



East Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a Meeting of the Finance & Assets Committee Held at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, CB7 4EE at 4:30pm on Thursday 27 November 2025

Present:

Cllr Chika Akinwale
Cllr Anna Bailey
Cllr Ian Bovingdon (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Christine Colbert
Cllr Lee Denney
Cllr Julia Huffer
Cllr Bill Hunt
Cllr David Miller
Cllr Alan Sharp (Chair)
Cllr John Trapp
Cllr Christine Whelan

Officers:

Sally Bonnett – Director Community
Maggie Camp – Director Legal
Jane Webb – Democratic Services and Elections Manager
Spencer Clark – Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
Richard Kay – Climate Change and Natural Environment Manager
Lucy Flintham – Community Infrastructure Manager
Rachel Hogger - Senior Strategic Planning Officer
David Morren – Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager
Jude Anthony – Director Finance and Section 151 Officer
Nigel Ankers – ECTC Finance Manager
Emma Grima – ECDC Director Commercial

22. Public Questions

No Public Questions had been received.

23. Apologies and substitutions

Apologies were received from Cllr Mark Goldsack, Mary Wade and Alison Whelan. Cllrs Julia Huffer attended as substitute for Councillor Mark Goldsack, and Christine Colbert attended as substitute for Councillor Alison Whelan.

24. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

25. Minutes

The Committee received the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2025.

Members unanimously resolved:

That the Minutes of the Finance & Assets Committee meeting held on 26 June 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chair.

26. Chair's Announcements

The Chair had no announcements.

27. Pathway to Net Zero

The Committee received a report (AA99, previously circulated) that provided Members with a clear pathway to reduce the Council's emissions to net zero and reported the latest 2024/25 emissions. Richard Kay, the Climate Change and Natural Environment Manager, presented the report.

The Climate Change and Natural Environment Manager confirmed that the external bodies involved were pension-related. Engagement took place with West Northants, the administrators of the pension fund, while the remaining information was sourced in-house.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Cllr Bailey and seconded by Cllr Bovingdon; both Councillors thanked the officer for a very comprehensive report and congratulated them on hitting the 2028 target.

Members resolved to **APPROVE**:

1. The Pathway to Net Zero report in Appendix A to the report.
2. NOTE the latest emission monitoring report entitled Carbon Audit for 2024/25 in Appendix B to the report.

28. Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement

The Committee received a report (AA100, previously circulated) providing information on Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 income and expenditure. The Community Infrastructure Manager presented the report and noted that on page 60, "i)" should read 174, not 91.

Members resolved to **NOTE**:

1. The Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/25, as detailed in Appendix 1, which will be published in December 2025.

29. Assets Update

The Committee considered a report (AA101, as previously circulated) to receive an update on Council-owned assets. The Open Spaces and Facilities Manager, presented the report and updated Members:

- Palace Green Toilets – Light refurbishment well underway and will be open on 12 December.
- Newnham Street (car park and road repairs) – Tenders close mid-December and have received a good response from contractors.
- Dock Car Park Ticket Machines – Now ordered and will take cash, credit, debit cards, and touch-phone payments. The Ringo App is operating well, and a phone line is available for payments. Once the machines are installed, a promotion will be launched on payment methods.

The Open Spaces and Facilities Manager reported that he had been unable to reach the officer responsible for the inclusive play audit; therefore, he would provide an update at the next meeting.

The Director Community, explained that the funding had accumulated in accordance with the CIL governance arrangements agreed by Full Council in February. Those who wish to apply should do so under the scheme set out on the Council's website.

The Director Commercial, clarified that the purpose of the play audit was to determine what facilities were currently provided in the district; no modelling had been conducted. The next stage of the audit would be to develop the Play Strategy. The potential funding from CIL was not intended to fully fund a project; it could be provided in part, as match funding. Additionally, the Strategy is expected to include a toolkit, guidebook, and resources for further assistance.

Members resolved to **NOTE**:

1. The update on Council-owned assets, and
2. The expenditure tracking sheet in Appendix 1

30. Littleport Assets

The Committee considered a report (AA102, as previously circulated) requesting the transfer of assets to Littleport Town Council. The Director Commercial presented the report.

The Director Commercial addressed the following questions from Members:

- When asked who owned these assets before 1974, it was stated that a response would be circulated after the meeting, as the answer was not known at that time.
- While requests from Parish Councils to acquire assets were being answered, there was currently no active pursuit of the Parish Councils for asset acquisition.
- Regarding Witchford Parish Council, the Council had responded, but this process was not straightforward due to maintenance schedules and possible TUPE implications. It had been agreed that the Council would

review its open spaces over the upcoming financial year. Littleport was slightly different because it was a small area of land that was time-sensitive and driven by the potential expansion of a medical practice.

Cllr Miller proposed the recommendations in the report with an amendment at the third bullet point of Section 4.4 of the report, which read,

“The freehold transfer of the car park, Main Street, Littleport, for the value of £1, with a restriction that LTC (Littleport Town Council) will not introduce car parking charges”,

and proposed to insert the words *“the land may not be used for any other purpose.”*

With the full bullet point reading:

“The freehold transfer of the car park, Main Street, Littleport, for the value of £1, with a restriction that the land may not be used for any other purpose and that LTC (Littleport Town Council) will not introduce car parking charges.”

