACTION BY
6.		<u>Member Motion – Local Electricity Bill</u>	To consider a Motion proposed relating to the Local Electricity Bill	<p>It was resolved that this Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) acknowledges the efforts that this council is making to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote renewable energy; (ii) recognises that councils can play a central role in creating sustainable communities, particularly through the provision of locally generated renewable electricity; (iii) further recognises <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that very large financial setup and running costs involved in selling locally generated renewable electricity to local customers result in it being impossible for local renewable electricity generators to do so, • that making these financial costs proportionate to the scale of a renewable electricity supplier's operation would create significant opportunities for councils and local community co-operatives to be providers of locally generated renewable electricity directly to local people, businesses and organisations, and • that revenues received by councils that became local renewable electricity providers could be used to help fund local greenhouse gas emissions reduction measures and to help improve local services and facilities; (iv) accordingly resolves to support the Local Electricity Bill, currently supported by a cross-party group of 187 MPs, and which, if made law, would make the setup and running costs of selling renewable electricity to local customers proportionate by establishing a Right to Local Supply; and (v) further resolves to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write to local MPs, asking them to provide information on the impact of the Bill and if appropriate support the Bill; • following a response from local MPs bring a report back to this Committee and then decide if East Cambridgeshire District Council wishes to write in support of the Bill. 	Jo Brooks Director Operations

8.	V58	<u>Housing and Community Advice Service – Update on Impact of COVID-19</u>	To consider an update on the Housing and Community Advice Service and the impacts arising from COVID-19	It was resolved: That the update in this report be noted.	Angela Parmenter Housing & Community Advice Manager
9.	V59	<u>Environment & Climate Change Action Plan and Ideas Forum Information Update</u>	To consider an update on the Action Plan	It was resolved: That the progress made to date with delivering the Environment Plan commitments be noted.	Richard Kay Strategic Planning Manager
10.	V60	<u>Budget Monitoring Report</u>	To consider the financial position for services under the Operational Services Committee	It was resolved: (i) To note that this Committee was currently projected to end the year with a revenue underspend of £57,000, when compared to its panned budget of £5,593,903; (ii) To note that the Committee had a projected capital programme outturn of £3,750,436. This was an overspend of £10,000.	Anne Wareham Senior Accountant

Please Note: These decisions will come into effect on **23rd September 2020** unless any 3 Members object and call-in the decision. The call-in must be in writing to the Chief Executive and be received by **21st September 2020**.