



East Cambridgeshire District Council

NOTICE OF MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Meeting of the **EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held on **TUESDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2026** in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER** at **THE GRANGE, NUTHOLT LANE, ELY, CB7 4EE**, commencing at **6:00 pm** with up to 15 minutes of Public Question Time, immediately followed by the formal business, and you are summoned to attend for the transaction of the following business

AGENDA

- 1. Public Question Time** **[oral]**
The meeting will commence with up to 15 minutes of Public Question Time (PQT). Questions/statements may be submitted in advance or placed in the PQT box in the Council Chamber prior to the commencement of the meeting. See Notes below for further information on the PQT scheme.
- 2. Apologies for Absence** **[oral]**
- 3. Declarations of Interest** **[oral]**
To receive declarations of interest from Members for any items on the Agenda in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct.
- 4. Minutes – 20 November 2025** **Page**
To confirm as a correct record.
- 5. Chair's Announcements** **[oral]**
- 6. To receive Petition(s)**
- 7. Notice of Motions under Procedure Rule 10**

Internal Drainage Boards

East Cambridgeshire District Council, hereinafter referred to as 'the Council', in support of the Fens' c.£3bn agricultural economy and the rural communities of our District, notes that:

- The work of our Internal Drainage Boards (hereinafter 'IDBs') is essential to the Fen-based economy, irrigation and flood prevention in East Cambridgeshire
- The East of England is one of the most water-stressed regions in the United Kingdom (per the Water Resources East Regional Water Resources Plan, 2022)
- Major infrastructure solutions are required to alleviate the projected water shortage, such as the cutting-edge agricultural reservoirs project championed by

the Council (per Eastern Powerhouse, 'A network of local reservoirs' report, July 2025)

- The Council offers a £1,000,000 pot of Community Infrastructure Levy funding for District-Wide Water Management and Flood Prevention
- DEFRA and MHCLG are undertaking an IDB funding and costs research project led by ICF and Logika consultants, the aim of which is to analyse the funding mechanisms and costs of IDBs and determine the economic and social value of their work. ICF intend to contact relevant stakeholders for comment, and a dissemination event is planned after publication
- DEFRA have proposed an additional £16m (now up to £91m in total) to improve farm and rural flood resilience, however, they have also proposed a three-band system of capital funding allocation effective April 2026 (all of which also encourage co-funding from local contributions) (table taken from public report to Middle Fen and Mere IDB dated to 30th September 2025, but information also available publicly via DEFRA website):

Band	Project Type	Typical Grant Range	Indicative Grant Rate (% of eligible costs)
A	Small-scale works (e.g. culvert repairs, pump upgrades)	Less than £250k	Up to 85%
B	Medium-scale infrastructure (e.g. embankment reinforcement, sluice upgrades)	£250k-£2m	60-75%
C	Large-scale or strategic schemes (e.g. new pumping stations, catchment-wide interventions)	More than £2m	40-60%

- It has a representative (Cllr Alan Sharp) on the LGA Special Interest Group on IDB reforms

The Council believes that:

- Whilst the additional £16m provided to improve farm and rural flood resilience is welcome, the banding restricts the ability of IDBs to make the necessary large-scale infrastructure investments for the optimal performance of their functions
- IDBs and Councils should not be forced to rely too heavily on the Special Levy alone, in the long term
- The proposed Fens Reservoir, whilst a welcome step, will not alleviate the need for action to protect the work of our IDBs in the immediate term
- Local action is necessary to protect and champion the work of our IDBs, especially in light of recent challenges to water supply due to below average rainfall

Therefore, the Council resolves to:

- Take account of the estimated 6% increase to the IDB Special Levy paid by the Council
- Instruct its representatives on the IDBs to gather information about how the Council might best support their work, and about their views on the proposed changes and research by DEFRA, and also to relay these to the LGA Special Interest Group via its representative (Cllr Alan Sharp)
- Instruct the Director (Community) and Director (Finance), as they have been doing, to continue to engage with IDBs on the financial impact of future changes to their governance
- Instruct the Director (Community) to write to DEFRA on behalf of the Council, as an interested stakeholder, to request the opportunity to provide input into the work undertaken by ICF on the future of IDBs

- Actively communicate with IDBs regarding the circumstances in which CIL (or other ECDC) funding may be applied for to support infrastructure used by IDBs for the purposes of water management and flood prevention for the benefit of the District's residents and businesses
- Monitor and engage with IDBs and DEFRA as further information about the future of IDBs emerges
- Promote widely its agricultural reservoirs project, especially with the regional Mayor, Paul Bristow, and the Cambridge Growth Company, as well as supporting other efforts to improve sustainable water management (as per its Climate and Nature Strategy to 2028)

Proposer: Cllr Lucius Vellacott – Soham South and Wicken (Conservative)
Seconder: Cllr Alan Sharp – Woodditton (Conservative)

8. To Answer Questions from Members

9. Pay Policy Statement 2026-27 Page 23

10. Schedule of items recommended from Committees and other Member bodies: Page 31

1. Licensing Committee – 10 September 2025 - Appendix A

- a. Licensing Act 2003 – Licensing Authority Statement of Licensing Policy – Five Year Revision **Page 37**

2. Finance & Assets Committee – 27 November 2025 - Appendix B

- a. Treasury Operations Mid-Year Review 2025/26 **Page 83**

3. Finance and Assets Committee – 29 January 2026 - Appendices C&D

- a. 2026/27 Annual Treasury Management Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision Policy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy **Page 101**
- b. Bereavement Centre Project – CIL Funding **Page 141**

11. The Making of the Witcham Neighbourhood Plan Page 145

12. Council Tax, Revenue and Capital Budgets Page 151

13. LGR Statutory Consultation Page 193

14. CIL Governance Arrangements Page 197

15. Constitutional Update – Further Amendments Page 205

16. Combined Authority Update Report Page 207



E GRIMA
Chief Executive

To: All Members of the Council

NOTES:

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting. Admittance is on a "first-come, first-served" basis, and public access will be from 30 minutes before the start time of the meeting. Due to room capacity restrictions, members of the public are asked, where possible, to notify Democratic Services (democratic.services@eastcambs.gov.uk or 01353 665555) of their intention to attend a meeting.

The meeting will be webcast, and a live stream will be available. Further details can be found at [Council - East Cambridgeshire District Council](#). Please be aware that all attendees, including those in the public gallery, will be visible on the livestream.

Public Questions/Statements are welcomed on any topic related to the Council's functions as long as there is no suspicion that it is improper (e.g. offensive, slanderous or might lead to disclosures of Exempt or Confidential information). Up to 15 minutes is allocated for this at the start of the meeting. Further details about the Public Question Time scheme are available at: <https://eastcambs.gov.uk/about-council/meetings-agendas-and-minutes/public-participation-meetings/public-question-time>

The Council has adopted a 'Purge on Plastics' strategy and is working towards the removal of all consumer single-use plastics in our workplace. Therefore, we do not provide disposable cups at our meetings and ask members of the public to bring their own drink if required.

Fire instructions for the meeting: In the event of a fire at the venue, instructions will be announced at the start of the meeting.

Reports are attached for each agenda item unless marked "oral".

If required, all items on the agenda can be provided in different formats (e.g. large type, Braille or audio tape, or translated into other languages), on request, by calling Main Reception on (01353) 665555 or e-mail: translate@eastcambs.gov.uk

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)."