



East Cambridgeshire District Council

Meeting: Finance & Assets Committee

Time: 4:30pm

Date: Thursday 24 September 2026

Venue: Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, CB7 4EE

Enquiries regarding this agenda: Jane Webb – Democratic Services & Elections Manager

Telephone: (01353) 665555 Email: Jane.webb@eastcambs.gov.uk

Committee membership

Quorum: 5 members

Conservative members

Cllr Anna Bailey
Cllr Lee Denney
Cllr Mark Goldsack (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Bill Hunt
Cllr David Miller
Cllr Alan Sharp (Chair)

Conservative substitutes

Cllr Ian Bovingdon
Cllr Martin Goodearl
Cllr Julia Huffer

Liberal Democrat & Independent members

Cllr Chika Akinwale
Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann
Cllr Mary Wade
Cllr Alison Whelan (Lead Member)
Cllr Christine Whelan

Liberal Democrat & Independent substitutes

Cllr Charlotte Cane
Cllr Christine Colbert
Cllr John Trapp

Lead Officer: Sally Bonnett, Director Community

Agenda

- 1. Public question time** **[oral]**
The meeting will commence with up to 15 minutes of public question time.
- 2. Apologies and substitutions** **[oral]**
- 3. Declarations of interests** **[oral]**
To receive declarations of interests from Members for any items on the agenda in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct.

4. Minutes	To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Assets Committee held on 25 June 2026	Page 1
5. Chair's Announcements		[oral]
6. ECTC Financial Statements 2025/26 & Annual Governance Statement 2025/26		Page 10
7. Growth & Infrastructure Fund		Page 48
8. Draft Inclusive Play Strategy		Page 51
9. Ely Museum Lease		Page 87
10. Assets Update		Page 89
11. NSIP Planning Charges		Page 93
12. Gender Pay Report		Page 97
13. CIL Funding Request		Page 103
14. MTFS Update		Page 105
15. Finance Report		Page 111
16. Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme		Page 135
17. Forward Agenda Plan		Page 139

Exclusion of the public, including representatives of the press

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 Categories 1 and 3 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

- 18. EXEMPT – ECTC Management Accounts**
- 19. EXEMPT – Write-off of Unrecoverable Debts**
- 20. EXEMPT - Minutes – 25 June 2026**

To confirm as a correct record the Exempt Minutes of the meeting of the Finance & Assets Committee held on 25 June 2026

Notes

1. Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting. If you are visiting The Grange during regular working hours, you should report to the main reception desk. If you attend an evening meeting, please enter through the glass atrium door at the back of the building.

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 livestream of this meeting will be available on [the committee meeting's webpage \(Finance and Assets Committee\)](#). Please be aware that all attendees, including those in the public gallery, will be visible on the livestream.

2. Public Questions/Statements are welcomed on any topic related to the Committee's functions as long as there is no suspicion that it is improper (for example, 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](#)
(www.eastcambs.gov.uk/committees/public-question-time-scheme).

3. 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 in our building or at our meetings and ask members of the public to bring their own drinks if required.
4. Fire instructions for meetings:
 - If the fire alarm sounds, please make your way out of the building by the nearest available exit, which is usually the back staircase or the fire escape in the Chamber and do not attempt to use the lifts
 - The fire assembly point is in the front staff car park by the exit barrier
 - The building has an auto-call system to the fire services, so there is no need for anyone to call the fire services

The Committee Officer will sweep the area to ensure that everyone is out.

5. Reports are attached for each agenda item unless marked “oral”.
6. If required, all items on the agenda can be provided in different formats (such as large type, Braille or audio tape, or translated into other languages), on request, by calling the main reception on (01353) 665555 or e-mail: translate@eastcambs.gov.uk
7. 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).”



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 25 June 2026

Present:

Cllr Chika Akinwale
Cllr Anna Bailey
Cllr Christine Colbert (Sub)
Cllr Martin Goodearl (Sub)
Cllr Julia Huffer (Sub)
Cllr Bill Hunt
Cllr David Miller
Cllr Alan Sharp (Chair)
Cllr John Trapp (Sub)
Cllr Alison Whelan (from 5:50pm)
Cllr Christine Whelan

Officers:

Sally Bonnett – Director, Community
Jude Antony – Director, Finance
Isabel Edgar – Director, Operations
Jane Webb – Democratic Services and Elections Manager
Spencer Clark – Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
Nicola Pema – HR Manager
Richard Kay – Climate Change & Natural Environment Manager
Marisa Rogers-Jones – Crematorium and Bereavement Centre Manager
David Morren - Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager
Nigel Ankers – Senior Finance Manager, ECTC
Lucy Flintham – Community Infrastructure Manager
Rory Thompson - Economic Development Officer
Kieran Carr – Economic Development Manager

1. Public Questions

No Public Questions had been received.

2. Apologies and substitutions

Apologies were received from Cllr Lee Denney, who was represented by Cllr Julia Huffer; Cllr Kathrin Holtzmann, who was represented by Cllr Christine Colbert; Cllr Mary Wade, who was represented by Cllr John Trapp; and Cllr Mark Goldsack, who was represented by Cllr Martin Goodearl. Cllr Alison Whelan would arrive late due to chairing a meeting at Cambridgeshire County Council.

3. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes

The Committee received the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2026.

Members unanimously resolved:

That the Minutes of the Finance & Assets Committee meeting held on 26 March 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chair.

5. Chair's Announcements

The Chair welcomed Nigel Ankers from ECTC to the meeting and thanked Cllr Ian Bovingdon, the former Vice-Chair, for his hard work over the years.

6. Climate Change and Nature Monitoring Report and Action Plan

The Committee received a report (AB24, previously circulated) providing an update on ECDC's climate and nature activities over the past 12 months and agreeing on a set of activities for the coming year. The Climate Change and Natural Environment Manager presented the report and the action plan set out therein.

Members made comments and received responses as follows.

- The number of ecologists had increased from one to two, aiding the implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) duties. The proposed actions were realistic and should be achievable, depending on both the team and external support. While actions for the natural environment would not require additional funding, reducing emissions would entail costs, such as purchasing solar panels, which was a corporate issue.
- Homes at Arbour Square featured solar panels, air-source heat pumps, and electric vehicle charging points, but it was unclear whether battery storage was included. The Government had yet to decide on any registration requirements for plug-in solar panels.
- There was no orchard planting planned this year.
- Some actions were still in progress, but the goal was to complete all targets where possible. A detailed annual emissions report was published on the website, and a follow-up report will be presented to the committee next year to track the agreed actions. If Members required an update in the meantime, they could contact the team.
- The Council has a Retrofit Projects Officer who can advise the public on how to improve their homes' EPC rating and on which grants are available to them, if applicable.

The recommendation in the report was proposed by Cllr Bailey and seconded by Cllr Huffer.

Cllr Bailey, as the proposer of the recommendation, expressed her gratitude to a small team for their significant efforts. She described the Habitat Management Plans as detailed and inspiring. Additionally, she acknowledged East Cambs Trading Company and Palace Green Homes for achieving Grade A Energy Performance Certificates for their homes, stating the Council was fully committed to reaching net zero.

Cllr Christine Whelan supported Cllr Bailey's thoughts and highlighted the proposals for great hedgehog habitats.

Cllr Huffer, as the seconder of the recommendation, expressed her support, mentioning that attracting wildlife can be achieved through small efforts.

A vote was taken on the recommendation as follows:

Members unanimously resolved that:

- The Climate and Nature Action Plan and Monitoring Report 2026, which incorporates the Climate and Nature Top 20 Actions for 2026/27, be **APPROVED**.

7. Assets Update

The Committee received a report (AB25, previously circulated) providing an update on Council-owned assets. The Open Spaces & Facilities Manager presented the report and gave the following update:

- The lift repair would take 3 weeks and start on 6 July.
- The Cloisters refurbishment work would be delayed until after the summer.
- 70 Market Street tenants have handed in their notice; the Council thanked them for looking after the property.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows:

- The Cloisters refurbishment work would now start in September, with no impact on costs. Plans were in place to use the family room while minimising disruption. Comms would be circulated to inform the public of the closure and other places to go, but the Council was aware that it would be disruptive.
- The Open Spaces & Facilities Manager was thanked for his work on inclusive play.
- On William Close, street lighting would have just one solar light installed.

Members resolved that:

- The update on Council-owned assets be **NOTED**
- The expenditure tracking sheet (as set out in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report) be **NOTED**.

8. CIL Funding Request

The Committee considered a report (AB26, previously circulated) on the allocation of up to £100,000 in Community Infrastructure Levy funding to the Viva Arts and Community Group Theatre Expansion project. The Community Infrastructure Manager presented the report.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows:

- Sixty-three young people were on the waiting list and would benefit from this admirable scheme. It was inspiring to see the level of involvement among these young people.

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

Cllr Bailey was pleased to propose the recommendation and happy that the funds were being distributed.

Cllr Huffer, as the seconder of the recommendation, expressed her happiness in supporting it, noting that the children of the district loved it.

Members unanimously resolved that:

- The allocation of up to £100,000 Community Infrastructure Levy funding to the Viva Arts and Community Group Theatre expansion project be **APPROVED**.

9. Planning Charges

The Committee considered a report (AB27, previously circulated) on the introduction of an additional charge for requests to determine whether planning permission was required for works for which no current fee was set. The Strategic Planning and Development Management Manager presented the report.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows.

- The fact that residents will be receiving informal advice and not a legal certificate will be declared clearly on the charging schedule, and the provided letter will state that it is the advice of an office, but should they require a formal legal determination, then they would need to make a certificate of lawful development.
-

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

Members unanimously resolved that:

- The changes to the Fee Structure be **APPROVED**.
- The report be **NOTED**.

10. Bereavement Centre Project Progress Update

The Committee considered a report (AB28, as previously circulated) on the progress of the Bereavement Centre Project. The Community Infrastructure Manager presented the report and provided Members with the following update:

- The project remains on track with both the programme and budget.
- Risks are being monitored closely. Section 278 works for the main entrance and permits and internet connections have all been accounted for in the budget. As of 5 June, the contingency fund holds approximately £120,000.
- The cremator from the Netherlands has been delivered and is set to be installed; this will take place concurrently with the completion of the remaining site components.
- Landscaping is underway, with the introduction of trees, shrubs, and seedlings.
- The tribute terrace is nearing completion, and the memorial garden is taking shape.
- Internally, all work is on track, with the chapel flooring scheduled to begin next week.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows:

- While the contractor is still on-site, they are responsible for maintaining the landscaping. After the contractor's departure, a habitat management and maintenance plan will be implemented to ensure ongoing landscape upkeep.
- All the fibre cabling from the site boundary to the comms room is complete.

Members resolved that:

- The progress towards completion of the Bereavement Centre be **NOTED**.

11. Lake View Bereavement Centre, Memorialisation Framework and Fees and Charges 2026

The Committee considered a report (AB29, as previously circulated) on the Lake View Bereavement Centre, Memorialisation Framework and Fees and Charges, including fees and charges for the pet memorial area, such as pet ash interments and full-body burials. The Bereavement Centre Manager presented the report.

The Bereavement Centre Manager addressed the following questions from Members:

- Pets will not be cremated; instead, their ashes will be interred, and full burial will be available for pets such as cats, dogs, parrots, and horses in a designated pet area.
- Pet burials require a legal permit and adhere to strict guidelines, including distance from watercourses and soil depth above and below the carcass.

- Interment fees were individual due to the grave having to be dug by hand; there was confusion over the price for a plot and a separate price for grave digging. Members suggested adding the Pet Plot fee rather than the Pet Internment fee.
- A brochure will illustrate the plaques and provide descriptions; the memorial plaques are small and placed on benches or obelisks; memorial plaques accompany the interment of ashes and consist of a tall post face and an inscription.
- All communities would be welcome and supported in interring their ashes at the bereavement centre.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Cllr Huffer and seconded by Cllr Miller.

Cllr Huffer, the proposer of the recommendations, expressed her support, highlighting that animals were an important part of the family, and Cllr Miller seconded the recommendations.

Members unanimously resolved that:

- The Lake View Bereavement Centre Memorialisation Fees and Charges Schedule 2026/27 be **APPROVED**.
- The Lake View Bereavement Centre Pet Memorial Fees and Charges Schedule 2026/27 be **APPROVED**.
- Authority be delegated to the Crematorium and Bereavement Services Manager, in consultation with the Director Operations, to make minor operational and supplier-led pricing adjustments to the memorialisation and pet memorial pricing schedule where required.

12. Business Grant Scheme

The Committee considered a report (AB30, as previously circulated) to approve the Council's proposed Business Grant Scheme. The Economic Development Officer presented the report.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows:

- The team effectively communicates their plans to a target audience through a mailing list of 2,000 contacts and collaboration with the Federation of Small Businesses. By using a first-come, first-served approach, they can launch projects early.

(5:50 pm – Cllr Alison Whelan arrived.)

