



# 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 23 March 2026

### **Present**

Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith  
Cllr David Brown  
Cllr Christine Colbert  
Cllr Lorna Dupré (substitute)  
Cllr Martin Goodearl  
Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann  
Cllr Julia Huffer (Chair)  
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 – Senior Finance Manager  
Lewis Bage – Communities and Partnerships Manager  
Nick Baker – Waste and Environmental Services Manager  
Emma Graves – Neighbourhood and Community Safety Officer  
Martin Grey – Leisure and Active Lifestyles Manager  
Emma Grima – Chief Executive and ECSS Managing Director  
Philippa Nowikow – Project Coordinator (Health and Wellbeing)  
Ashleigh O'Connor – Planning Service Development and Technical Support  
Marisa Rogers-Jones – Crematorium and Bereavement Service Manager  
Helen Sarkies – Customer Services Manager  
Anne Wareham – Senior Accountant

### **58. Public Question Time**

No public questions were submitted.

### **59. Apologies and Substitutions**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mark Inskip. Cllr Lorna Dupré attended as a substitute for Cllr Inskip.

## **60. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Alan Sharp declared a personal interest in agenda item 10, Service Delivery Plans and End of Year Reports, as the Chair of Board of Governors at Bottisham Village College.

## **61. Minutes**

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 January 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

## **62. Chair's Announcements**

The Chair reminded the Committee that questions directed to officers should be for clarification. Other points should be confined to the debate.

## **63. Community Safety Partnership 6 Monthly Report**

This item was discussed after agenda item 15, Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire SLA Performance Monitoring Update.

Emma Graves, Neighbourhood and Community Safety Team Leader, introduced this report, AA155 previously circulated, which updated the Committee on the work of the East Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership over the last six months. It was understood that as Lis Every, the Chair of the East Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership, was not present, Committee members could expect answers to their questions in writing.

Cllr Martin Goodearl asked what was meant by "identifying vulnerabilities" and what the "improved access and positive outcomes" were in Littleport. It was understood that these questions would be forwarded to the Chair of the East Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership and this report would be carried forward to the next meeting of the Committee.

It was resolved to:

Note the report from the Chair of the East Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership.

## **64. Budget Monitoring Report**

Anne Wareham, Senior Accountant, presented this report, AA156 previously circulated, which updated the Committee on the financial position for services under the Operational Services Committee.

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, the Senior Accountant agreed to provide a written answer to explain why a large amount of the 2025/26 budget for Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants had not been spent.

It was resolved to:

- (i) Note that the Committee was currently projecting a year-end underspend of £229,000 on its revenue budget of £6,842,567.
- (ii) Note that the Committee has a projected capital programme outturn of £14,987,148. This was also in line with the revised budget.

#### **65. ECSS Business Plan 2026/27**

Emma Grima, ECSS Managing Director, presented this report, which invited the Committee to approve the annual ECSS Business Plan 2026/27.

The Senior Finance Manager explained that more money has been invested in new vehicles, which would reduce vehicle maintenance costs. The provision of wheeled bins meant less expenditure on black bin bags.

In reply to Cllr Martin Goodearl, the Senior Finance Manager stated that HVO fuel had increased by 20p per litre. This would be monitored as it would mean an extra cost for the Council.

In reply to Cllr Lorna Dupré, the ECSS Managing Director confirmed that ECSS was a Teckal company and she explained that the picture on page 28 was purely illustrative and was not meant to be a Venn diagram. Later in the meeting it was stated that increasing the number of staff from 65 to 80 members had increased costs by £616,841. It was understood that this meant less expenditure on temporary staff. It was expected that the budget would break even for 2025/26.

Cllr Julia Huffer proposed and Cllr Lucius Vellacott seconded the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and it was unanimously

resolved to

Approve the ECSS Business Plan 2026/27 as set out in Appendix 1.

#### **66. New Waste Collection Service – Project Update**

Nick Baker, Waste and Environmental Services Manager, presented a report, AA158 previously circulated, which updated the Committee on progress towards implementing the necessary changes to the Council's waste and recycling collection service, as approved by Full Council. The delivery of the new food waste collection vehicles had been delayed and so loan vehicles would be provided by the manufacturer, at no extra cost, until the new vehicles arrived. In addition, the Council

was working with a number of hire companies and another authority to hire temporary vehicles as a contingency against any further delays. It was noted that the new collection service was still scheduled to commence on 1 June 2026.

In reply to Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager explained that a carbon impact assessment for the possible late delivery of newer, more efficient vehicles was unnecessary, as this was only a contingency plan and even if it was enacted, it would only be over a short period of time.

In reply to Cllr Martin Goodearl's question about keeping residents updated, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager replied that the dates for delivering the bins to residents had not changed. An information pack would be taped to the top of every wheeled bin.

In reply to Cllr Lucius Vellacott, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager reported that a communications strategy was in place and contingency communications had already been considered, in the unlikely event that residents needed to be informed of a delay in the delivery of the new collection service.