Councillor Miller emphasised that the insertion was introduced in the context of local government reorganisation. He expressed hope that other Members would support him in safeguarding the assets to ensure they were used for their intended purposes rather than disposed of in the future.

Councillor Hunt seconded the recommendations outlined in the report and expressed his agreement with Councillor Miller's concerns. He supported the addition of the revised wording in section 4.4 of the report. Additionally, he emphasised the value of visiting the site, noting that it offered a different perspective when viewed in person.

Members resolved to unanimously **APPROVE**:

1. The recommendations as set out in 4.4 of the report, but with the third bullet point to read, “The freehold transfer of the Car Park, Main Street, Littleport, for the value of £1, with a restriction that **the land may not be used for any other purpose** and that LTC will not introduce car parking charges.
2. Delegate authority to the Director Legal & Monitoring Officer to complete the relevant legal documentation to implement the above.

31. A new East Cambridgeshire District Council Fund to Support Emerging Neighbourhood Plans

The Committee considered a report (AA103 as previously circulated) to consider the terms of a new match funding scheme to support parish councils with the development of neighbourhood plans. The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager presented the report.

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

Members unanimously resolved to **APPROVE**:

- i. The proposed scheme, set out in Appendix 1 to the report, for implementing the new district-wide match fund to support emerging neighbourhood plans.
- ii. Delegate authority to the Director (Operations) to approve the grant allocation to parish councils, where they meet the terms of the scheme as set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

32. Service Delivery Plans 2025/26 – Six Month Performance Update

The Committee considered a report (AA104 as previously circulated) to receive an update on the Service Delivery Plans for 2025/26.

Members were informed that.

- The completion of the Kennett £100k homes is expected by January.
- A report will be provided to Members detailing the number of parking appeals received.
- An update regarding street name and numbering performance will be circulated to Members.
- The use of AI is under consideration; however, a policy is currently being drafted. Once the policy is implemented, further investigation into AI use can proceed.

Members resolved to **NOTE** the update on the Service Delivery Plans for 2025/26.

33. Community Infrastructure Levy Funding Request

The Committee considered a report (AA105, as previously circulated) to consider increasing the amount of CIL funding available to the Streatham and Wilburton Community Land Trust, The Link project. The Director Community presented the report.

During the discussion, Members asked questions regarding the funding. The Director Community clarified that:

- Only one-third of the funding would be provided, and any overspend would need to be covered by other sources.
- There would be no cost to taxpayers since the funds come from CIL monies.
- There had been a previous scheme submitted; this new one included meeting rooms but excluded a large hall.

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

Members resolved to **APPROVE** an increase of up to £190,000 to the amount of CIL funding available to the Streatham and Wilburton Community Land Trust, The Link project.

34. Finance Report

The Committee received a report (AA106, as previously circulated) providing budget monitoring information for services under the Finance & Assets Committee and, as part of its corporate remit, for the Council as a whole. The Director Finance presented the report.

One Member asked why the actuals exceeded the forecasts for housing benefit and other figures. The Director Finance agreed to come back to Members with a response after the meeting.

Members resolved to **NOTE**:

1. This Committee has a projected year-end underspend of £322,000 when compared to its approved revenue budget of £7,969,054.
2. That overall, the Council has a projected year-end underspend of £877,000 when compared to its approved revenue budget of £19,249,383.
3. That the overall position for the Council on Capital is a projected outturn of £15,970,684, which is an overspend of £1,200,000 when compared to the revised budget.

35. Treasury Operations Mid-Year Review 2025/26

The Committee received a report (AA107, as previously circulated) providing an update on the Council's 2025/26 Treasury Management Strategy. The Director Finance presented the report and highlighted an error on page 158, where the figure should read £0.9298million and not £9.298million.

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

It was unanimously resolved to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL**:

1. That the mid-year review of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2025/26, as set out in Appendix 1, be **NOTED**.

36. Forward Plan

The Committee considered its Forward Plan.

It was unanimously resolved to **NOTE** the forward agenda plan and to add two reports:

- Outside Bodies – Waterbeach IDB Appointment Report, and
- Bereavement Centre Update Report.

37. Exclusion of Press and Public

It was resolved unanimously:

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the following item because it was likely, in the 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 I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

38. ECTC Management Accounts

The ECTC Finance Manager presented the ECTC Management Accounts for the six months to 30 September 2025. The ECTC Finance Manager presented the report.

It was resolved to NOTE the management accounts covering the 3 months to 30 September 2025

39. Write-Off of Unrecoverable Debts

The Committee received a report (AA108, as previously circulated) on the write-off of unrecoverable debts. The Director Finance presented the report.

It was unanimously resolved to **APPROVE** that:

- Two Business Rate debts, as detailed in the report, be written off, and
- the third Business Rate debt, be **DEFERRED**.

40. EXEMPT Minutes – 25 September 2025

The Committee received the Exempt Minutes of the Finance & Assets Committee meeting held on 25 September 2025.

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The meeting concluded at 6:50 pm

Chair.....

Date.....