Councillor Sharp, the proposer of the recommendations, was pleased to support them as they would benefit small businesses. Councillor Alison Whelan agreed that this approach was a logical use of the funds. Cllr Huffer seconded the recommendations.

Members unanimously resolved that:

- The Business Grant Scheme be **APPROVED**.

- The Business Grant Scheme will open on 6 July 2026, with all projects to be completed by 31 January 2027.
- The Council reserves the right to close the scheme to any further applications when the funding is fully utilised.

13. Growth and Infrastructure Fund Update

The Committee considered a report (AB31, as previously circulated) on an update to the Growth and Infrastructure Fund Grant Scheme. The Director Community presented the report.

Members resolved that:

- The contents of the report be NOTED.

14. Finance Report

The Committee received a report (AB32, previously circulated) to provide Members with budget 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.

Members made comments and asked questions as follows:

Members resolved to **NOTE:**

- This Committee has a year-end underspend of £1,331,912 when compared to its approved revenue budget of £7,969,054.
- The Council has a year-end underspend of £1,990,003 when compared to its approved budget of £19,249,383.
- that the overall position for the Council on Capital is an outturn of £12,518,671, which is an underspend of £4,449,410.

15. 2025/26 Treasury Operations Annual Performance Review

The Committee received a report (AB33, previously circulated) that provides Members with an overview of the Council's operations during the 2025/26 financial year. The report reviews the Treasury Management activity during the financial year 2025/26 and reports on the prudential indicators as required by CIPFA's Treasury Management Code of Practice. The Director Finance presented the report.

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

Members **RECOMMENDED TO FULL COUNCIL:**

- That they approve this report detailing the Council's treasury operations during 2025/26, including the prudential and treasury indicators, as set out in the Annual Treasury Management Review (Appendix 1).

16. Annual Report of Representatives on Outside Bodies

The Committee received a report (AB34, previously circulated) that provided Members with the Annual Reports on Outside bodies from the representatives and an updated list of representatives for the coming year. The Democratic Services and Elections Manager presented the report.

Councillor Bailey informed Members that the District Council Network had been rebranded as the Local Councils Network, and that the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) is now known as Local Government East (LGE).

It was noted that there were vacancies on the Internal Drainage Boards. These vacancies were not related to Members. However, the Democratic Services and Elections Manager agreed to reach out to the Internal Drainage Boards to see whether the Council could offer any assistance in filling these vacancies.

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

Members unanimously resolved that:

- The annual reports from the Council representatives on Outside Bodies within the remit of the Finance & Assets Committee be **NOTED**.
- The Outside Bodies List within the remit of Finance & Assets be **APPROVED**.

17. Forward Plan

The Committee considered its Forward Plan. The Director Community stated that one extra item would be added to the Forward Plan: Growth and Infrastructure Fund

It was unanimously resolved to **NOTE** the Forward Plan and add one extra item:

- Growth and Infrastructure Fund

18. 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).

19. EXEMPT – ECTC Management Accounts

The Committee received a summary view of the ECTC Management Accounts. The ECTC Finance Manager presented the ECTC Management Accounts.

Members resolved that the contents of the report be **NOTED**.

20. Appointments, Transfers & Resignations

The Committee received a report (AB36, previously circulated) detailing staff appointments, transfers, and resignations. The HR Manager presented the report.

Members unanimously resolved to **NOTE** the information in the report.

21. EXEMPT – Write-Off of Unrecoverable Debts

The Committee considered a report regarding the write-off of irrecoverable debts. The Director Finance presented the report.

The recommendations in the report were proposed by Cllr Sharp and seconded by Cllr Miller. It was unanimously resolved:

Members unanimously resolved to:

- **NOTE:** Three Business Rates have been written off using delegated powers
- **NOTE:** Six Council Tax debts have been written off using delegated powers

22. EXEMPT Minutes – 26 March 2026

The Committee received the Exempt Minutes of the Finance & Assets Committee meeting held on 26 March 2026.

It was resolved unanimously:

That the Exempt Minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2026 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

The meeting concluded at 6:22 pm

Chair.....

Date.....

TITLE: ECTC FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2025/26 & ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2025/26

Committee: Finance & Assets

Date: 24 September 2026

Author: ECTC Finance Manager and ECTC Managing Director

Report number: AB68

Contact officer: Nigel Ankers, ECTC Finance Manager
Nigel.ankers@palacegreenhomes.co.uk, 01353 616393.

Issue

1. To receive the East Cambs Trading Company Financial Statements and Annual Governance Statement for 2025/26.

Recommendations

2. Members are asked to note the East Cambs Trading Company Financial Statements 2025/26 as set out in Appendix 1.
3. Members are asked to note the East Cambs Trading Company Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 as set out in Appendix 2.

Background/Options

4. East Cambs Trading Company (ECTC) auditors, Price Bailey, have issued an unqualified opinion on the statements and confirmed that they give a true and fair view of the state of ECTC's affairs as of 31 March 2026. They also confirm that they have been prepared in accordance with the relevant laws and regulations.
5. The ECTC 2025/26 accounts were approved by the ECTC Board on 27 August 2026.
6. The ECTC Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 was approved by the ECTC Board on 27 August 2026.

Arguments/Conclusions

7. The 2025/26 Financial Statements and the Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 are now provided to the Finance & Assets Committee as the Shareholder Committee for noting.

Additional Implications Assessment

Financial Implications No	Legal Implications No	Human Resources (HR) Implications No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) No	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) No	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) No

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – ECTC Draft Financial Statements 2025-26
- Appendix 2 – ECTC Annual Governance Statement 2025-26

Background documents

None

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

**DIRECTORS' REPORT AND
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

COMPANY INFORMATION

Directors	P J Remington J Hill (resigned 31 December 2025) I Edgar E Grima (appointed 5 February 2026)
Company secretary	E L Grima
Company number	10061867
Registered office	The Grange Nutholt Lane Ely Cambridgeshire CB7 4EE
Auditors	Price Bailey LLP Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors Tennyson House Cambridge Business Park Cambridge CB4 0WZ

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

CONTENTS

	Page
Directors' report	1 - 2
Independent Auditors' report	3 - 5
Statement of Comprehensive Income	6
Statement of Financial Position	7 - 8
Statement of Changes in Equity	9
Cash Flow Statement	10
Notes to the Financial Statements	11 - 26

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

The Directors present their report and the audited financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 March 2026.

Directors

The Directors who served during the year were:

P J Remington
J Hill (resigned 31 December 2025)
I Edgar
E Grima (appointed 5 February 2026)

Statement of directors' responsibilities

The Directors are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with UK adopted international accounting standards. Under company law the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit or loss for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The Directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Statement as to disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the company's auditors are unaware, and each director has taken all the steps that he ought to have taken as a director in order to make himself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

Small companies note

In preparing this report, the Directors have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

Auditors

The auditors, Price Bailey LLP, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

This report was approved by the board on and signed on its behalf.

E Grima
Director

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of East Cambs Trading Company Limited (the 'company') for the year ended 31 March 2026 which comprise The Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Changes in Equity, Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 March 2026 and of the loss for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with UK adopted international accounting standards;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The directors are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT (CONTINUED) TO THE MEMBERS OF EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Director's Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Director's Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Director's Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Directors were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemptions in preparing the Director's Report and from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of Directors

As explained more fully in the Directors' Responsibilities Statement set out on page 1, the Directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Directors determine necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Directors are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Directors either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditor's Report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the company and the industry in which it operates and considered the risk of non-compliance with the applicable laws and regulations including fraud, in particular those that could have a material impact on the financial statements.

This included those regulations directly related to the financial statements, including financial reporting, tax legislation and distributable profits. In relation to the industry this included employment laws and health and safety.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT (CONTINUED) TO THE MEMBERS OF EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

The risks were discussed with the audit team and we remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit. We carried out specific procedures to address the risks identified. These included the following:

Reviewing minutes of Board meetings, correspondence with their regulators, agreeing the financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation, enquiries of management including those responsible for the key regulations for any instances of actual, suspected or alleged fraud or non-compliance.

To address the risk of management override of controls, we reviewed systems and procedures to identify potential areas of management override risk. In particular, we carried out testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, and evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions to identify large or unusual transactions. We reviewed key authorisation procedures and decision making processes for any unusual or one-off transactions. We also assessed management bias in relation to the accounting policies adopted and in determining significant accounting estimates.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Auditor's Report

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in a Report of the Auditors and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Stella Athanasiadou ACA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Price Bailey LLP

Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors
Tennyson House
Cambridge Business Park
Cambridge
CB4 0WZ

Date:

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

**STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026**

	Notes	2026 £	2025 £
CONTINUING OPERATIONS			
Revenue from contracts with customers			
Revenue from services		1,845,052	1,621,445
Revenue from property development		4,567,416	2,242,879
Revenue from grant income		72,143	-
		<u>6,484,611</u>	<u>3,864,324</u>
Cost of sales		(4,920,314)	(2,837,682)
Gross profit		<u>1,564,297</u>	<u>1,026,642</u>
Administrative expenses		(2,075,995)	(1,796,971)
Other operating income	2	121,629	93,346
Operating (losses) / profit	3	<u>(390,069)</u>	<u>(676,983)</u>
Interest receivable		-	12,105
Interest payable	6	(145,397)	(87,985)
Net fair value gains on financial assets/liabilities at fair value through profit or loss		-	(5,197)
(Loss) / Profit before income tax		<u>(535,466)</u>	<u>(758,060)</u>
Income tax expense	7	-	(10,118)
(Loss) / Profit and total comprehensive (loss) / income for the year		<u><u>(535,466)</u></u>	<u><u>(768,178)</u></u>

There were no recognised gains and losses from 2026 or 2025 other than those included in the statement of comprehensive income.

The notes on pages 11-26 form part of these financial statements.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 MARCH 2026**

Registration No. 10061867

		2026	2025
	Notes	£	£
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	8	68,690	54,970
Right-of-use assets	9	25,970	51,939
		<u>94,660</u>	<u>106,909</u>
Current assets			
Inventories	10	2,572,177	3,412,927
Trade and other receivables	11	1,995,637	975,254
Cash at bank and in hand	12	524,693	759,830
		<u>5,092,507</u>	<u>5,148,011</u>
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	13	(1,228,875)	(752,139)
Financial liabilities - borrowings	14	-	-
Lease liabilities	15	(40,406)	(34,023)
		<u>(1,269,281)</u>	<u>(786,162)</u>
Net Current Assets		3,823,226	4,361,849
Total assets less current liabilities		3,917,886	4,468,758
Non-Current Liabilities			
Financial Liabilities – borrowings	14	(5,850,000)	(5,825,000)
Lease liabilities	15	-	(40,406)
		<u>(5,850,000)</u>	<u>(5,865,406)</u>
Net assets		(1,932,114)	(1,396,648)
Equity			
Called up share capital	17	1	1
Retained earnings		(1,932,115)	(1,396,649)
		<u>(1,932,114)</u>	<u>(1,396,648)</u>

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION (CONTINUED)
AS AT 31 MARCH 2026**

Registration No. 10061867

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the board and were signed on its behalf by:

E Grima
Director

Date:

The notes on pages 11-26 form part of these financial statements.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026**

	Share Capital £	Retained earnings £	Total equity £
Balance as at 1 April 2024	1	(628,471)	(628,470)
Loss for the year	-	(768,178)	(768,178)
Total comprehensive income for the year	-	(768,178)	(768,178)
Balance as at 31 March 2025	1	(1,396,649)	(1,396,648)
Balance as at 1 April 2025	1	(1,396,649)	(1,396,648)
Loss for the year	-	(535,466)	(535,466)
Total comprehensive income for the year	-	(535,466)	(535,466)
Balance as at 31 March 2026	1	(1,932,115)	(1,932,114)

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

**CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026**

		2026		2025	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities,					
Net cash inflow from operating activities	21	74,708	(88,132)		
Net cash inflow from operating activities			74,708	(88,132)	
Cash flows from investing activities					
Payments for plant and equipment	8	(45,164)	(9,276)		
Proceeds from sale of plant and equipment	8	-	-		
Interest received		-	12,105		
Net cash (outflow) / inflow from investing activities			(45,164)	2,829	
Cash flows from financing activities					
Repayment of leasing liabilities	23	(36,941)	(47,594)		
Loans advanced	23	2,875,000	1,675,000		
Loans repaid	23	(3,102,740)	(1,263,947)		
Net cash outflow from financing activities			(264,681)	363,459	
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents			(235,137)	278,156	
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			759,830	481,674	
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	12		524,693	759,830	

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026**

1. Accounting policies**1.1 Statutory information**

East Cambs Trading Company Limited is a private company limited by shares incorporated and domiciled in England and Wales, United Kingdom. The address of the registered office is The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 4EE.

The company is primarily involved in property development and management of council services.

The financial statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the company and rounded to the nearest £1.

1.2 Compliance with accounting standards

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with UK-adopted international accounting standards.

