



East Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a Meeting of East Cambridgeshire District Council
held at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, CB7 4EE
on Thursday 20 November 2025 at 6.00 pm

Present

Councillor Chika Akinwale	Councillor Julia Huffer
Councillor Christine Ambrose Smith	Councillor Bill Hunt
Councillor Anna Bailey	Councillor Mark Inskip
Councillor Ian Bovingdon	Councillor James Lay
Councillor David Brown	Councillor David Miller
Councillor Charlotte Cane	Councillor Kelli Pettitt (Chair)
Councillor Christine Colbert	Councillor Alan Sharp
Councillor Lee Denney	Councillor John Trapp
Councillor Lorna Dupré	Councillor Ross Trent
Councillor Lavinia Edwards	Councillor Lucius Vellacott
Councillor Mark Goldsack	Councillor Alison Whelan
Councillor Kathrin Holtzmann	Councillor Christine Whelan
Councillor Keith Horgan (Vice Chair)	

16. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

17. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Martin Goodearl, Cllr Mary Wade and Cllr Gareth Wilson.

18. Declarations of Interest

The Director Legal explained that a dispensation had been granted to all Members who also served as County Councillors that allowed them to participate in the debate and vote on agenda item 10, Local Government Reorganisation Final Report.

19. Minutes – 18 September 2025

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 18 September 2025 be agreed as a correct record.

20. Chair's Announcements

The Chair asked Members to complete their data protection training, if they had not already done so.

On behalf of the Council and the Community it served, the Chair extended her heartfelt thanks to John Hill, as he retired after 25 years as the Council's Chief Executive. The Chair paid testament to John Hill's dedication and the depth of trust and respect he had earned over so many years' service. He had steered the Council through many challenges with calmness, courage and clarity and always with the best interests of the residents at heart. He had carried out his work without fuss or expectation of praise, which had strengthened the foundations of the community in ways that would be felt for many years to come. He had been steady, principled and deeply committed. The Chair concluded that it had been a privilege to serve alongside him.

The Chair invited other Councillors to pay tribute to the outgoing Chief Executive.

Cllr Anna Bailey stated that this was a poignant day, as it was the Chief Executive's last Council meeting and it was also the meeting where the authority had to vote on its own abolition. She stated that John Hill had first joined the Council as Assistant Chief Executive in 1995 before becoming Chief Executive in 2000. He had also been seconded to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority as Joint Chief Executive from 2018 to 2021. He had guided the Council through a global pandemic, had set up two hugely successful trading companies and led the Council into a very secure financial position during challenging economic times. He had run a number of elections and held the positions of Police Area Returning Officer and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Returning Officer. He had carried out these duties with great tact and diplomacy.

Cllr Bailey explained that Leaders and Chief Executives had a special working relationship and former Leaders had been in touch to pay tribute to John Hill. Brian Ashton wished him a very long and happy retirement. Peter Moakes appreciated his straightforward approach, stating that "John said what he meant and meant what he said."

Cllr Bailey stated that James Palmer, who was in attendance, had paid tribute by saying that the role of a Chief Executive in a local authority was a very difficult tightrope to tread. Being all things to all people was notoriously difficult and doing so while gaining respect, particularly of partisan individuals, was a notable skill. James Palmer had formed a strong working relationship with John

Hill when he became Leader in 2013. They had restructured the Council, taking the tough decision to reduce the number of councillors and senior officers. The savings made had transformed the authority and built-up mutual trust between them and Charles Roberts, who was Leader from 2017-2019. Their other notable achievements included convincing the County Council to build the Ely southern bypass, working with developers to open Ely leisure village and build the Hive Leisure Centre. They had expanded the markets from a single to multiple days a week. They had all worked together at the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, where they had delivered Peterborough University and Soham Railway Station. James Palmer concluded by thanking John for everything he learned from him, including his detailed knowledge of French wines. He wished him a long, happy and well-deserved retirement.

