



East Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a Meeting of the Operational Services Committee

Held at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, CB7 4EE at 4:30 pm on
Monday 29th September 2025

Present

Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith
Cllr David Brown
Cllr Christine Colbert
Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann
Cllr Julia Huffer (Chair)
Cllr Mark Inskip
Cllr David Miller (Substitute)
Cllr Alan Sharp
Cllr John Trapp
Cllr Ross Trent
Cllr Lucius Vellacott (Vice Chair)
Cllr Christine Whelan

Officers

Patrick Adams – Senior Democratic Services Officer
Nigel Ankers – ECSS Finance Manager
Jude Antony – Director Finance
Nick Baker – Waste and Environmental Services Manager
Isabel Edgar – Director Operations
Emma Graves – Neighbourhood and Community Safety Officer
Emma Grima – ECSS Director Commercial
Catherine Sutherland – Senior Waste Management Officer

18. Public Question Time

No public questions were submitted.

19. Apologies and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Martin Goodearl. Cllr David Miller attended as a substitute for Cllr Goodearl.

20. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

21. Minutes

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23rd June 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

22. Chair's Announcements

The Chair made no announcements.

23. Community Safety Partnership 6 monthly update

Emma Graves, Neighbourhood and Community Safety Officer, presented this report, AA55 previously circulated, which updated the Committee on the work of the East Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership (ECCSP). She explained that unfortunately neither the Chair nor the Vice Chair was able to attend the meeting. However, she invited members of the Committee to ask questions about the report, which she would refer to the Board to answer.

Members of the Committee asked the following questions:

Cllr Mark Inskip asked whether an Independent Advisory Group, similar to the organisation set up in South Cambridgeshire to consider changes that could affect the community, could be set up in East Cambridgeshire.

Cllr John Trapp noted that East Cambridgeshire was reported as being bottom of the league table in terms of violence and asked whether this meant the District was the worst or the best in terms of violent crime.

Cllr Christine Colbert asked whether year 8 students were experiencing domestic violence from their parents or their siblings.

Cllr Christine Whelan asked whether road safety incidents referred to in the report included motorised scooters, which were illegal outside the trial area in Cambridge, and if so, how many incidents were recorded.

The Chair asked members of the Committee to ensure that the Police were informed of any road safety concerns, particularly those involving young drivers and motorcyclists.

It was resolved to:

A) Note the report at Appendix 1 and 2 from the Chair of the ECCSP.

24. Quarter 1 2024/25 Performance Report for the Waste and Street Cleansing Services

The Senior Waste Management Officer, Catherine Sutherland, presented a report, AA56 previously circulated, which provided the Committee with the Quarter 1 performance report for the delivery of the waste and street cleansing services by East Cambs Street Scene Ltd (ECSS).

Cllr Mark Inskip asked why the amount of recycled waste appeared to be declining. The Senior Waste Management Officer explained that this was a national trend and so the Council would be introducing a new waste collection service next year to try and reverse this effect. It was noted that it had been a dry summer, which reduced the amount of garden waste.

In reply to Cllr Christine Colbert, the Senior Waste Management Officer confirmed that the Council was responsible for the removal of dead animals from the roads and recorded the number that were collected. The Director Operations clarified that this was not reported as a Key Performance Indicator as part of the Memorandum of Agreement with ECSS. The Chair also confirmed that the public should report these to the Council for removal.

It was resolved to:

- A)** Note the performance of service delivery for Quarter 1 (April-June) 2025/26.

25. Street Cleansing Review

The Senior Waste Management Officer, Catherine Sutherland, presented a report, AA57 previously circulated, which updated the Committee on the outcome of the Street Cleansing service review. She explained that performance continued to improve and the quarterly performance reports during the last year were all noted without major concern by the Operational Services Committee.

Cllr David Brown expressed concern regarding loose straw from trucks, which was creating a mess on the district's roads and blocking gutters. The Chair explained that lorries were not required by law to cover their loads when transporting straw and she suggested that the Council should contact its MP and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs about this. Cllr Mark Inskip stated that there was a straw burning power station in his ward, which received daily deliveries and that loose straw was an issue that needed to be addressed.

Cllr Christine Whelan asked if letters on the street had been successful in moving cars to allow roads to be cleaned. The Senior Waste Management Officer agreed to find out.

Cllr John Trapp asked if future reports could be consistent and name the service users as residents and not also as customers. It was noted that the scale on the left in graph

3 on page 43 of the agenda referred to the percentage of times that the response target had been achieved.

Cllr Mark Inskip welcomed the improvement in service and stated that the team should always have sufficient resources to cover absences.

The Chair proposed and the Vice Chair seconded the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and the Committee unanimously

Resolved to:

- A)** Note that the existing street cleansing specification, with the inclusion of the updates as set out in sections 4.4 and 4.5 was fit for purpose and no further changes were required.
- B)** To instruct the Director Operations to include this specification within the broader ECSS service contract currently being renewed in 2026 to support the roll out of the new bin collection service.

26. New Waste Collection Service – Project Update

Nick Baker, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager, presented a report, AA58 previously circulated, which updated the Committee on the progress being made towards implementing the necessary changes to the Council's waste and recycling collection service, as previously approved by Full Council. He explained that work was going well, and the Council was on target to deliver the new bins and caddies commencing on 23rd March 2026.