Historical cost convention

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

1.3 New or amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations adopted

For the purpose of the preparation of these financial statements, the Company has applied all standards and interpretations that are effective for accounting periods beginning on or after 1 April 2025:

- Lack of Exchangeability (Amendments to IAS 21 The Effects of Changes in Foreign Exchange Rates)

There are a number of standards, amendments to standards which have been issued by the IASB that are effective in future accounting periods that the Company has decided not to adopt early.

The following amendments are effective for the period beginning 1 April 2026:

- IFRS 7 Financial Instruments: Disclosures and IFRS 9 Financial Instruments – Amendments regarding the classification and measurement of financial instruments
- IFRS 7 Financial Instruments: Disclosures and IFRS 9 Financial Instruments — Amendments regarding Contracts Referencing Nature-dependent Electricity
- Amendments to IFRS 1, IFRS 7, IFRS 9, IFRS 10 and IAS 7 resulting from Annual Improvements to IFRS Accounting Standards — Volume 11

The following amendments are effective for accounting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2027:

- IFRS 18 Presentation and Disclosure in Financial Statements
- IFRS 19 Subsidiaries without Public Accountability: Disclosures
- IAS 21 The effects of Changes in Foreign Exchange Rates

The Company has assessed the amendments to become effective in 2026, and onwards, and has concluded they have no material impact on its financial statements.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026**

1. Accounting policies (continued)**1.4 Revenue recognition****Revenue from contracts with customers**

Revenue is recognised at an amount that reflects the consideration to which the Company is expected to be entitled in exchange for transferring goods or services to a customer. For each contract with a customer, the Company: identifies the contract with a customer; identifies the performance obligations in the contract; determines the transaction price which takes into account the time value of money; allocates the transaction price to the separate performance obligations on the basis of the relative stand-alone selling price of each distinct good or service to be delivered; and recognises revenue when or as each performance obligation is satisfied in a manner that depicts the transfer to the customer of the goods promised.

Further details on specifics relating to each revenue stream is listed below:

Grounds Maintenance Services

The Company provides a grounds maintenance service predominantly to local authorities and educational establishments and the performance obligation is satisfied when services are rendered. For larger contracts invoices are issued on a monthly basis or as the work is completed for smaller contracts. There is no significant financing component to these contracts, with a fixed fee agreed annually, invoices issued and paid on a monthly basis. The maintenance service is performed to an agreed schedule, with any issues resolved at the next visit.

Markets

The Company operates street markets on behalf of the local council and collects revenue from the individual stallholder and the performance obligation is satisfied when the Market is held. Invoices are issued on a monthly basis and payments are made via direct debits.

Property Development

The Company develops and sells residential properties. Revenue is recognised when control over the property has been transferred to the customer. The properties have generally no alternative use for the company. However, an enforceable right to payment does not arise until legal title has passed to the customer. Therefore, revenue is recognised at a point in time when the legal title has passed to the customer. The revenue is measured at the transaction price agreed under the contract. The consideration is due when legal title has been transferred.

1.5 Government grants

Government grants are recognised in Statement of Comprehensive Income on a systemic basis over the periods in which the company recognises as expenses the related costs for which grants are intended to compensate. The grants are shown separately in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

Grants are recognised on respect of the delivery of affordable housing projects and all conditions have been fulfilled.

1.6 Other operating income

Other operating income includes revenue from all other operating activities which are not related to the principal activities of the company. This includes the recharge of ancillary costs incurred on behalf of other group entities.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026****1. Accounting policies (continued)****1.7 Property, plant and equipment**

Property, plant and equipment is stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of property, plant and equipment less their estimated residual value, over their expected useful lives on the following bases:

Plant & machinery	25% straight line
Leasehold improvements	16.67% straight line
Office equipment	16.67% straight line
Computer equipment	33.33% straight line

1.8 Right-of-use assets

A right-of-use asset is recognised at the commencement date of a lease. The right-of-use asset is measured at cost, which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability, adjusted for, as applicable, any lease payments made at or before the commencement date net of any lease incentives received, any initial direct costs incurred, an estimate of costs expected to be incurred for dismantling and removing the underlying asset, and restoring the site or asset.

Right-of-use assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful life of the asset, whichever is the shorter. Where the company expects to obtain ownership of the leased asset at the end of the lease term, the depreciation is over its estimated useful life. Right-of use assets are subject to impairment or adjusted for any remeasurement of lease liabilities.

1.9 Inventories

Inventories are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Work in progress comprises direct materials, labour costs, site overheads, associated professional charges and other attributable overheads. Net realisable value represents the estimated selling price less costs to complete and sell.

At each year end, inventories are assessed for impairment. If inventories are impaired, the carrying amount is reduced to its selling price less costs to complete and sell. The impairment loss is recognised immediately in profit or loss.

1.10 Trade and other receivables

Short term receivables are measured initially at transaction price and are measured subsequently at amortised costs.

1.11 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours.

1.12 Operating profit

Operating profit consists of items which are of operational nature, excluding investment income and finance cost.

1.13 Trade and other payables

Short term payables are measured initially at fair value, and subsequently at amortised cost. Other financial liabilities, including bank loans, are measured initially at fair value, net of transaction costs, and are measured subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026**

1 Accounting policies (continued)**1.14 Pensions****Defined contribution pension plan**

The Company operates a defined contribution plan for its employees. A defined contribution plan is a pension plan under which the Company pays fixed contributions into a separate entity. Once the contributions have been paid the Company has no further payment obligations.

The contributions are recognised as an expense in the Statement of Comprehensive Income when they fall due. Amounts not paid are shown in accruals as a liability in the Statement of Financial Position. The assets of the plan are held separately from the Company in independently administered funds.

1.15 Taxation

Current taxes are based on the results shown in the financial statements and are calculated according to local tax rules, using tax rates enacted or substantially enacted by the statement of financial position date.

Deferred income tax is provided, using the liability method, on temporary differences between the tax bases of assets and liabilities and their carrying amounts, in the financial statements. Deferred income tax assets relating to the carry-forward of unused tax losses are recognised to the extent that it is probable that future taxable profit will be available against which the unused tax losses can be utilised.

Current and deferred income tax assets and liabilities are offset when the income taxes are levied by the same taxation authority and when there is a legally enforceable right to offset them.

1.16 Leases

All leases are accounted for by recognising a right-of-use asset and a lease liability except for:

- Leases of low value assets; and
- Leases with a duration of 12 months or less.

A lease liability is recognised at the commencement date of a lease. The lease liability is initially recognised at the present value of the lease payments to be made over the term of the lease, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, the Company's incremental borrowing rate. Lease payments comprise of fixed payments less any lease incentives receivable, variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, amounts expected to be paid under residual value guarantees, exercise price of a purchase option when the exercise of the option is reasonably certain to occur, and any anticipated termination penalties. The variable lease payments that do not depend on an index or a rate are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

Lease liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. The carrying amounts are remeasured if there is a change in the following: future lease payments arising from a change in an index or a rate used; residual guarantee; lease term; certainty of a purchase option and termination penalties. When a lease liability is remeasured, an adjustment is made to the corresponding right-of use asset, or to profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset is fully written down.

The Company leases an office used by staff in the Property Development division and Market Square, Ely to provide street markets in Ely. Both leases have annual rent reviews.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026**

1. Accounting policies (continued)**1.17 Finance costs**

Finance costs attributable to qualifying assets are capitalised as part of the asset. This is based on the cost of the asset at the interest rate charged on the company's borrowings of 4.5%.

All other finance costs are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

1.18 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for revenues and expenses during the year and the amounts reported for assets and liabilities at the statement of financial position date. However, the nature of estimation means that the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. The significant accounting judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty affecting the company are disclosed below.

Going concern including liquidity

The Directors regularly review the plans of the business and are pleased to report that by the end of the first half of the financial year 2026/27, the remaining units in the 27-property development at Arbour Square will have been successfully handed over to the customer, Havebury Homes. Planning permission, subject to completion of a Section 106 agreement, was granted on a third phase at Arbour Square to deliver another 13 dwellings. It is forecast that this project will commence in early 2027. Part of the Company's purpose is to support East Cambridgeshire District Council, of which it is a wholly owned subsidiary, in its' desire to work with local communities to deliver affordable housing initiatives for residents. This involves providing support in the form of staff expertise as well as when necessary interim funding. The staff expertise being provided means that there are very close links to the organisations that ECTC is assisting, including access to all necessary information to allow a complete understanding of the status of any debts and their recoverability.

Careful consideration has been given to the timing of expected receipts from debtors and the impact on the company's cashflow. The directors remain satisfied as to the recoverability of this balance; however, the timing of receipts is dependent upon the completion of related transactions and associated funding arrangements. The directors have reflected their best estimate of the timing of these receipts within their forecasts.

The Directors are satisfied that there is sufficient headroom on the facility with ECDC to enable it to commence the third phase at Arbour Square early in 2027, and to continue to explore other possible opportunities. There is reasonable certainty that the handover of the last few properties on phase 2 at Arbour Square will occur within the next two months, which will bring significant cashflow receipts. Payments have also been made by debtors in line with revised timescales agreed, and assurances received that future payments will also be made within the timescales expected. This has not always been within the total control of the debtors as they have been reliant on other third parties to be able to access their long-term funding.

In consideration of all of the above, the Directors have concluded that the accounts should be prepared on a going concern basis and that the company has sufficient resources to enable it to meet liabilities as they fall due for a period of at least 12 months from approval of these financial statements.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.19 Critical accounting estimates and judgements (continued)

Leases – discount rate

Under IFRS 16, the Company recognises a right-of-use asset representing its right to use the underlying asset and a lease liability representing its obligation to make lease payments.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments, discounted using the Company's incremental borrowing rate. Management have made a judgement to use a portfolio approach when estimating an incremental borrowing rate.

The incremental borrowing rate is determined on a portfolio basis, the most significant portfolio being the lease of properties. Judgement has been used to determine that a portfolio basis is an appropriate basis. As the Company had agreed borrowings for general purposes at a rate of 5.22%, this has been determined as the borrowing rate of the lease.

Refer to note 14 for additional disclosures relating to leases held by the Company.

The valuation of work in progress and allocation of costs to each period

Costs directly attributable to the projects have been included in the work in progress figure accordingly. When calculating the work in progress the directors consider the stage of completion of the project and the likelihood of all costs being recovered, applying this in accordance with applicable framework.

Refer to note 14 for additional disclosures relating to leases held by the Company.

Useful lives of depreciable assets

Estimates have been made in respect of useful economic lives of property, plant and equipment, which determine the amount of depreciation charged in profit or loss. Uncertainties in these estimates relate to the technological obsolescence that may change the utility of plant and machinery and could result in a material change to the amount of depreciation recognised. These estimates are reviewed annually at the reporting date based on the expected utility of the assets. The net book value of the assets at the end of the period was £68,690 (2025 £54,970)

Further detail on useful life estimates is included in the accounting policy note 1.7.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026**

2. Other Operating Income

Other operating income consists of:

	2026 £	2025 £
Recharges of expenditure incurred on behalf of other Group entities	121,629	93,346

3. Operating (losses) / profit

Operating (losses / profit is stated after charging

	2026 £	2025 £
Depreciation of owned fixed assets	30,920	37,782
Depreciation of right to use assets	25,969	41,320
Auditors' remuneration	48,600	46,300

4. Employees and directors

	2026 £	2025 £
Wages and Salaries	1,203,774	1,081,702
Social security	149,772	107,850
Other pension costs	67,482	66,751
	1,421,028	1,256,303

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2026	2025
Directors	3	3
Administration	35	29
	38	32

Two of the three Directors only receive remuneration from the ultimate parent company.

5. Directors' remuneration

	2026 £	2025 £
Directors' remuneration	12,000	12,000
Directors' pension contributions to a defined contribution pension scheme	630	1,320
	12,630	13,320

During the year 1 directors (2025 – 1) was accruing benefits under defined contribution pension schemes.

The above director's remuneration disclosure relates to the highest paid director also for both 2026 and 2025.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

6. Interest Payable

	2026 £	2025 £
Loan interest payable	142,478	83,290
Interest on leases	2,919	4,695
	<u>145,397</u>	<u>87,985</u>

Total loan interest payable in the year was £252,740 (2025: £259,850). During the year £110,262 was transferred to work in progress (2024: £140,409) based on the funding requirements for each capital project at the loan rate of 4.5%.