Cllr Baliey stated that Charles Roberts remembered their great working relationship, whilst serving as District Councillor, Leader, Deputy Mayor and Strategic Adviser to the Combined Authority. They had a great working relationship and had never once raised their voices. He thanked John for advising him through ever more challenging roles. He praised him for being wise, insightful, tenacious and a man of integrity. He missed working with him and wished him all the best for the future.

Cllr Bailey thanked John Hill on behalf of the Council, the Trading Companies and the people of East Cambridgeshire for his very long service. She praised him for his excellence in running the elections, for his innovation, his mentoring of staff and Members, his calmness in a crisis and his belief in public service. She thanked him for his own advice to her on so many different subjects, via informative diagrams and drawings. She wished him and his wife a long and happy retirement in Yorkshire.

Cllr Charlotte Cane pointed out that both she and John Hill were from Birmingham. She remembered his work in both untangling the contractual arrangements regarding Jubilee Gardens and the setting up of the farmers' market, both to the benefit of residents. She thanked him for his work in running the elections, which regardless of the results, she always knew had been run fairly. He had enjoyed a long and illustrious career and she wished him a long and happy retirement.

Cllr Lucius Vellacott remembered John Hill giving him his induction, by expertly explaining decades of the working culture at the Council, including the work of officers and councillors, by using a Venn diagram. He stated that John Hill commanded respect and had inspired him into wanting to dedicate his life to public service. He concluded by saying that John had served the residents of the district well and his many years of service left behind a legacy that people would continue to benefit from for many years to come.

Cllr Lorna Dupré thanked John Hill for his 25 years of service as the Council's Chief Executive, which was half of the authority's lifetime. They had shared reminiscences of her home island of Jersey and she would miss their many conversations about this and many other topics. She wished him a long and productive retirement.

Cllr Mark Goldsack thanked John Hill for the advice he had provided him during his two years' tenure as Chair of the Council and wished him all the best for the future.

Cllr Alan Sharp also thanked John Hill for his guidance when he was Chair of the Council. He would miss their conversations regarding their football teams from the Birmingham area and he wished him a happy retirement.

21. Petitions

No petitions had been received.

22. Notice of Motions Under Procedure Rule 10

(i) Tackling Long-Term Empty Homes

Cllr Mark Inskip proposed and Cllr Keith Horgan seconded the following motion.

Council notes:

- Long-Term Empty Homes, as defined by the government in the Local Government Finance Act 1992¹ (as amended), are a national problem that need a local solution.
- The number of long-term empty homes (empty for 6+ months) in the district: 528 (Sept 2022), 546 (Sept 2023), 531 (Sept 2024), 473 (Sept 2025)—a recent improvement, but still a significant wasted housing resource.
- The council's most recent Empty Homes Strategy was adopted in 2006 and despite being linked on the council's website is believed to be no longer live.
- The council's Private Sector Housing Renewal Strategy dates from 2022 and is based on other policies which expired in 2017 and 2021.
- The fiscal levers available to councils to deal with the problem of long-term empty homes include, but are not limited to, compulsory purchase orders, Long-Term Empty Property premiums and Empty Dwelling Management Orders.

Council believes:

- That bringing empty homes back into use can play a key part in local strategies to meet housing need. Not only are empty homes a wasted resource, but they are often the subject of complaints and frustration for communities, as well as being a catalyst for crime and degradation².
- That effective action on bringing empty homes back into use is among the fastest and best-value ways to increase supply, cut blight, and improve access to housing in East Cambridgeshire.

- A modernised strategy should combine support incentives with proportionate and compassionate enforcement, learning from councils that have delivered results.