In reply to Cllr Christine Whelan, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager explained that, during the initial weeks of the new service, a dedicated collection crew for each waste commodity would be available every day to carry out missed bin collections. These would be carried out a day after the bins should have been collected and so bins missed on Friday would be collected on Saturday.

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager stated that community collections of waste in black bags would continue, and he asked Cllr Trapp to report any specific collection service that he was concerned about, outside the meeting, as these collections were being reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

It was resolved to:

Note the progress made on this project to date and that the project remains on budget and on track to deliver the required changes in the Council's waste collection and recycling service.

## **67. Service Delivery Plans and End of Year Reports**

Emma Grima, Chief Executive, presented a report, AA159 previously circulated, which invited the Committee to consider the Service Delivery Plans for 2026/27 and end of year reports 2025/26 for services reporting to the Operational Services Committee.

### **New Bereavement Services**

In reply to Cllr Martin Goodearl, the Crematorium and Bereavement Service Manager explained that staff at the Bereavement Centre will be able to multi-task and therefore cover staff leave or sickness. Most of the gardening work would be carried out by the Council's Open Spaces team.

### **Community and Partnerships**

In reply to Cllr Alan Sharp, the Communities and Partnerships Manager reported that detached youth engagement was being carried out throughout the district and any feedback received was passed on to the relevant organisation for them to consider. The Council had developed and shared a Youth Event Toolkit with local groups and the authority can help organisations use the Toolkit to deliver their own youth events.

### **Customer Services**

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, the Customer Services Manager explained that customer satisfaction rates were improving.

### **Environmental Health Service**

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager explained that Sanctuary had agreed to fund 40% of the cost of disabled adaptations in their homes but there had been a delay in the receipt of purchase orders. These had now been received for most of the current financial year, and the Council was working with Sanctuary regarding payments for the remainder of that year.

### **Strategic Planning and Development Management Service**

In reply to Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann, the Planning Service Development and Technical Support explained that following the withdrawal of the tree strategy, the policy team were considering the next steps, which would be shared with the Committee.

In reply to Cllr Christine Colbert, the Planning Service Development and Technical Support explained that the target for determining major applications had not been met due to delays in the drafting of the Section 106 agreements, the Committee requesting more information and a delay in receiving information from a consultee. The target of ensuring that all applications were determined within 26 weeks, unless an extension had been agreed, would not be met. In most cases, this was due to applications going back to the Planning Committee after permission had been granted, in order to satisfy planning conditions imposed by the Council; in other cases, it was due to appeals for non-determination. The Planning Service Development and Technical Support was prepared to give more details on any specific case.

In reply to Cllr Christine Whelan, the Planning Service Development and Technical Support explained that the temporary staff were currently employed in the planning team. However, eight interviews would be held in April for permanent planning positions. During staff turnover, every effort was made to ensure the transition was as smooth as possible. Customer Services were able to view the internal planning system to ensure that queries were addressed to the correct case officer.

Cllr Julia Huffer proposed and Cllr Lucius Vellacott seconded the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and the Committee unanimously

resolved to:

Approve the Service Delivery Plans (SDP) and note end of year (EOY) reports in Appendix 1, for the following services:

- a) New Bereavement Services (SPD only)
- b) Building Control
- c) Communities & Partnerships
- d) Communications
- e) Customer Services
- f) New – Digital & Information Service
- g) New – Environmental Health Services (SDP only)
- h) Housing and Community Advice
- i) Leisure and Active Lifestyles
- j) Licensing
- k) Strategic Planning and Development Management
- l) Waste and Environmental Services (EOY only)
- m) New – Waste Management SDP

#### **68. Housing Enforcement and Financial Civil Penalties Policies 2026**

Nick Baker, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager, presented a report, AA160 previously circulated, which updated the Committee on the Housing Enforcement and Civil Penalties policy in light of the introduction of the Renters' Right Act 2025.

In reply to Cllr David Brown, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager stated that he would update the Committee on whether and how registered social landlords would be affected by the Act.

In reply to Cllr John Trapp, the Waste and Environmental Services Manager stated that he would update the Committee on two points; firstly, the issues of penalties where joint landlords had committed the same offence at the same property and secondly on why the Council might commence formal enforcement, without first taking informal action.

Cllr Alan Sharp proposed and Cllr Martin Goodearl seconded the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and the Committee unanimously

resolved to:

- (i) Approve the Housing Enforcement and Financial Civil Penalty Policies 2026 (Appendix 1 and 2) in preparation for implementation on 1 May 2026.
- (ii) Provide delegated authority for the Director Operations to make operational changes in this fast-changing area of regulation.

## **69. Community Sports Facilities Grant**

Martin Grey, Leisure and Active Lifestyles Manager, presented a report, AA161 previously circulated, which considered a grant recommendation under the Community Sports Facilities Grants programme.

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

resolved to:

Approve a grant of £48,000 to Burwell Community Sports Centre as set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report.

## **70. Lake View Bereavement Centre – Rules and Regulations Policy 2026**

Marisa Rogers-Jones, Crematorium and Bereavement Service Manager, presented a report, AA162 previously circulated, to consider and approve the Lake View Bereavement Centre, Crematorium and Natural Burials Rules and Regulations, including the Framework for Enforcement, to provide clear standards for the operation, use and management of the site.