7. Income tax expense

Factors affecting the income tax expense

The tax assessed for the year is lower than the standard rate of corporation tax in the UK. The difference is explained below:

	2026 £	2025 £
Loss per accounts	<u>(535,466)</u>	<u>(768,178)</u>
Loss multiplied by the standard rate of corporation tax in the UK of 19% (2022 - 19%)	(101,739)	(145,954)
Effects of:		
Depreciation in excess of capital allowances	4,679	4,543
Adjustment for IFRS 16 leases	-	(282)
Movement in unrelieved pension provision	1,818	(1,675)
Losses carried forward	95,242	142,381
Change in corporation tax provision relating to previous periods	-	10,118
	<u>-</u>	<u>10,118</u>
Tax expense	<u>-</u>	<u>10,118</u>

The company has trading losses of £2,003,691 carried forward (2025 - £1,502,415)

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

8. Property, plant and equipment

	Plant & Machinery	Leasehold Improvement	Office & computer Equipment	Total
Cost				
As at April 1 2025	72,094	11,600	97,848	181,542
Additions	3,464	37,500	4,200	45,164
Disposals	(7,615)	-	(38,901)	(46,516)
As at 31 March 2026	<u>67,943</u>	<u>49,100</u>	<u>63,147</u>	<u>180,190</u>
Depreciation				
As at April 1 2025	46,735	9,280	70,557	126,572
Charge for the year	12,488	2,320	16,112	30,920
On disposals	(7,615)	-	(38,377)	(45,992)
As at March 31 2026	<u>51,608</u>	<u>11,600</u>	<u>48,292</u>	<u>111,500</u>
Net Book Value				
As at March 31 2026	<u>16,335</u>	<u>37,500</u>	<u>14,855</u>	<u>68,690</u>
As at March 31 2025	<u>25,359</u>	<u>2,320</u>	<u>27,291</u>	<u>54,970</u>
	Plant & Machinery	Leasehold Improvement	Office & computer Equipment	Total
Cost				
As at April 1 2024	71,244	54,508	89,420	215,172
Additions	850	-	8,428	9,278
Disposals	-	(42,908)	-	(42,908)
As at 31 March 2025	<u>72,094</u>	<u>11,600</u>	<u>97,848</u>	<u>181,542</u>
Depreciation				
As at April 1 2024	33,927	43,902	53,867	131,696
Charge for the year	12,808	8,286	16,690	37,784
On disposals	-	(42,908)	-	(42,908)
As at March 31 2025	<u>46,735</u>	<u>9,280</u>	<u>70,557</u>	<u>126,572</u>
Net Book Value				
As at March 31 2025	<u>25,359</u>	<u>2,320</u>	<u>27,291</u>	<u>54,970</u>
As at March 31 2024	<u>37,317</u>	<u>10,606</u>	<u>35,553</u>	<u>83,476</u>

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

9. Right-of-use assets

	Land and Buildings	Total
As at April 1 2025	51,939	51,939
Depreciation	(25,969)	(25,969)
As at March 31 2026	<u>25,970</u>	<u>25,970</u>
As at April 1 2024	93,259	93,259
Depreciation	(41,320)	(41,320)
As at March 31 2025	<u>51,939</u>	<u>51,939</u>

The Company leases land at Market Square, Ely under an agreement for a term of 10 years. On renewal, the terms of the leases are renegotiated.

Details of leasing liabilities are included within note 15 and lease expense disclosed in note 3.

10. Inventories

	2026 £	2025 £
Completed properties held for resale	-	2,222,565
Work in progress	2,572,177	1,190,362
	<u>2,572,177</u>	<u>3,412,927</u>

The total amount of work in progress recognised as an expense during the year was £4,253,744 (2025: £2,084,363).

11. Trade and other receivables

	2026 £	2025 £
Current:		
Trade receivables	40,656	49,204
Other receivables	1,460,199	-
Amounts owed by group entities	355,846	310,070
Other taxation	16,048	5,352
Prepayments and accrued income	122,888	610,628
	<u>1,995,637</u>	<u>975,254</u>

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

12. Cash and cash equivalents

	2026 £	2025 £
Cash at bank and in hand	524,693	759,830

13. Trade and other payables

	2026 £	2025 £
Current		
Trade payables	564,192	158,789
Amounts owed to group entities	349,881	299,118
Other taxation and social security	31,488	27,544
Other payables	197,047	187,838
Accruals and deferred income	86,267	78,850
	<u>1,228,875</u>	<u>752,139</u>

14. Borrowings

	2026 £	2025 £
Current:		
Loans due within one year	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Non-current		
Due 1 – 2 years:		
Amounts owed to parent undertakings	-	-
Loans due after one year	-	-
Due 2 – 5 years:		
Amounts owed to parent undertakings	5,850,000	5,825,000
	<u>5,850,000</u>	<u>5,825,000</u>
Total non-current	<u>5,850,000</u>	<u>5,825,000</u>

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

14. Borrowings (continued)

East Cambridgeshire District Council has a fixed and floating charge on all property, or undertakings of the Company not already charged.

15. Lease Liabilities

	2026	2025
	£	£
Current:		
Lease liability	40,406	34,023
Non-current:		
Lease liability	-	40,406
	<u>40,406</u>	<u>74,429</u>

Refer to note 16 for further information on financial instruments. Details of finance costs are included within note 6. Details of the right of use assets are included within note 9.

In the event of default by the Company on the lease liabilities, the lease assets in note 9 would be returned to the lessor.

During the year Licence fees relating to a Licence to Occupy, which is not disclosed under IFRS 16, totalled £40,935 (2025: £34,065). Within non-current liabilities are lease liabilities falling due after more than 5 years totalling £Nil (2025 - £Nil).

16. Financial Instruments

Financial assets and liabilities

The carrying value of the company's financial assets and liabilities as recognised at the year end of the years under review may also be categorised as follows:

	Financial assets at amortised cost	Financial liabilities at amortised cost	Total carrying amount
As 31 March 2026	£	£	£
Cash and cash equivalents	524,693	-	524,693
Trade receivables	40,656	-	40,656
Other receivables – current	1,460,199	-	1,460,199
Amounts owed by group entities	355,846	-	355,846
Borrowings	-	(5,850,000)	(5,850,000)
Trade payables	-	(564,192)	(564,192)
Amounts owed to group entities	-	(349,881)	(349,881)
Other payables - current	-	(197,047)	(197,047)
Accruals and deferred income	-	(86,267)	(86,267)
Total	<u>2,381,394</u>	<u>(7,047,387)</u>	<u>(4,665,993)</u>

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

16. Financial Instruments (continued)

	Financial assets at amortised cost	Financial liabilities at amortised cost	Restated Total carrying amount
As 31 March 2025	£	£	£
Cash and cash equivalents	759,830	-	759,830
Trade receivables	49,204	-	49,204
Amounts owed by group entities	289,627	-	289,627
Borrowings	-	(5,825,000)	(5,825,000)
Trade payables	-	(158,788)	(158,788)
Amounts owed to group entities	-	(299,118)	(299,118)
Other payables - current	-	(187,838)	(187,838)
Accruals and deferred income	-	(78,850)	(78,850)
Total	1,098,661	(6,549,594)	(5,450,933)

Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk of financial loss to the company if a customer or counterparty to a financial instrument fails to meet its contractual obligations, and arises principally from the company's receivables from customers and balances at financial institutions.

The company's exposure to credit risk in the property development division is limited as title to any property sold does not pass until funds are received.

For the grounds maintenance division, the major customer is a local authority and the sole shareholder of the company so the risk is perceived to be low. The remaining customers are predominantly also local authorities.

For the markets division, the customers are individual market stall vendors and each debt is relatively small. Most vendors have been trading with the company, and its local authority predecessor for a number of years.

The company held cash and cash equivalents of £524,693 at 31 March 2026 (2025: £759,830). The cash and cash equivalents are held at NatWest Bank which is rated A- to A at leading credit rating agencies and so the company considers these to have a low credit risk.

The carrying amount of the financial assets best represents the maximum exposure to credit risk at the end of the reporting period.

Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the company will not be able to meet its financial obligations as they fall due. The company's policy throughout the year has been to ensure that it has adequate liquidity to meet its liabilities when due by careful management of its working capital.

Market Risk

Market risk is that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices, such as currency or interest rates. The company's cash flows are largely independent of any interest rates or currency fluctuations. The borrowing is at a fixed rate of interest.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

16. Financial Instruments (continued)

	Less than one year	More than one year less than five years	Total
	£	£	£
2026			
Trade and other payables	1,228,875	-	1,228,875
Borrowings	-	5,850,000	5,850,000
	<u>1,228,875</u>	<u>5,850,000</u>	<u>7,078,875</u>
	Less than one year	More than one year	Restated Total
	£	£	£
2025			
Trade and other payables	752,139	-	752,139
Borrowings	-	5,825,000	5,825,000
	<u>752,139</u>	<u>5,825,000</u>	<u>6,577,139</u>

Fair values

The carrying amounts of all financial assets and liabilities of the company as disclosed in the notes to the financial information are approximately their fair values.

Capital management

The company's objectives when managing capital are to safeguard the company's ability to continue as a going concern in order to provide returns for shareholders, benefits for other stakeholders and to maintain an optimal capital structure to reduce the cost of capital with an appropriate level of leverage for the size of the business so as to maintain investor, creditor and market confidence and to sustain future development of the business. In order to maintain or adjust the capital structure, the company may return capital to shareholders, issue new shares or sell assets to reduce debt.

17. Share capital

	2026 £	2025 £
Share classified as equity		
Allotted, called up and fully paid		
1 Ordinary share of £1	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

18. Pension commitments

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the company to the fund and amounted to £67,482 (2025 - £66,751).

Contributions totalling £16,826 (2025 - £10,502) were payable to the fund at the year end and are included in creditors.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

19. Related Party Transactions

In line with paragraph 25 of IAS24, the company has taken advantage of the exemption from the requirement to disclose transactions with East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) and connected companies due to the control exercised by ECDC by virtue of it being the only shareholder.

The company has loans of £5,850,000 (2024: £5,825,000) due to ECDC on March 31 2029 lent at an interest rate of 4.50% increasing to 4.75% in 2026.

20. Details of Parent Undertaking

The ultimate parent undertaking is East Cambridgeshire District Council, registered address The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 4EE

21. Net cash inflow from operating activities

	2026	2025
	£	£
Loss before income tax	(535,466)	(758,060)
Depreciation	56,890	79,102
Loss on disposal of asset	523	-
Interest received	-	(12,105)
Interest expense (including capitalised interest)	255,658	264,405
Net fair value gains on financial assets / liabilities at fair value through profit or loss	-	5,197
Taxation	-	(10,118)
	<u>(222,395)</u>	<u>(431,579)</u>
Decrease/(Increase) in inventories	840,750	(17,876)
(Increase)/Decrease in trade and other receivables	(1,020,383)	634,104
Increase)/(Decrease) in trade and other payables	476,736	(272,781)
Net cash outflow from operating activities	<u><u>74,708</u></u>	<u><u>(88,132)</u></u>

22. Reserves

The following is a description of each of the reserve accounts that comprise equity shareholders' funds:

Share capital	The share capital comprises the issued ordinary shares of the company at par.
Retained earnings	Retained earnings comprise the Company's cumulative accounting profits and losses since inception.

EAST CAMBS TRADING COMPANY LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

23. Changes in liabilities arising from financing activities

	Lease liability £	Bank loans £	Total £
Balance at 1 April 2024	117,328	5,149,040	5,266,368
Net cash used in financing activities	(47,594)	(1,263,947)	(1,311,541)
Loans advanced	-	1,675,000	1,675,000
Interest expense (including capitalised interest)	4,695	264,907	269,602
Balance at 1 April 2025	74,429	5,825,000	5,899,429
Net cash used in financing activities	(36,941)	(3,102,740)	(3,139,681)
Loans advanced		2,875,000	2,875,000
Interest expense (including capitalised interest)	2,918	252,740	255,658
Balance at 31 March 2026	<u>40,406</u>	<u>5,850,000</u>	<u>5,890,406</u>

Annual Governance Statement 2025/26

Introduction

East Cambs Trading Company Ltd (ECTC) is a private company limited by shares wholly owned by East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC). The Company operates at arm's length from the Council with an independent board for operational decision making. Whilst remaining accountable to its shareholder through the Articles of Association and Shareholder Agreement.

Mission Statement

We believe that by continuing to develop the services that we offer we will be able to deliver services that are profitable, sustainable and flexible and focused on meeting the needs of local people and businesses in East Cambridgeshire.

We believe in improving the quality of life of the taxpayer of East Cambridgeshire and we believe in the Council's objectives that are set out in the Corporate Plan 2023-27. ECTC will continue to support the Council in achieving these objectives.

ECTC Commitments

- Deliver quality homes for the people of East Cambridgeshire.
- Trade in a manner that, wherever possible, acts in the best interest of the Council.
- Maximise on every commercial opportunity.

Company Purpose and Strategic Objectives

ECTC exists to deliver commercial and community benefits for East Cambridgeshire through:

- Property development and housing delivery.
- Grounds maintenance and tree services.
- Management and delivery of Ely Markets.
- Supporting the wider objectives of the Council.

The Company remains committed to delivering quality homes, maximising commercial opportunities in a manner that is in the best interest of its shareholder and the communities of East Cambridgeshire.

Governance Framework

ECTC is governed through:

- Articles of Association.
- Shareholder Agreements.
- Annual Business Plan.
- Financial Regulations and Internal Controls.
- Risk Management Framework.