Council resolves to:

1. Direct Officers to develop a new Empty Homes Strategy by July 2026, replacing the 2006 and 2022 documents, with clear targets, resourcing, and an annual public report and present this to Operational Services committee for review and onward recommendation to full Council. This strategy to include:
 - a) ambitious and realistic district targets to reduce long-term empty homes and return them to use
 - b) the list of the full range of fiscal levers, including council tax premium rates, published local exemptions and deferrals for active renovation.
2. As part of a new Empty Homes Strategy, develop a business case and options for the resources required to implement the strategy, including investigation into:
 - a) a revolving Empty Homes Loan Fund³ to finance works to bring empty homes back to habitable standard.
 - b) an expanded enforcement capacity (including training and legal support) to deploy Empty Dwelling Management Orders and targeted Compulsory Purchase Orders for persistently problematic properties⁴.
 - c) an Empty Homes Partnership with local housing associations, community-led housing groups and social enterprises to support owners to bring properties up to standard and explore external funds to underwrite conversions.
 - d) the associated cost and Return on Investment justification of an Empty Homes Officer function along with a review of case management systems.
 - e) the resourcing, associated costs and justification of a public “Report an Empty” portal and matchmaker service for buyers and renovators, and publish a quarterly dashboard, in line with LGA best practice.
3. Following the adoption of a new Empty Homes Strategy, run an annual communications campaign during Empty Homes Week to showcase success stories and promote offers and enforcement.

Notes:

1. Long-term empty homes are defined as dwellings that have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a period of one year or more. This definition is used for the purpose of council tax, where councils can charge a premium on such properties to

encourage their reoccupation.

2. As advised by the November 2023 publication of the Local Government Association entitled, "A practical approach for councils on dealing with empty homes" found here: <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/practical-approach-councils-dealing-empty-homes>
3. An example of an Empty Homes Loan Fund, learning from Councils that signpost to partners that specialise in this is Lendology.com (see <https://www.lendology.org.uk/loans/empty-property-loans/?nocache=1751535828>)
4. Currently, as Anglia Revenues Partnership are employed to manage the collection of our Council Tax, as well as provide the data on empty homes, it will be advisable to consult with them as to how this strategy interfaces with their responsibilities. It may also be possible they could assist with enforcement actions as they currently operate a service to recover unpaid Council Tax above certain thresholds.

Cllr Mark Inskip explained that originally Cllr Christine Colbert was going to second this motion but Cllr Keith Horgan had approached him with some suggested amendments. Cllr Inskip had welcomed Cllr Horgan's input, had accepted his amendments and he now hoped that that Council would agree this motion that had cross-party support. He reported that the Council had 473 long term empty homes and the Council's Empty Homes Strategy had been agreed in 2006 and so needed updating. He recommended that the authority learned from other Councils, such as Leeds City Council, Cornwall Council, South Norfolk Council and Durham County Council, all of whom had innovative empty homes strategies. He concluded that the Council needed a new Empty Homes Strategy as letting out empty homes would bring more revenue to the Council, meet local housing needs and support local tradesmen whose work could improve empty homes to a habitable standard.

Cllr Christine Colbert stated that the tools were available to make empty homes occupiable. Residents in her ward were distressed by the sight of uninhabited homes falling into disrepair, being vandalised and attracting rats. She was pleased to support this motion.

Cllr Bill Hunt stated that this was a very good idea that would save homes from becoming derelict and provide much needed housing. He commended the motion and the cross-party support for it. Cllr Mark Goldsack also praised the motion and welcomed the cross party working that had generated it.

Cllr Keith Horgan thanked both Cllr Mark Inskip for agreeing to work with him in drawing up the wording for this motion and for Cllr Christine Colbert in agreeing to step aside and allow him to second the motion. He stated that empty homes was a national problem that needed local solutions. There were many reasons why a home remained empty and the Council should be doing all it could to rectify this problem and provide homeless people with a place to live. The Council's Empty Homes Strategy needed to be updated to address this issue. He commended the motion to Council.

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, Cllr Mark Inskip explained that a revolving empty homes loan had been launched in Cornwall and was a payment made to a homeowner to renovate their home. They then paid back the loan and this

money was then loaned out again to the next homeowner. Cllr Inskip thanked councillors for their support for this motion.

A vote was taken and the above Motion was unanimously carried.