In reply to Cllr Ross Trent, the Crematorium and Bereavement Service Manager agreed to provide the Committee with the dimensions of meadow natural burial graves.

In reply to Cllr David Brown, the Crematorium and Bereavement Service Manager reported that she would respond to the Committee regarding the following suggested minor amendments:

- Define the time period for which vehicles could be left unattended at the Centre.
- Include reference to the Council's successor, as the Council will be abolished in just over two years.
- Include reference to visiting hours and public holidays under the heading Opening Hours.
- Define Easter in the list of days that the office will be closed.

In reply to Cllr Christine Colbert, it was noted that "bears" should be amended to "bearers" on page 289 of the agenda.

In reply to Cllr Martin Goodearl, it was agreed that a book of remembrance should be provided.

In reply to Cllr Lucius Vellacott, the Crematorium and Bereavement Service Manager explained that the character of the meadow needed to be maintained and therefore permanent memorial plaques would be installed in a separate designated area. Flowers, without plastic, could be left and would be removed and recycled after 14 days. The location of the planned pet cemetery had not yet been confirmed.

Cllr Julia Huffer proposed and Cllr Lucius Vellacott seconded the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and with 6 votes in favour, no votes against and 6 abstentions

it was resolved to:

- (i) Approve the Lake View Bereavement Centre, Crematorium and Natural Burial Rules and Regulations (Appendix 1).
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Crematorium and Bereavement Service Manager to implement non-material changes and manage the Rules and Regulations as the operational standard for the site, including day-to-day decision-making and enforcement in line with the approval framework.

## **71. Public Spaces Protection Order – Vehicle Related Anti-Social Behaviour**

Emma Graves, Neighbourhood and Community Safety Officer, presented a report, AA163 previously circulated, which invited the Committee to consider the Vehicle Related Anti-Social Behaviour Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) consultation findings and approve the implementation of the PSPO.

In reply to Cllr David Brown, the Communities and Partnerships Manager explained that, if implemented, the PSPO would be carefully monitored and after three years a decision would have to be taken on whether to renew it. It was noted that by then the Council will have been replaced by a unitary authority.

In reply to Cllr Martin Goodearl, the Communities and Partnerships Manager stated that the Police would be responsible for gathering evidence of any PSPO breach and if the evidence was sufficient, they would ask the Council to issue a fixed penalty notice. Cllr Lorna Dupré asked if the Police would use CCTV when gathering evidence. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the Committee should receive an update on this matter, hopefully at September's meeting. It was noted that the Council's Legal team would be consulted with regard to Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) policy compliance, in the event of CCTV being used by the Council.

Cllr Lucius Vellacott proposed and Cllr Martin Goodearl seconded the recommendations in the report. A vote was taken and it was unanimously

resolved to:

- (i) Note the PSPO consultation findings at Appendix 1.
- (ii) Approve the implementation of the draft Vehicle Related Anti-Social Behaviour Public Spaces Protection Order at Appendix 2 for a period of three years.

**72. Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire SLA Performance Monitoring Update**

Philippa Nowikow, Project Coordinator (Health and Wellbeing), presented a report, AA163 previously circulated, which invited the Committee to consider the outcome of a review of the grant awarded to Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire (VCAEC) for 2024 to 2026 and determine whether to award a new grant for 2026 to 2028.

Cllr Julia Huffer proposed and Cllr Lucius Vellacott seconded the recommendation in the report. A vote was taken and the Committee unanimously

resolved to:

- (i) Note the review findings.
- (ii) Award a grant to VCAEC to support the delivery of services via a Service Level Agreement from 1 April 2026 until 31 March 2028.

**73. Draft Minutes of Anglia Revenues Partnership for 9<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

The Committee received the minutes from the Anglia Revenues Benefit Joint Committee meeting on 9 December 2025.

It was resolved:

To note the Minutes of the Anglia Revenues & Benefits Joint Committee meeting on 9 December 2025.

**74. Forward Agenda Plan**

The Committee considered its Forward Agenda Plan. It was understood that it had been agreed earlier in the meeting to receive an update on the Community Safety Partnership at its next meeting and an update on the PSPO at its meeting in September.

It was resolved to:

Note the Forward Agenda Plan, amended to include an update from the Community Safety Partnership on 22 June 2026 and a report on the Public Spaces Protection Order to be scheduled for 14 September 2026.

**75. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Cllr Martin Goodearl proposed and Cllr David Brown seconded that the meeting should go into private session. A vote was taken and with 11 votes in favour, 0 against and 1 abstention it was resolved:

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).

**76. East Cambs Street Scene Management Accounts for the 9 months to December 2025 - EXEMPT**

The Committee considered a report, AA165 previously circulated, which considered the ECSS Management Accounts for the 9 months to December 2025.

It was resolved that:

The ECSS Management Accounts for the 9 months to December 2025 be noted.

The meeting concluded at 5.51 pm

Chair .....

Date.....