- Operations Management Contracts.

These arrangements provide the framework through which the Company directs and controls its activities and manages risk.

Review of Performance During 2025/26

Property Development

The Company continued delivery of its housing programme throughout 2025/26.

Key achievements included:

- Completion and sale of the remaining homes at Eden Square.
- Progression of construction works at Arbour Square Phase 2.
- Signing of a contract with the Havebury Housing Partnership for the sale of all 27 houses at Arbour Square Phase 2 as affordable housing with a social rent tenure.
- Achieved planning permission, subject to completion of a Section 106 Agreement, for 13 dwellings at Arbour Square Phase 3.
- Working with Haddenham CLT to develop proposals for an extension to Ovins Rise.
- Continued support to Kennett CLT.

As at 31 March 2026, since its formation, the Company has delivered 186 homes, including 55 through Community Land Trusts, Registered Providers and £100k Homes initiative.

Commercial Services

The Company continued to deliver Grounds Maintenance and Ely Market Services.

Grounds Maintenance maintained high service standards whilst continuing to secure commercial income with approximately one-third of service income generated from organisations other than ECDC.

Ely Markets continue to provide a vibrant and successful market offer, supporting local businesses, footfall in Ely city centre and community needs. The service remains financially sustainable and continues to outperform national market sector trends.

Social Value of Property Development

An initial assessment of Social Value has been undertaken and is focused on the value of the affordable housing.

Site	Market Housing	Affordable Housing	Total	Difference between AH & OM Value
The Shade, Soham	5	8	13	£43,830

Barton Road, Ely	9	2	11	£257,133
Phase 1 Arbour Square, Ely	77	15	92	£934,066
Ovins Rise, Haddenham	35	19	54	£2,514,991
Eden Square, Ely	9	4	13	£600,000
Phase 2, Arbour Square	0	27	27	£163,960
	135	75	210	£4,513,979

The typical discount to registered providers is 20% on open market value, however, this can vary depending on the offers made and their access to Homes England grant.

The Shade, Soham- £520,000 of grants were received to assist with funding the affordable housing and this has been deducted from the difference. The properties were sold to the CLT with a 47% discount on open market value.

Barton Road, Ely- The third dwelling was delivered as a S106 contribution of £72,143 which reduced the profitability of the scheme. This has been added to the revenue of Phase 2 Arbour Square as it was provided as a grant to increase the affordable provision of that scheme. The properties were sold to the CLT at a 46% discount on open market value.

Phase 1 Arbour Square, Ely- ECTC did not need to make any affordable housing provision on this site as it was a refurbishment, so all 15 units are counted as additional. The properties were sold to the CLT with a 27% discount on open market value.

Ovins Rise, Haddenham- The properties were sold to the CLT at a 59% discount on open market value.

Eden Square, Ely- The £100k Homes scheme provided an average discount of 60% on open market value.

Phase 2 Arbour Square, Ely- As the site has not completed this is based on the assumptions of the scheme.

From the outset, due to decisions taken on the delivery model, none of the projects were expected to make the 'traditional' 20% profit target. If different decisions were taken from the outset and a profit of 20% was achieved then the Company could have realised more profit if a viability exercise was undertaken in the planning process to reduce the amount of affordable housing to achieve a 20% profit target (note- not relevant to Community-led developments; The Shade, Soham and Ovins Rise, Haddenham).

A social value report which captures other areas in the business will be produced during 2026/27.

Review of Governance Arrangements During 2025/26

During 2025/26 the Board continued to operate within the requirements of the Articles of Association and Shareholder Agreement. Board meetings were held regularly and received reports covering:

- Financial Performance.
- Risk Management
- Project Update.
- Business Planning.
- Governance Matters.

The Board maintained effective oversight of the Company's operations and strategic direction throughout the year.

The retirement of John Hill as Managing Director and Board Member was identified as a governance change requiring succession planning and implementation during 2025/26. Appropriate arrangements, including Council approvals, were put in place to ensure continuity of leadership and governance. Emma Grima succeeds John Hill as Managing Director and Board Manager.

Shareholder Oversight

The Finance & Assets Committee continued to act as shareholder Committee on behalf of the Council and fulfilled its responsibilities through:

- Review and approval of the business plan.
- Monitoring financial performance.
- Receiving statutory accounts and governance reports.

Regular reporting ensured effective shareholder oversight.

Financial Governance

The Company maintained appropriate financial management and control arrangements throughout 2025/26.

Key assurances include:

- Preparation of financial statements in accordance with relevant accounting standards.
- Independent external audit by Price Bailey LLP.
- Regular management accounts presented to Board and Shareholder Committee.
- Cashflow monitoring and financial forecasting.
- Appropriate budget monitoring arrangements.

The Board continued to monitor:

- Project cashflows.

- Loan performance.
- Development expenditure.
- Future borrowing requirements.
- Business plan assumptions.

The Company remained within its approved loan arrangements with ECDC and continued to monitor repayment profiles through its financial forecasts.

Risk Management

The Board maintained a strategic risk register throughout 2025/26, with risk updates considered at each formal Board meeting.

Key risks monitored during the year included:

- Economic uncertainty and housing market volatility.
- Development cost inflation.
- Changes in planning and housing policy.
- Adequacy of governance arrangements.
- Delivery of development projects.
- Local Government Reorganisation and future shareholder arrangements.
- Adequacy of organisational resources.

The Board is satisfied that appropriate mitigation measures remain in place for all strategic risks.

Internal Control and Assurance

The Company maintains a framework of internal control designed to manage risk to a reasonable and proportionate level.

Key assurance mechanism include:

- Independent external audit.
- Board scrutiny and challenge.
- Shareholder oversight.
- Quarterly financial monitoring.
- Health and Safety governance.
- Strategic risk reporting.

Governance Challenges and Future Improvements

The Board has considered whether any significant failures occurred during 2025/26.

No significant governance failures were identified.

The Company continued to operate in accordance with:

- Articles of Association.
- Shareholder Agreement.

- Approved Business Plan.
- Financial Regulations.
- Applicable Company and accounting legislation.

During 2025/26 the Company identified the following areas for continued attention during 2026/27:

- Embedding governance arrangements following leadership of changes.
- Expiration of two contracts with ECDC on 31 March 2027.
- Delivery of Arbour Square Phases 2 and 3.
- Securing a pipeline for future development projects.
- Housing market conditions and construction inflation.
- Maintain sufficient organisational capacity and specialist skills to deliver the Company's business.
- Responding to Local Government Reorganisation change where relevant.

These matters will continue to be monitored through the Board's governance and risk management arrangements.

Annual Governance Opinion

The Board has reviewed the effectiveness of its governance arrangements during 2025/26 and is satisfied that:

- Governance arrangements remain fit for purpose.
- Effective systems of internal control operated throughout the year.
- Appropriate financial management arrangements were in place.
- Risks were actively managed and monitored.
- The Company remained compliant with the requirements of its governing documents.
- No significant governance failures were identified requiring disclosure within this statement.

The Board therefore concludes that East Cambs Trading Company Limited maintained an effective governance framework throughout 2025/26 and that the Company's governance arrangements remain proportionate, robust and appropriate to its scale and activities.

TITLE: Growth and Infrastructure Fund

Committee: Finance and Assets

Date: 24 September 2026

Author: Director Community

Report number: AB69

Contact officer: Sally Bonnett, Director Community

Sally.bonnett@eastcambs.gov.uk (01353) 616451, Room 105, The Grange, Ely

Issue

1. To approve the expenditure of the remaining Growth and Infrastructure Fund money.

Recommendations

2. Members are requested to approve a grant of £405,000 to East Cambs Trading Company as a contribution towards a housing development scheme delivering 100% affordable housing at Phase 3 Arbour Square, Ely
3. Approve the allocation of £373,107.60 to install PV panels on the car park canopy and/or a battery solution at Lake View Bereavement Centre, Mepal
4. Approve the tendering of the solar PV panels and/or battery solution and installation through a specialist framework.
5. Delegate authority to the Director Legal, in consultation with the Director Operations and Director Finance, to enter into the necessary contractual and/or legal arrangements to implement the above recommendations.

Background/Options

6. An update regarding the Growth and Infrastructure Fund was presented at the June meeting of this committee. Officers met with Witchford Parish Council in July, who confirmed their decision not to progress their Ely Road Cycleway Project.
7. The total amount of unallocated funding is £778,107.60. Due to the Cambridgeshire Horizons spending deadline of May 2027, there was insufficient time to reopen the Growth and Infrastructure Fund for a further application round, undertake assessment, and allocate funding. So, as set out in the report presented in June 2026, officers have identified two projects that can be delivered within the required timeframe, ensuring all the funding is spent.
8. In July 2025, ECTC applied for planning permission for development at the site known as Phase 3 Arbour Square, Ely. In March 2026, the Planning Committee approved, subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement, a 13-unit scheme which secured 31% affordable housing, i.e. policy compliant. The Section 106 Agreement was completed on 28 August 2026.

9. A grant of £405,000 would increase the amount of affordable housing delivered at the site by enabling the nine open market houses to be delivered as social rent houses.
10. Once the evidence that the site will be delivered as a wholly affordable housing scheme is received, the Director Community will enter into a funding agreement with ECTC to ensure the grant is used to deliver the site as 100% affordable.
11. The allocation of £373,107.60 to Lake View Bereavement Centre would enable the installation of solar panels on canopies over the car park, which will generate green electricity and further enhance the sustainability features of the site.
12. The electric cremator has a running load of 264kWh/day to maintain the 'at rest' temperature, although this does not take into account the fluctuations in energy requirements to reach operating temperatures (figures provided by DfW, electric cremator producer). From initial market testing, it is envisaged that an 81kWp system, with 180 panels, could be achieved within the budget, and further investigation is required around a supporting battery solution. This could produce between 77,000 – 85,000kWh annually. Although the precise savings, both financially and emissions, are subject to greater analysis and detailed specifications.
13. All preparatory groundworks, including ducting, have been completed as part of the CIL capital build project, with a view to minimise operational disruption when the opportunity arrived to install solar on site and to minimise reliance on the grid, in turn saving on energy costs and reducing the carbon footprint of the asset.

Arguments/Conclusions

14. Members are recommended to approve the grant of £405,000 to ECTC for the delivery of additional affordable housing at Phase 3 Arbour Square, Ely and £373,107.60 to install PV panels on the car park canopy at Lake View Bereavement Centre, Mepal to deliver the benefits set out above and to ensure that the money is spent before the Cambridgeshire Horizons May 2027 deadline.

Additional Implications Assessment

15.

Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Human Resources (HR) Implications
No	Yes	No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA)	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)
No	No	No

- (a) **Legal implications** - requirement to enter into a funding agreement with ECTC to ensure the grant is used to deliver the site as 100% affordable. To progress a procurement for PV canopies through a dedicated renewable energy procurement framework.

- (b) **Carbon Impact** – provision of PVs and/or battery system as detailed above is estimated to provide up to 77,000 – 85,000kWh per annum. As a minimum, and when combined with careful choice of energy tariffs, the proposal is targeted to save at least a third of the energy bills for the site, potentially significantly more. Correspondingly, the ongoing carbon footprint for the operation of the building will be similarly reduced.

Appendices

None

Background documents

Minutes of the Finance and Assets meeting held on 24 November 2022, 25 January 2024 and 25 June 2026.

TITLE: Inclusive Playground Strategy

Committee: Finance and Assets

Date: 24 September 2026

Author: Leisure & Active Lifestyles Manager

Report number: AB70

Contact officer: Martin Grey, Leisure & Active Lifestyles Manager
martin.grey@eastcambs.gov.uk, (01353) 616469, Room 002, The Grange, Ely

Issue

1. To consider the draft Inclusive Playground Strategy and toolkit.

Recommendations

2. Members are requested to approve the draft Inclusive Playground Strategy in Appendix 1 and the draft Inclusive Playground Toolkit in Appendix 2
3. Delegate authority to the Leisure & Active Lifestyles Manager, in consultation with the Chair of Finance & Assets Committee, to make minor amendments to the draft documents.

Background/Options

4. In May 2024, the Council passed an Accessible Play Motion in which it recognised that all children and young people should have access to outdoor play opportunities that are inclusive and accessible, including children with disabilities, wheelchair users and those with special educational needs. It acknowledged that playgrounds are important community assets that support childhood development, wellbeing and social inclusion.
5. The motion set out the following: Develop an inclusive Playground Strategy which will include (but is not limited to):
 - a. How the Council will respond to the independent audit in the short, medium and long-term to achieve, where practical and possible, an outcome of inclusive playgrounds that are within this Council's control.
 - b. Possible funding opportunities to deliver a) above.
 - c. A Toolkit for achieving Inclusive Playgrounds, based on the standards and principles relevant at the time of delivery, which will be used by the Council and available for use by other providers.
 - d. A communications strategy to promote Inclusive Playgrounds which will include raising awareness of the importance of Inclusive Playgrounds and possible sources of funding to external providers.