23. To Answer Questions From Members

No questions were received from members.

24. Schedule of Items Recommended from Committees and Other Member Bodies

Council considered a report (AA92, previously circulated) containing details of recommendations to Council from both the Finance and Assets Committee on 25 September 2025 and the Audit Committee on 21 October 2025.

Council considered the recommendation from the Finance and Assets Committee to review the Council's Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS). Cllr Sharp recommended that the Council retained the current scheme where everyone made a contribution. He explained that there was support for those on low incomes. Cllr Cane stated that the decision made by the Finance and Assets Committee had been agreed on the deciding vote of the Chair because half of the Committee believed, as she did, that the poorest in the district should not have to pay any Council Tax.

Cllr Alan Sharp proposed and Cllr Ian Bovingdon seconded the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken and with 13 votes in favour and 12 against, Council agreed

to resolve:

- a) that the annual review of the LCTRS be approved and that the Scheme for 2026/27 remain unchanged.

Council considered the recommendation from the Audit Committee to adopt the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy. Cllr David Brown stated that the Audit Committee had unanimously agreed to recommend this Strategy to Council. Cllr Lucius Vellacott thanked officers for their work on the Strategy and stated that the Council's auditors wanted the authority to adopt it.

Cllr David Brown proposed and Cllr Lucius Vellacott seconded the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken and Council unanimously agreed

to resolve:

- b) to adopt the updated Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy.

25. Local Government Reorganisation Proposals

Council considered a report (AA93, previously circulated) which considered the final proposals for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The Director Operations explained that the seven councils in Cambridgeshire had worked together to produce five different options. Councils could only support one proposal. This authority was working with Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council in supporting option B. Cambridgeshire County Council had supported option A, Fenland District Council and Peterborough City Council had both supported option D, whilst Huntingdonshire District Council had recommended that their Cabinet support option E. No Council appeared to be supporting option C and so as things stood, this option would not be submitted to Government.

Cllr Anna Bailey proposed that the recommendation in the report be amended to ensure that the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat & Independent Group be consulted over the draft business case and joint covering letter for submission of the Council's preferred proposal to Government. Cllr Julia Huffer agreed with this amendment, which was accepted without debate.

Cllr Anna Bailey thanked officers for their work supporting dozens of meetings on this issue. She also thanked the Leaders of the other six authorities for working together on this matter and in particular, she wished to thank the political leaderships of both Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council who had worked across political boundaries and geographical areas to support option B. She explained that she would prefer to either keep the current structure or for the Council to form a unitary authority on its own, but neither of these scenarios were realistic. All the options had strengths and weaknesses and both option A and option B met the Government's criteria, whilst in her view, options D and E did not. She stated that option A was only supported by one authority. The County Council had not shared its business case for option A, which would see the district dominated by the city of Cambridge and lead to more development in the area, as 150,000 new homes had been pledged in addition to their Local Plan. In contrast, the business case for option B had been written by the authorities themselves, whilst all the others had been written by consultants. She argued that option B would realise more savings than option A, lead to lower debt, more money under the Government's Fair Funding Review and lower Council Tax for the district's residents. She therefore supported option B.

Cllr Lorna Dupré proposed that the recommendation be amended to support option A instead of option B. Cllr Mark Inskip seconded this amendment.

Cllr Lorna Dupré stated that the majority of East Cambridgeshire residents supported option A, as did the district's parish councils, along with City of Ely Council, Citizens Advice, Cambridgeshire Acre and Anglia Ruskin University. The NHS and the integrated care boards also aligned with option A. She asserted that option A would establish two councils of similar size and population, both resilient enough to withstand financial shocks, thus meeting

the Government's criteria. Local residents went to Cambridge for their services such as education, leisure and transport. Option A would allow them to help shape decisions made on these services. The alternative, Option B, would mean joining with areas that the district's residents had no ties to. She concluded that it was likely that the new authority would be in existence for at least 50 years and it was important to make the right decision and this was option A.