Cllr Christine Whelan asked if there would be a second letter sent out to residents nearer to the delivery date. The Waste and Environmental Services Manager explained that the communication campaign would continue and would increase in intensity after Christmas, but it would be very expensive to send out a letter to all residents a second time. He further explained that there would be a full information pack delivered with the new bins. In response to a further question, he also explained that there were restrictions on what information could be included with Council Tax bills, but this method of communication would be considered.

In response to a question from Cllr Mark Inskip, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager confirmed that some residents had received more than one letter as they had more than one bin and whilst the mail merge had been corrected in some cases, in other cases duplicate letters were sent out. He suggested that with 45,000 letters being dispatched, some anomalies were inevitable. However, this would be rectified before any further mailshots went out which were based on bin collection rounds.

In response to Cllr Christine Colbert, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager explained that a campaign about to be launched would include a reminder to residents not to put batteries in their black bins as they can cause fires.

In reply to Cllr David Miller, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager stated that food waste could be wrapped in a bag in the new service, which would meet the legal requirement for the Council to collect separated food and recycle flexible plastics. He also confirmed that households will be able to request larger bins if they meet certain criteria.

In reply to Cllr David Brown, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager announced that members of the waste team would be attending the next Parish Council Forum to encourage them to include details of the forthcoming new waste service in their village magazines. It was noted that some local publications were unconnected to parish councils and officers would work to promote the new service in these as well.

In response to Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager explained that as long as new homes were registered for Council Tax, they would receive a bin collection from occupation. It was suggested that the onus was on new residents moving into the area to contact the Council to find out the waste collection arrangements.

In reply to Cllr Lucius Vellacott, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager explained that households who were already on an alternative service using sacks due to space and or access issues, would not be provided with new bins. Otherwise, requests from residents who claimed they had limited space would be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. In flatted properties, arrangements were being made with landlords to ensure the best mix of bins for the new service.

Cllr John Trapp welcomed the fact that the proposed new collection rounds had been reviewed by operational staff, learning lessons from when the rota was changed about three years ago. He also congratulated staff on ordering new equipment early, in the knowledge that there would be considerable demand from other councils.

The Committee thanked officers for their work on this project.

It was resolved:

To note the progress made of this project to date and that the project remained on budget and on track.

27. ECSS Financial Statements 2024/25 and Annual Governance Statement 2024/25

Nigel Ankers, the ECSS Finance Manager, presented a report, AA59 previously circulated, which invited the Committee to receive the East Cambs Street Scene Financial Statements and Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25. The ECSS Director Commercial stated that the Annual Governance Statement had been agreed by the Board on 16 September.

It was noted that the Chief Executive was retiring and so a new Director would have to be appointed. The ECSS Director Commercial explained that the new Chief

Executive would become the Managing Director of the ECSS, but they were two separate roles.

In reply to Cllr Mark Inskip, the ECSS Director Commercial explained that the aim of the ECSS was to cover its costs and not to make a net profit. In response to Cllr David Miller, the ECSS Director Commercial stated that if ECSS were in a position to pay dividends, the Committee would be expected to recommend to Full Council on how any dividends made by the company could be reinvested.

It was resolved to:

- A)** Note the East Cambs Street Scene Financial Statements 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 1.
- B)** Note the East Cambs Street Scene Annual Governance Statement 2024/25 as set out in Appendix 2.

28. Budget Monitoring Report

The Director Finance presented a report, AA60 previously circulated, which provided the Committee with details of the financial position for services under the Operational Services Committee.

In reply to Cllr Christine Whelan, the Director Finance agreed to find out how much grant money had been lost due to the fact that the post supported by the Police and Crime Commissioner had not been filled.

In response to Cllr John Trapp, the Director Finance explained that the Council had not yet invoiced Fenland District Council for the Disabled Facility Grant related work this authority carried out on their behalf after being awarded the contract.

It was unanimously resolved to:

- A)** Note that the Committee was currently projecting a year-end underspend of £30,000 on its revenue budget of £6,842,567.
- B)** Note that the Committee had a projected capital programme outturn of £12,789,751. This was also in line with the revised budget.

29. Anglia Revenues Benefit Joint Committee Minutes

The Committee received the minutes from the Anglia Revenues Benefit Joint Committee meetings on 18th March 2025 and 17th June 2025.

It was resolved:

To note the Minutes of the Anglia Revenues & Benefits Joint Committee meetings on 18th March 2025 and 17th June 2025.

30. Forward Agenda Plan

The Committee considered its Forward Agenda Plan. Cllr Mark Inskip suggested that the Committee should receive an update on the new waste service at its meeting in January. The Chair stated that the Committee would consider this at their next meeting in November.

It was resolved to:

Note the Forward Agenda Plan

31. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Cllr David Brown proposed and Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith seconded that the meeting should go into private session. It was resolved unanimously:

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

32. East Cambs Street Scene Management Accounts for the 3 months to June 2025 - EXEMPT

The Committee considered a report, AA61 previously circulated, which considered the ECSS Management Accounts for the 3 months to June 2025.

It was resolved that:

The ECSS Management Accounts for the 3 months to June 2025 be noted.

The meeting concluded at 5:35 pm

Chair

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