6. Audits were carried out by PiPA Play in 2025. This covered 20 Council-managed sites with 23 playgrounds, and 10 Parish Council sites with 15 playgrounds.
7. In February 2026, the Council approved a bespoke Community and Infrastructure Levy (CIL) grant scheme for Inclusive Play and Open Spaces to facilitate delivery of inclusive playgrounds and open spaces.

Arguments/Conclusions

8. The Inclusive Playground Strategy explains the process undertaken by the Council to receive inclusive play audits on the play areas it manages, a summary of the audit findings and sets out the actions the Council will take to improve both new and existing playgrounds.
9. The Inclusive Playground toolkit is intended to support local councils, developers, housing associations and other playground and open space providers to develop and upgrade accessible play spaces. The toolkit provides practical help and advice and identifies potential funding sources. This toolkit will be shared with partners to support inclusive playgrounds across the district.
10. The Toolkit and the CIL funding scheme will be promoted to local councils and other key stakeholders, and the play area information on the Council's website will be updated to include information about accessible features.
11. Costs to deliver the strategy will be met from existing budgets as part of ongoing maintenance and replacement works and CIL funding where applicable.

Additional Implications Assessment

12.

Financial Implications No	Legal Implications No	Human Resources (HR) Implications No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Yes	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) No	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) No

Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Inclusive Playground Strategy
Appendix 2: Draft Inclusive Playground Toolkit

Background documents

Full Council 23 May 2024 Decision List



East Cambridgeshire
District Council

Inclusive Playground Strategy

2026 to 2028

Contents

Foreword	4
Background	6
What we mean by ‘inclusive play’	8
The audit process	9
ECDC managed play areas audit findings	10
Top 5 district-wide priorities	11
Delivering inclusive playgrounds	12
ECDC Actions 2026 to 2028	13
Working with developers	14
Supporting local councils and other providers	16
Inclusive Play and Open Spaces CIL Grant Scheme	17

Foreword

East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) is committed to ensuring that children and young people of all abilities can access high-quality opportunities for outdoor play.

This strategy provides a practical framework for making playgrounds across the district more inclusive. It builds on the council's decision in May 2024 to undertake an independent audit of the playgrounds it maintains, to invite parish councils to participate in the same process, and to use the findings to shape this district-wide inclusive playground strategy.

To enable delivery of the strategy the council has also created an Inclusive Play and Open Spaces Community Infrastructure Levy fund, which supports capital projects that improve accessibility and create additional capacity in response to growth.

The key actions in section 6 sets out what the council will do to ensure the playgrounds that it maintains are more accessible and enjoyable for all children and young people across the district and how it will help other providers to do the same.

Cllr Alan Sharp
Chair, Finance and Assets Committee



01

Background

In May 2024 the council passed an Accessible Play Motion in which it recognised that all children and young people should have access to outdoor play opportunities that are inclusive and accessible, including children with disabilities, wheelchair users and those with special educational needs. It acknowledged that playgrounds are important community assets that support childhood development, wellbeing and social inclusion.

The motion also acknowledged that some existing playgrounds do not currently meet these needs and stated that East Cambridgeshire District Council should lead by example by embedding inclusive design principles in playgrounds under its control and encouraging the same approach across other providers, including parish councils.

To support this, an independent audit was carried out of all council-owned playgrounds, and parish councils were offered the opportunity to have their play areas audited at the district council's expense, and a budget of up to £25,000 was allocated to this work. The motion also required a report on the findings and the development of an Inclusive Playground

Strategy covering improvement plans, funding opportunities, a toolkit of good practice and a communications programme.

The motion also sought to embed inclusive play within planning processes for new developments, explore a Local Plan policy requiring inclusive playgrounds, and improve public awareness of accessible playground features through the council's website, social media and local information boards.

In February 2026 the council approved a bespoke Community and Infrastructure Levy (CIL) grant scheme for Inclusive Play and Open Spaces to facilitate delivery of the play audit recommendations.

This strategy sets out the actions ECDC will take in response to the play audit findings to improve council managed playgrounds. It also explains how the council will support others to develop and enhance their own playgrounds through the Inclusive Play Toolkit and funding available via the Inclusive Play and Open Spaces CIL Grant Scheme.

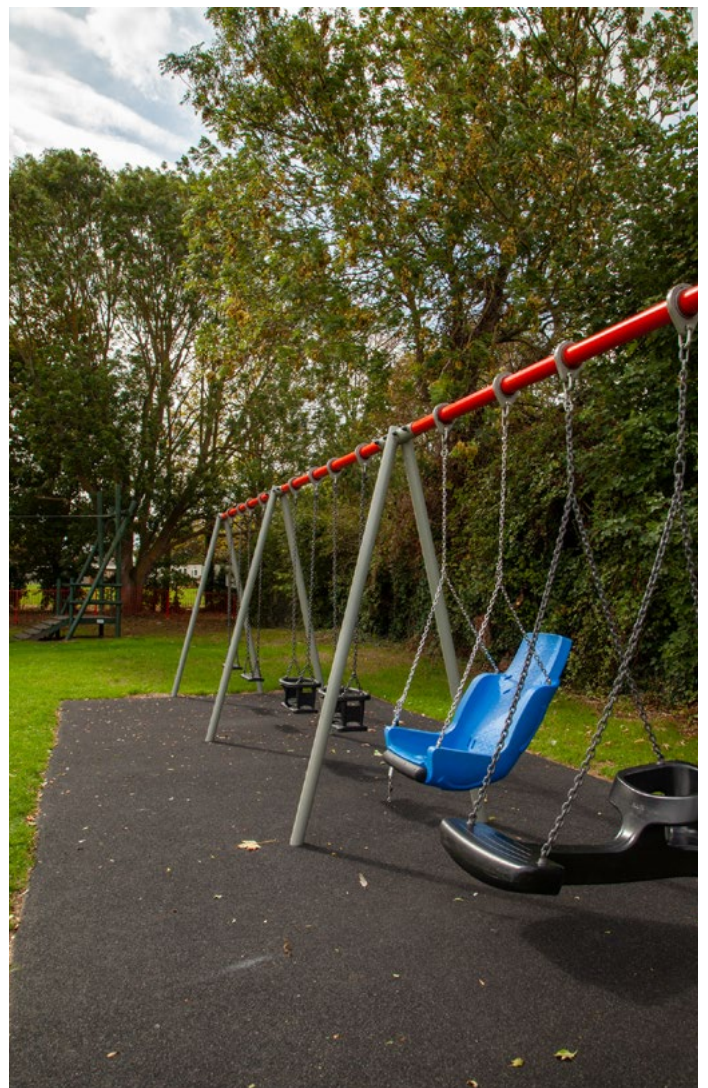


02

What we mean by 'inclusive play'

Inclusive play means designing, managing and improving play spaces so that children and young people can reach them, enter them, move around them, stay comfortably, and participate in a wide range of play experiences alongside others.

The strategy adopts an understanding of inclusion that goes beyond minimum physical access. Inclusive play spaces should enable disabled and non-disabled children to play together, offer a variety of physical, sensory, social and imaginative experiences, and remove barriers created by layout, surfacing, equipment and access.



03

The audit process

PiPA (Plan Inclusive Play Areas) is a social enterprise with the sole aim of helping to improve accessible and inclusive play facilities for children and families across the UK. PiPA is the only tool to independently assess inclusive provision in outdoor play areas. PiPA exists to empower the true meaning of inclusion, equality and diversity in play area design, enabling everyone the same opportunity to play in a fun and safe environment, because all children need and have the right to play.

PiPA were contacted by the council in 2025 and they carried out an audit of 23 play areas managed by ECDC.

Parish councils were provided with the opportunity to have an audit of their play areas and initially 20 Parishes expressed an interest that covered 37 playgrounds.

Those parish councils were invited to an audits workshop which explained what the outcomes of the audits would show, discussed the overall inclusivity of playgrounds and detailed what information PiPA needed from playground owners. 15 parish council play areas were audited.

Each audit report included an assessment of 4 key areas:

- **Accessibility of the Area**, barriers that might be in place, surfaces that exclude users from the play area
- **Dynamic Play Opportunity**, opportunities for everyone to get their whole bodies involved in dynamic play (this can be achieved through sliding, climbing, spinning or swinging)
- **Nurturing the Senses**, at least 3 of the senses from the 6 senses must be accessed from both a seated and standing position
- **Rest and Recharge**, assess areas for families to relax in quiet zones or play on their own and review seating throughout the space

These are all given a RAG rating and a summary provided alongside some recommendations for the play area.

Each parish council that requested an audit received a report and ECDC also received reports for each play area in Ely and Fordham, with Littleport and Soham areas receiving separate joint reports for the area overall.

04

ECDC managed play areas

audit findings

The audits identify a consistent theme across nearly all the play areas the district council manages: while many sites have reasonable or good physical access, they offer very limited inclusive dynamic play, sensory play and rest/recharge provision.

Most sites require targeted improvements to support children with physical, sensory and cognitive needs.

Common weaknesses

Nearly every site received the following:

- red ratings for Dynamic Play
- red ratings for Nurturing the Senses
- Frequent red ratings for Rest and Recharge provision
- little or no provision for wheelchair users
- limited opportunities for play at height for less mobile users
- few sensory play opportunities

Insufficient seating and resting spaces were found at the following locations:

- Beresford Road, Ely
- Brooke Grove, Ely
- Cherry Drive, Ely
- Collier Close, Ely
- Darwin Close, Ely
- Goldsmiths Court, Ely
- Kingsley Walk, Ely
- Morley Drive, Ely
- Murfitts Close, Ely
- Tennyson Place, Ely
- Fishers Bank, Littleport
- Highfields Green, Littleport
- Sandys Crescent, Littleport
- The Orchards, Littleport
- Celadine View, Soham
- Downfields, Soham
- Lion Mills, Soham
- Millers Place, Soham
- Fordham

Top 5 district-wide priorities

Common strengths

Many sites have hard standing surfaces, level access and accessible gates. Several parks already provide a good foundation for future inclusive improvements.

Existing accessibility means future investment can focus on equipment rather than extensive groundworks at some locations, for example:

- Cherry Drive, Ely
- Darwin Close, Ely
- Morley Drive, Ely
- Murfitts Close, Ely
- Tennyson Place, Ely
- Teal Avenue, Soham
- Bittern Grove, Soham
- Lapwing Way, Soham
- Kingfisher Drive, Soham

1. Wheelchair-accessible roundabouts (Littleport, Soham, Fordham)
2. Sensory play areas and gardens (Beresford Road, Ely; Cherry Drive, ELY; Fordham)
3. Ramped play units providing inclusive access to play at height (Collier Close, Ely; Darwin Close, Ely; Soham)
4. Accessible pathway improvements (Brook Grove, Ely; Goldsmiths Court, Ely; All sites, Littleport)
5. Additional accessible seating and rest areas (Brook Grove, Ely; Kingsley Walk, Ely; Fordham)

These actions would address the most common shortcomings identified by PiPA and provide the greatest improvement in inclusive play provision managed by ECDC across East Cambridgeshire.

05

Delivering inclusive playgrounds

ECDC will support the improvement of playgrounds across the district in four ways, making improvements to the play area it manages, working with developers during the planning process to ensure new play areas that are delivered are inclusive, supporting parish councils and other providers to deliver improvements to both new and existing playgrounds and making CIL funding available to local organisations to support the delivery of improvements.



06

ECDC Actions 2026 to 2028

A review of the audit findings has identified that the key priorities for the council to address to support inclusive playgrounds are:

- ◆ providing new specific items (depending on consultation with parishes to avoid duplication) as provided in top 5 priorities
- ◆ access improvements to current playgrounds
- ◆ utilising equipment already in place to ensure it is as accessible as possible
- ◆ align future equipment replacement decisions with inclusive design requirements
- ◆ embed inclusive play expectations in planning advice, developer discussions and the evidence base for future planning policy where appropriate
- ◆ use the council's Inclusive Play and Open Spaces Community Infrastructure Levy fund to support eligible projects that improve accessibility and respond to growth
- ◆ support parish councils to bring forward investable projects with needs evidence and match funding
- ◆ promote this strategy and toolkit and the Inclusive Play and Open Spaces CIL funding to parish councils and other partners
- ◆ update the play area information on the Councils website to highlight accessible features
- ◆ costs to deliver the actions will be met from existing budgets as part of ongoing maintenance and replacement works and CIL funding where applicable.

07

Working with developers

Alongside improvements to existing play areas, the district council works with developers delivering new play facilities and open spaces to embed inclusive play expectations into planning advice and early project discussions. This helps ensure new provision is accessible, inclusive and considered consistently from the outset.

Following on from the audits carried out by PiPA the template and criteria is now used to review and comment on play areas through the planning process. This provides more robust evidence of need and also supports planning officers with knowledge of inclusive playgrounds.