Cllr James Lay stated that in his ward of Woodditton all seven parish councils supported option A, as they were a long distance from Peterborough where option B would establish the new authority's headquarters. He urged councillors not to ignore the views of these parish councils and support option A.

Cllr Lucius Vellacott stated that the County Council had agreed to support option A without seeing the business case and their survey was unfairly slanted against option B. He opposed option A, which would see a greater increase in Council Tax for residents than option B. Due to the cheapness of the land in the district, compared to that of the Greater Cambridge area, it was inevitable that many of the new homes proposed for the Greater Cambridge area would be built in East Cambridgeshire if option A was agreed. He asserted that the Greater Cambridge authority proposed in option B would be large enough to form a sustainable local authority. He reported that the health minister had stated that the health boundaries would change alongside the local authority boundaries. He recognised that some areas would be some distance from Peterborough but whatever boundaries were agreed, some areas on the edge of the county would be some distance from the principal city. He asserted that it was not in the district's interests to be dominated by Cambridge and option B was the best choice for the district's rural economy.

Cllr Bill Hunt stated that the district's residents would still be able to visit Addenbrookes, go to sixth form college and do their shopping in Cambridge if option B was agreed. He supported option B because he opposed increases in Council Tax, a congestion charge and supported free parking.

Cllr John Trapp explained that under option A the two authorities would be of similar size, whilst under option B the district would have less influence in a larger unitary council. It was clear that almost all of East Cambridgeshire's workers commuted within the area of the authority proposed under option A. The East West Rail and the investment in the Oxford-Cambridge Arc would benefit the district and the Greater Cambridge area, which the district would be part of under option A. He concluded that an authority made up of East Cambridgeshire and the Greater Cambridge area would be a balanced mix of rural and urban areas.

Cllr Charlotte Cane asserted that the district's residents felt connected to Cambridge and wanted to be able to shape the decisions that affected this area, which they would be able to do in the authority proposed in option A, whilst in option B they would be in a larger authority with Peterborough, where they would have no influence on the Cambridge area. In the Bottisham ward, all the

parish councils supported option A and she hoped that all councillors would respect the views of their parish councils.

Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann stated that Cambridge was an internationally recognised economic powerhouse, which had great influence on the district. East Cambridgeshire's road infrastructure and water supply was dependent on Cambridge. She supported option A, as it gave the residents the best opportunity to influence their future.

Cllr Alan Sharp explained that the Council could not satisfy the views of all the parishes on the district's boundaries, for example, those closest to Newmarket would probably prefer to be part of Suffolk. He stated that it was clear that the leaderships of Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council had a close working relationship and if the district joined with those two, as proposed under option A, we would be sidelined and ignored. He explained that the County Council supported option A, but the business plan had not been made public and he had not been invited to participate in the meeting organised by county councillors with his parish councils. He asserted that opinion from parish councillors was divided on this issue and when representatives from the County Council had actively championed option A, they had assured parish councils that it should be supported just so it could be considered by Government. He concluded that he opposed the whole project, which the Government were doing to save money and had nothing to do with devolution.

Cllr Mark Goldsack explained that he also totally opposed the Local Government Reorganisation project and lamented that an opportunity to alter the county boundaries around Newmarket was being missed. He questioned how members with prepared scripts could be coming to the debate with an open mind. He said he had listened to the debate and he could see merits in both options but had decided to support option B as this would provide the most benefit and the least harm to the district's residents.

Cllr Mark Inskip reminded Council that the structure of local government in Cambridgeshire had not changed in 50 years and it was important to make the right decision. Whilst he could see the benefits of unitary authorities, he did not support the manner or the timescale in which the Government was forcing through its plans. Nevertheless, he recognised that the Council needed to decide which option was the best one for its residents. Under option B those residents could be as far as 60 miles from where the Council was likely to meet in Peterborough. In option A, Ely would be the second largest settlement, with the rest of the area being rural, whilst in option B, Peterborough, Wisbech and March were all larger than Ely and the area was less rural. When consulted, residents had clearly identified far more strongly with Cambridge, than with Peterborough, which was fundamentally different in character. Residents looked to Cambridge for attending 6th form and other tertiary education but if option B was agreed, councillors from this district would not be able to influence local educational policy. He urged councillors to vote for option A.