Little Downham Case Study, Accent Housing

A good existing relationship with the housing provider supported early consultation on play areas for a new housing estate in Little Downham. Working with the developer at an early stage in the process allowed sight and discussion regarding the play area to be provided. Following this early consultation the design of the playground was changed resulting in better surfaces being provided to be inclusive to allow adequate access between the various items of equipment.





08

Supporting local councils and other providers

ECDC has funded play audits for 15 parish council playgrounds and will continue to offer support to local councils and other providers of playgrounds and open spaces. The council has produced an Inclusive Playground Toolkit which is intended to support local councils, open space planners, housing associations and other playground and open space providers to develop and upgrade accessible play spaces. The toolkit brings together the standards and principles that should guide inclusive play projects, practical help for providers, and funding information.



09

Inclusive Play and Open Spaces CIL Grant Scheme

To enable local councils and other organisations to deliver changes to make playgrounds more inclusive, ECDC has set up a specific grant funding scheme. The Inclusive Play and Open Spaces CIL Grant Scheme provides capital funding towards projects that ensure playgrounds are accessible to children of all abilities. It can be used to fund new facilities or to create additional capacity and improvements at existing playgrounds.



End of document.



East Cambridgeshire
District Council

Inclusive Playground Toolkit

01

About this toolkit

This toolkit is intended to support local councils, open space planners, housing associations and other playground and open space providers to develop and upgrade accessible play spaces.

The toolkit brings together the standards and principles that should guide inclusive play projects, practical help for providers, and funding information.

The toolkit focuses on spaces that have been designed specifically for play, such as playgrounds and play areas. However, it can be applied to many spaces throughout our communities and public space whether or not they have been specifically allocated for children's play.



02

Play value

The term play value describes the range and quality of play opportunities and experiences offered by a play environment. It is also used to describe the value a space, or piece of equipment, brings to children to help them extend their play. A space rich in play value creates opportunities for a variety of physical, social and sensory play experiences. It offers all children and teenagers the opportunity to freely interact with or experience the following:

- ◆ **other children and teenagers**, with a choice to play alone or with others, to negotiate, co-operate, fall out, and resolve conflict
- ◆ **the natural world**, weather, the seasons, bushes, trees, plants, insects, animals and mud
- ◆ **loose parts**, natural and man-made materials that can be manipulated, moved and adapted, built and demolished
- ◆ **the natural elements**, earth, air, fire and water
- ◆ **challenge and risk taking**, physical and emotional
- ◆ **playing with identity**, role play and dressing up
- ◆ **movement**, running, jumping, climbing, balancing and rolling
- ◆ **rough and tumble**, play fighting
- ◆ **senses**, sounds, tastes, textures, smells and sights

Key features of good play spaces include:

- the space and context as a whole is as important as individual play features in creating successful play spaces
- spaces include play materials and play features that are non-prescriptive and therefore encourage imagination and suggest many different ways of being played on or with
- spaces do not rely on manufactured play equipment for the play opportunities offered (spaces use manufactured equipment to enhance what is on offer)
- the natural features of the spaces, such as existing trees and natural puddles, are respected and integrated
- the spaces incorporate opportunities for children to encounter or create challenge and risk

03

Balancing risks and benefits

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published a high-level statement to promote a balanced approach to managing risk in children's play (Health and Safety Executive (2012) Children's Play and Leisure: promoting a balanced approach).

The statement emphasises that when planning and providing play opportunities, the goal is not to eliminate risk, but to consider the risks and the benefits.

Risk management in play provision involves balancing risk and benefits in a strategic way.

When play spaces have the right equipment and materials, in the right place, with the right policies and procedures in place for inspection and maintenance, then the play provision will be as safe as is reasonably practicable, which is what the law requires. It is important to put issues of safety and risk into context. Many children and teenagers actively seek adventurous, exciting play experiences with a degree of risk.

04

Steps to developing inclusive play spaces

The following step-by-step process is designed to help councils, schools, developers, and community organisations plan, design, deliver and manage an inclusive playground where children and families of all abilities can play together.

In addition to the step-by-step guide there are organisations that work nationally that can support with some of the work around inclusive playgrounds such as PiPA Play or charities such as Scope. Play equipment providers can sometimes offer information and case studies around what has worked well elsewhere and what type of equipment might be most suited to the project in mind.

Projects should address inclusive access, inclusive play experiences, comfort and stay, social interaction, dignity, safety and long-term management. This should include consideration of arrival and parking, pathways and gradients, boundaries and gates, surfacing, inclusive seating and resting points, shelter and shade, quiet or less stimulating spaces where appropriate, accessible information, and equipment that supports shared play.

Stage	Key questions	Actions	Outputs
1. Identify the need	Who is currently underserved?	Review local demographics, existing play provision, accessibility gaps and community priorities.	Needs assessment
2. Build the team	Who needs to be involved?	Establish a project team including children, disabled people, families, access specialists, maintenance teams and local stakeholders.	Project Governance and Stakeholder Plan
3. Determine a budget	How will the project be funded?	Identify funding opportunities, prepare a business case and develop a realistic capital and lifecycle budget to cover maintenance and inspection costs.	Funding Strategy and Budget
4. Select the site	Is the site accessible, safe and suitable?	Assess access, transport links, topography, utilities, biodiversity, drainage and opportunities for future growth.	Site Assessment Report
5. Engage the community	What do local people want?	Carry out inclusive consultation, take care not to raise expectations and be honest about what can be achieved.	Community Engagement Report

Stage	Key questions	Actions	Outputs
6. Develop the design	Does the design provide play for everyone? What is the access like?	Prepare an inclusive design brief that includes a range of physical, sensory, imaginative, social and nature-based play opportunities, accessible routes, seating, shade and clear wayfinding. Include access for pathways and parking.	Concept Design and Design Brief
7. Fundraising	How will the work be paid for?	Revisit and revise budget, carry out fundraising activities, submit grant applications.	Funding Applications
8. Procure the build	How will quality be assured?	Prepare specifications, appoint experienced contractors, monitor construction quality and undertake accessibility inspections throughout the build.	Completed Inclusive Playground
9. Open and remote	How will the community use the space?	Launch the playground and promote it through local networks and encourage ongoing community use.	Community Launch Plan
10. Maintain and improve	How will the playground remain inclusive?	Implement regular inspections, maintain equipment and landscaping, collect user feedback and review performance annually to inform future improvements.	Maintenance Plan and Annual Review

05

Access to playgrounds, design considerations

Access to playgrounds should be designed in at inception or addressed in any improvement plans. The following should be considered:

- approaching and use of the space, adequate space around the equipment
- gates and other entrances should be wide enough and manageable for wheelchairs and buggies
- paths and routes around the space
- surfacing must be wheelchair and buggy friendly
- access to spaces for gathering and socialising, seating for all
- facilities (such as parking and toilets)

It is important to remain mindful of the range of individual, multiple or a combination of medical impairments and conditions, which need consideration for children, siblings, family members and those who might be accompanying them.

Mobility issues

Things to consider

Limited ability to move freely affects participation and independence. Design may require someone to assist, accompany or transfer children to and from play equipment and features.

A reasonable design may consist of:

- a good path into the space from the path, street or car park
- ease of travel to spots for socialising
- surfaces that are able to be 'wheeled on' and allow access to as many structures and features as possible, but still offer variety and fun
- items that support interaction and that can be reached from wheelchair height, such as sand or water trays and musical items
- there is head room under structures
- there are turning spaces for wheelchairs, especially in areas for socialising

- there are items, such as loose parts play materials, to play with at ground level
- there are opportunities for those that use a wheelchair to get out and reach items such as sand, water, loose parts and other items that are easy to manipulate and don't require fine motor skills or strength
- access to natural elements
- there are tunnels that a person can be wheeled through or navigate through with some independence
- there are good hand-grips and rails
- adequate facilities for assistive or service dogs
- consider tactile features
- narrow paths through unmown areas of grass can help exploration



Sensory issues

Things to consider

Sensory impairments affect communication and navigation, requiring careful lighting and noise management while avoiding overwhelming combinations of sounds, scents and visual stimuli.

A reasonable design may consist of:

- planting that stimulates the sense of smell and touch
 - a mix of materials that offer a range of textures and shapes to touch
 - careful consideration of surfacing so that it is not acoustically overwhelming
 - raised edges and textures can help with direction
 - strong cues of colour at level changes, steps and on hand grips
 - the use of strong colours and light
 - features, resources and materials that offer sound and gentle vibration
 - quieter spaces shielded from excessive background noise
- the opportunity to explore elements such as sand, water and other natural features
 - features that block out the noise of wind and passing traffic
 - clear and concise information on any signage
 - adequate facilities for assistive or service dogs



Mental health issues

Things to consider

All children benefit from a sense of security and stability, which can come from good community resources and play spaces. These can facilitate trust, respect, self-esteem, and independence.

A reasonable design may consist of:

- a range and choice of different types of activity within the space, such as active and quiet, enclosed places and open spaces
- natural features
- spaces which support children to be 'on their own' without stigma attached
- a range of loose parts play materials to support exploration, creativity and contemplation
- sensory features, such as water, sand and loose fill

Cognitive processing conditions

Things to consider

Children with cognitive conditions may need extra supervision, tailored equipment and support to recognise danger, manage social situations and access age appropriate play opportunities.

A reasonable design may consist of:

- the space is designed so that it is easy to understand how to get around and use it
- signage, when needed, is clear and uses symbols or pictures
- provide choice in spaces, ones that are busy and active and quieter ones
- the use of natural boundaries to help prevent wandering off
- consider fencing some spaces, particularly if they are close to hazards
- a good range of physical challenges so that children can identify what feels right for them
- equipment that enables side-by-side activity for those that require a greater level of supervision
- spaces which support children to be 'on their own' without stigma attached

06

Kennett case study

The playgrounds at Kennett are the result of the former landowner's determination to make them very special. After 2 years of intensive research they chose an independent contractor to provide the equipment. The brief was to create a play space which thrilled the children and provided seating and social opportunities for parents and carers. Each playspace in Kennett has a different theme. The village green centrepiece is a bespoke 'Fort Kennett' which has proved hugely popular. It was also important to them to create an inclusive space and these adaptations were achieved easily and seamlessly. The play roundabout is wheelchair friendly and the picnic tables are also wheelchair (and pushchair) friendly with grid matting removing the obstacles that deter access to many play spaces.

The second playground to open (close to the station) has a train theme with the centrepiece being a bespoke train, the 'Kennett Flyer'. Sensory boards enhance learning opportunities and are deliberately inclusive (for example a butterfly designed to appeal to visually impaired children). The colours are bright and appealing and again there is a wheelchair picnic bench as well as ample attractive painted seating.





07

Planning for reasonable design when refurbishing play spaces

There may be opportunities to consider accessibility when existing play spaces are being changed or upgraded.

Things to consider include:

- assess and improve the general play value through the provision of natural elements or loose parts play materials that can be accessed easily by the largest number of children
- include and improve paths, and in particular, provide access to popular activities
- provide opportunities for socialising and for children to play together
- build in shade
- consult the community profile and assess the need for features such as toilets and boundaries
- assess the value that current users apply to play items and features. It may be that some features will be retained even if they cannot easily be made accessible
- determine if the adjustment achieves a number of goals such as participation, challenge and play value

Factors to take into account when deciding whether a design feature is reasonable:

- whether taking any particular step would be effective in preventing the substantial disadvantage
- the practicability of the step
- the financial and other costs of making the adjustment and the extent of any disruption caused
- the extent of the financial or other resources needed
- the availability of financial or other assistance to help, such as partnership funding
- the potential impact on the range of users



08

Funding sources

Delivering inclusive playground improvements will usually require a combination of funding sources rather than reliance on a single grant. Applicants should develop a clear project plan, supported by an inclusive play audit or needs assessment, community consultation, realistic capital costs, arrangements for future inspection and maintenance, and evidence of any match funding required. Funding can come from a variety of sources such as council investment, developer contributions where appropriate, external grants, charitable funding and community fundraising.

The information below is not an exhaustive list but gives details of a number of funding sources and organisations that can support with identifying funding and funding applications.

East Cambridgeshire District Council has a [Inclusive Play and Open Spaces CIL Fund \(opens in new window\)](https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-control/community-infrastructure-levy/cil-information-parish-1) (eastcambs.gov.uk/services/planning-and-building-control/community-infrastructure-levy/cil-information-parish-1) specifically intended to improve accessibility in playgrounds and open spaces. It can support capital projects that provide new facilities or create additional capacity in response to local growth. Projects must be located in East Cambridgeshire, include accessibility improvements, be supported by an inclusive play audit or needs assessment, and secure at least 10% match funding. The level of grant awarded will reflect the scale of growth in the relevant parish, town or city.

The council has other [grants for community projects \(opens in new window\)](https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/services/community-safety-and-wellbeing/grants-and-community-projects/grants-community-projects) (eastcambs.gov.uk/services/community-safety-and-wellbeing/grants-and-community-projects/grants-community-projects) including the Facilities Improvements Grant and S106 Grants.