Cllr Anna Bailey stated that none of the district's parish councils had seen the business case for option A, which she expected would show a large amount of development being allocated for East Cambridgeshire. The councils under option A were not of equal strength or resilience and she explained that the business case for option B showed that by 2040 the southern council would be 50% larger economically than the northern one, leaving a higher level of deprivation in the north. She stated that under option A it would take 6 years to payback the costs of reorganisation but under option B it would be only 4 years, which was a significant difference in local governance where budgets were under severe pressure. She explained that it was unwise to try and make local government boundaries match those of health authorities, as these were likely to change. She asserted that there was a great demand for houses from the Greater Cambridge area and if option A was agreed it was inevitable that East Cambridgeshire would be subject to additional development.

A vote was taken and with 12 votes in favour, 13 votes against and no abstentions the amendment was Lost.

Cllr Lorna Dupré stated that all Members could agree that the Local Government Reorganisation was a bad process, but she hoped that the Council would not support a bad option. She suggested that the Council's survey to residents had been misleading and even then, option B had only received marginal support. She expressed disappointment in the fact that no other local council appeared to want to join us, with the exception of Fenland. She asserted that the arguments in favour of option B were flawed, with speculation regarding the Government's Fair Funding review and making premature assumptions on how Council Tax rates would be set. She expressed concern regarding the eligibility of local students for home to school transport under the proposals for option B. She stated that under option B the district would find itself in the largest council in the country in terms of councillor numbers and some of the district's councillors would have to make a 120-mile trip to attend meetings in Peterborough. She concluded that option B would be a bad choice for the district.

Cllr Lucius Vellacott recognised that this was an emotive subject. The different options had been evaluated by the administration and in the end option B had been recognised as the best choice for the district and this had cross-party support in the county. In reply to Cllr Dupré, he stated that there would be satellite offices and there was no guarantee that the Council would be based in Peterborough if option B was agreed. This choice would also avoid the district being dominated by Cambridge, who would inevitably take decisions that were not in the district's best interests. He concluded that he would be supporting option B as he was convinced that it was the best option for delivering what the residents that he represented wanted.

Cllr Keith Horgan stated that the Government were forcing the Council to make a decision with insufficient time to evaluate all the evidence. It was clear to him that neither Cambridge City Council nor South Cambridgeshire District Council wanted to join with this authority. He concluded option B was the best

choice as it would ensure the lowest Council Tax for residents and had the shortest pay-back time.

Cllr John Trapp expressed concern that under option B the new authority would have about 125 councillors, which was too large and would only have about 20 representatives from this district. Peterborough City Council and Huntingdonshire District Council had made it clear that they did not want to join with this authority. He also expressed concern about the level of debt the new authority under option B would incur. He concluded that he could not support option B, which the parish councils did not want.

Cllr Charlotte Cane stated that East Cambridgeshire was an area of important business innovations, which was due to its proximity to Cambridge. The district was not just dependent on farming. She could not support option B, which would partner the authority with Peterborough instead of Cambridge.

Cllr Alan Sharp stated the Government's Local Government Reorganisation process was only attempting to save money and had no interest in improving local representation. The Council had to decide what was the least bad option and in the end the Government would make the final decision. The location of the headquarters of the new authorities had not been decided and he would not speculate on this. He supported option B, which he felt would protect East Cambridgeshire farmland from development.

Cllr Julia Huffer explained that residents would still be able to visit Cambridge for their work, leisure, health and education if option B was agreed. This option would also protect the district from the 227,000 extra homes pledged to be built in Greater Cambridge. She reported that under option B, local offices would remain in the district, the tax burden would be lower and the district's rural communities would be combined with other similar areas.

Cllr Anna Bailey stated that the surveys carried out by different authorities had a low number of returns compared to the area's overall population and so were not statistically valid. She explained that the financial data being used to support option B was not speculation but was from independent analysis that was given to all Cambridgeshire authorities to base their decisions on. However, Members could only speculate on the location of the new councils' headquarters, as this would be a decision for those new authorities to make. She concluded that she wanted an East Cambridgeshire unitary but this was not feasible. Instead, she supported option B, which would create two economically balanced authorities and ensure that the district's residents would be represented by an authority capable of delivering high quality, affordable services. She urged Members to support option B and send a clear message to the Government.

Cllr Anna Bailey proposed and Cllr Julia Huffer seconded the recommendation, as amended. A vote was taken and with 13 votes in favour, 12 votes against and no abstentions, Council agreed

to resolve:

- a) To note the report and the proposals for Options A-E for Local Government Reorganisation.
- b) To endorse Option B for submission to Government by 28 November 2025.
- c) To delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrat & Independent Group, to finalise the draft business case and a joint covering letter for submission of the Council's preferred proposal to Government.

26. Constitution Update – Further Amendments

Council considered a report (AA94, previously circulated) to review proposed amendments to the Constitution.

The Chair proposed and the Vice Chair seconded the recommendation in the report.

A vote was taken and it was unanimously agreed

to resolve:

to approve the proposed amendments to Constitutional Procedural Rule 12.5, as detailed in paragraph 3.2 of the report.

27. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority – Update reports

Council received the reports (previously circulated) from the Combined Authority's meetings in September 2025 and October 2025.

It was resolved:

that the reports on the activities of the Combined Authority from the Council's representatives be noted.

28. Appointment of Chief Executive

Council considered a report (AA95, previously circulated) to appoint the Council's Chief Executive.

Cllr Lorna Dupré explained that she wished Emma Grima success in the post but due to concerns that she had in the appointment process, expressed at the previous Council meeting, she would be abstaining.

Cllr Anna Bailey proposed and the Chair seconded the recommendation in the report.

A vote was taken and with 13 votes in favour, none against and 12 abstentions

It was resolved:

To endorse the appointment of Emma Grima as the Council's Chief Executive.

29. Appointment of Board Director for East Cambs Street Scene and East Cambs Trading Company.

Council considered a report (AA96, previously circulated) to appoint a Board Director for East Cambs Street Scene (ECSS) and East Cambs Trading Company (ECTC).

Cllr Lorna Dupré stated that she considered it a conflict of interest to appoint the Council's Chief Executive as the Director for East Cambs Street Scene and East Cambs Trading Company and so she could not support this appointment. She requested a recorded vote.

Cllr Anna Bailey explained that it was a procedural requirement to appoint the Chief Executive to these positions and Cllr Lucius Vellacott reported that this was part of the shareholder agreement, there was no conflict of interest and to refuse to make the appointment would create grave uncertainties to both trading companies.

Cllr Anna Bailey proposed and Cllr Julia Huffer seconded the recommendation in the report.

A recorded vote was taken and these were cast as follows:

For (13): Cllrs Christine Ambrose Smith, Anna Bailey, Ian Bovingdon, David Brown, Lavinia Edwards, Mark Goldsack, Keith Horgan, Julia Huffer, Bill Hunt, David Miller, Kelli Pettitt, Alan Sharp and Lucius Vellacott.

Against (12): Cllrs Chika Akinwale, Charlotte Cane, Christine Colbert, Lee Denney, Lorna Dupré, Kathrin Holtzmann, Mark Inskip, James Lay, John Trapp, Ross Trent, Alison Whelan and Christine Whelan.

Abstain (0)

It was therefore resolved:

to appoint the Council's Chief Executive as Board Director for ECSS and ECTC from 1 January 2026.

The meeting concluded at 8:10 pm

Chair.....

Date.....

DRAFT