[Support Cambridgeshire \(opens in new window\)](https://supportcambridgeshire.org.uk/) (supportcambridgeshire.org.uk/) and [VCAEC \(Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire\) \(opens in new window\)](https://www.caec.org.uk/) (caec.org.uk/) can help eligible organisations identify suitable funding and develop or review applications. Applicants should confirm current criteria, secure any required match funding and allow for future inspection and maintenance costs before work begins.

[My Community \(opens in new window\)](https://mycommunity.org.uk/funding) (mycommunity.org.uk/funding) is a helpful website which brings you the latest tools, tips and ideas to help make your community a brilliant place to live. It includes lots of information on how to fund grants and tips to improve your chances of getting one.

[Cambridgeshire Community Foundation \(opens in new window\)](https://www.cambscf.org.uk/) (cambscf.org.uk/) is a hub for local funding opportunities who work to understand the needs of local communities.

[The Thalia WB Community Fund \(opens in new window\)](http://cambscf.org.uk/funds/thalia/) (cambscf.org.uk/funds/thalia/) offers financial assistance to local not-for-profit organisations that deliver benefits to the general public, biodiversity or the environment, within a 10-mile radius of a landfill site.

[The Biffa Award \(opens in new window\)](http://biffa-award.org/) (biffa-award.org/) supports a wide range of community and environmental projects across the UK.

[The Big Lottery Fund \(opens in new window\)](http://tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/) (tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/) awards grants to UK organisations to help improve their communities.

[FCC Communities Foundation \(opens in new window\)](http://fcccommunitiesfoundation.org.uk/) (fcccommunitiesfoundation.org.uk/) is a not-for-profit business that helps benefit the lives of people who live close to landfill sites by awarding grants for community, biodiversity and heritage projects.

[The National Lottery Awards \(opens in new window\)](http://tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/funding-programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-england/) (tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/funding-programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-england/) for All England with grants of £300 to £20,000 for projects lasting up to two years. Playground projects may qualify where they improve community spaces, bring people together or help children and young people thrive.

[National Lottery Reaching Communities England \(opens in new window\)](http://tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/funding-programmes/reaching-communities-england/) (tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/funding-programmes/reaching-communities-england/) with grants from £20,001 upwards for larger, community-led projects. Inclusive play schemes could qualify where they create welcoming community spaces, support children and young people, tackle health inequalities or improve access to quality outdoor spaces.

Tesco community [Groundwork grant programmes \(opens in new window\)](http://groundwork.org.uk/apply-for-a-grant/) (groundwork.org.uk/apply-for-a-grant/) offers small grants that may support equipment and activities benefiting children and young people. These are more likely to support a defined element of a playground project than a complete refurbishment, and applicants should check which Tesco programme is currently open.

[Co-op Local Community Fund information \(opens in new window\)](http://co-operative.coop/media/news-releases/community-groups-invited-to-apply-to-co-ops-local-community-fund-as-applications-open/) (co-operative.coop/media/news-releases/community-groups-invited-to-apply-to-co-ops-local-community-fund-as-applications-open) has periodic UK-wide funding for local charities and community organisations. Playground projects may be suitable where they create opportunities for young people, improve wellbeing, strengthen community cohesion or support sustainable community spaces.

09

Contacts

For more information regarding Inclusive Playgrounds in general, or specifics such as the process of undergoing an audit you can reach out to the following.

Play England

Play England is the national charity in England that promotes and protects every child's right to play. They work with national partners and other organisations with shared aims to raise awareness about the importance of play and have built up considerable experience and resources to help support individuals and organisations.

www.playengland.org.uk
(opens in new window)
info@playengland.org.uk

PiPA

PiPA (Plan Inclusive Play Areas) is a social enterprise with the sole aim of helping to improve accessible and inclusive play facilities for children and families across the UK. PiPA is the only tool to independently assess inclusive provision in outdoor play areas. PiPA exists to empower the true meaning of inclusion, equality and diversity in play area design.

www.pipa-play.org (opens in new window)
info@pipa-play.org

Scope

[Scope \(opens in new window\)](https://scope.org.uk/campaigns/lets-play-fair-16ef55/campaigning-for-inclusive-playgrounds-guide) (scope.org.uk/campaigns/lets-play-fair-16ef55/campaigning-for-inclusive-playgrounds-guide), the disability equality charity, have produced a Campaigning for Inclusive Playgrounds Guide with parents of disabled children. This guide is part of our Let's Play Fair campaign.

End of document.

TITLE: Extension of Lease to Ely Museum

Committee: Finance and Assets

Date: 24 September 2026

Author: Chief Executive

Report number: AB71

Contact officer: Emma Grima, Chief Executive

Emma.grima@eastcambs.gov.uk , 01353 616271, Room 103, The Grange, Ely

Issue

1. To consider a request for the extension of the lease on The Old Gaol, Market Street, Ely, Cambs.

Recommendations

2. Members are requested to:

Approve the extension of the lease to Ely Museum at The Old Gaol, Market Street, Ely to 31 March 2125, and

Delegate authority to the Director Legal & Monitoring Officer to complete the relevant legal documentation.

Background/Options

3. The Council leases The Old Gaol Building, Market Street, Ely to Ely Museum. The lease expires in 2047.

Ely Museum Trustees are in the process of identifying future funding opportunities. Most funders will not engage when there are 20 years or less left on the lease. This has triggered a request to extend the lease to run for at least 50 years.

Arguments/Conclusions

4. The Council is committed to ensuring that assets like Ely Museum continue to be available now and in the future and has even made a contribution through the Community Infrastructure Levy (£165,000). The current lease is a peppercorn rent (£1) per annum, and it is not proposed that this is changed.
5. It is recommended that the lease is extended to 31 March 2125.

Additional Implications Assessment

Financial Implications No	Legal Implications Yes Completion of documentation	Human Resources (HR) Implications No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) No	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) No	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) No

Appendices

None.

Background documents

Existing Lease.

TITLE: Assets Update

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 24 September 2026

Author: Open Spaces & Facilities Manager

Report number: AB72

Contact officer: Spencer Clerk, Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
Spencer.clerk@eastcambs.gov.uk 01353 665555 The Grange, Ely

Issue

1. To receive an update on Council-owned assets.

Recommendations

2. Members are requested to:
 - a. Note the update on Council-owned assets, and
 - b. Note the expenditure tracking sheet at Appendix 1.

Background/Options

3. On 26 March 2026 (Agenda Item 8), the Finance & Assets Committee received a report detailing Council-owned assets, which provided a summary of each asset. This report provides an update on the assets contained within that report.

The Asset Management budget expenditure sheet in Appendix 1 identifies areas of planned expenditure and provides an update on actual spend to date. Members will continue to receive the expenditure tracking sheet as part of the Assets Update.

Council Assets Update

4. **Inclusive Play-** The Strategy is being considered by Committee in another item on this agenda.

Members will be aware that funds are being set aside from the Community Infrastructure Levy towards Inclusive Play and Open Spaces. This fund currently stands at £297,264.88 (as of 31 August 2026). Parish Councils can apply to the Council for match funding to assist with the delivery of inclusive play and open spaces.

70 Market Street, Ely- The property is being advertised. Members will consider a new tenant in November 2026.

Cloisters Public Conveniences, Ely- The refurbishment works will be carried out in September 2026.

The Grange lift- The work has now been completed, and the lift is operational.

Additional Implications Assessment

Financial Implications None	Legal Implications None	Human Resources (HR) Implications None
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) None	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) None	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) None

Appendices

Appendix 1- Asset Spend Tracker.

Background documents

Finance & Assets Committee- 26 March 2026- Agenda Item 8- Assets Update and Asset Management Plan

Asset	Budgeted Expenditure	Nature of Work	Actual Expenditure	Notes
Public Car Parks				
	50,000.00	Broad Street- resurfacing and remedial works		Not started
Total Public Car Parks	50,000.00		0.00	
Closed Churchyards				
	17,000.00	St Marys Church- Gully/brickwork	14,650.00	Complete- underspend is reflective of the extent of the work that needed to be completed. The budget was an estimate
Total Closed Churchyards	17,000.00		14,650.00	
Littleport Depot				
	201,020.06	Phase 2 Depot Improvement Plan	201,020.06	Complete
Total Littleport Depot	201,020.06		201,020.06	
Play Areas/Open Space				
Total Play Areas	0.00		0.00	
Public Conveniences				
	5,000.00	Annual Deep Cleaning of all Public Toilets		Not instructed
	34,000.00	Refurbishment of Cloisters		Due to commence in September 2026
Total Public Conveniences	39,000.00		0.00	
Public Footpaths/Open Spaces				
	10,000.00	Williams Close Street Lighting	10,000.00	Works complete
Total Public Footpaths/Open Space	10,000.00		10,000.00	
The Grange				
	30,000.00	Works identified in conditions surveys		Some of the identified work has commenced and will continue throughout the year
		Repair to the lift	34,354.56	Remainder of the invoice (£14,721.24) to be paid in September 2026. Work complete
Total The Grange			34,354.56	
70 Market Street, Ely				
				The property is now vacant, there may be some cosmetic work that needs to be done once a new tenant is found.
Total 70 Market Street, Ely	0.00		0.00	
72 and 74 Market Street, Ely				
	20,000.00	Installation of secondary double glazing	12,940.00	Work complete-. Underspend is due to the budget only being an estimate at the time of requesting.
Total 72 Market Street, Ely	20,000.00		12,940.00	
Cemetery Lodge				
Total Cemetery Lodge	0.00		0.00	
Ely Museum				
	1,000	Annual Gutter Cleaning		.
	10,000	Works identified in conditions survey		Priority Works complete- awaiting invoice

Total Ely Museum	1,000.00		0.00	
St Johns Road Garages				
Total St Johns Road Garages	0.00		0.00	
The Old Barn, Littleport				
Total The Old Barn, Littleport	0.00		0.00	
Mepal Outdoor Centre				
	11,471.40	Site security cameras	4,779.75	Paid monthly and there needs to be a review once the BC is open.
Total Mepal Outdoor Centre	11,471.40		4,779.75	
Other				
	10,000.00	Repairs to car park at eSpace North		Not commenced
Total Other	10,000.00		0.00	

Total Budgeted Expenditure	359,491.46	Spend to Date	277,744.37
Asset Management Budget	170,194.00		
Depot Reserve	201,020.06		
Contribution from S106/Other	23,000.00		

TITLE: Planning Charges

Committee: Finance & Assets

Date: 24 September 2026

Author: David Morren

Report number: AB73

Contact officer: David Morren, Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager, david.morren@Eastcambs.gov.uk, 01353 656337 Room 008 The Grange, Ely

Issue

1. This report relates to the introduction of a new charging regime to cover the expenses of dealing with National Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) in line with recent changes to legislation.

Recommendations

2. Members are requested to note the report and to authorise the changes in the Fee Structure as advised.

Background/Options

3. On 15 May 2026, the Government published regulations enabling host local authorities involved in NSIPs to recover the costs of providing relevant services to project promoters, subject to establishing and publishing a charging schedule. The regulations came into force on 8 June 2026.
4. The primary legislation enabling host local authorities to recover costs for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects ("NSIPs") is [The Infrastructure Planning \(Fees\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2026](#)
5. The regulations amend Schedule 2 of the *Infrastructure Planning (Fees) Regulations 2010* to officially add "host local authorities" to the list of prescribed public authorities permitted to charge project applicants. They allow local councils directly affected by an NSIP to fully recover reasonable costs for services provided during the Development Consent Order (DCO) process. Cost recovery spans the entire lifecycle of an NSIP, including pre-application discussions, examination participation, and post-consent monitoring. To use these powers, councils must first establish and publish a transparent fee-charging schedule
6. Historically, there has been no fee received for NSIP applications and the cost to facilitate responses and to undertake the Inquiries have been borne in the main by Local Authorities. Some applicants appreciate this and sign Planning Performance Agreements ("PPAs") to ensure Councils are not heavily impacted, as this work is laborious, complex, and resource intensive; however, there is no legal requirement to do so.

7. In defining reasonable costs, and in line with the Planning Act 2008 and associated regulations, cost recovery is limited to the reasonable costs of providing relevant services, meaning advice, information or other assistance provided in relation to the NSIP.
8. For such PPAs, the Council uses the adopted charging schedule for pre-application advice, as it is designed to ensure Cost Recovery for such work. Due to the nature of NSIPs, the work is often complex, often at short notice and with short timescales. There is a shortage of skilled workers around the country who have experience dealing with such matters; therefore, resourcing for such projects is often expensive and relies on contractors. The fees set out in the tables below reflect this and align with the Council's charging for similar works.
9. It is intended that the charging schedule covers any work that the Council undertakes on such projects, not just Planning Officers. This could include, but is not limited to, Arboricultural officers, Conservation officers, Ecologists, Environmental Protection Officers, etc. The fees for such officers will be recorded and passed on to the relevant teams as appropriate.
10. The fee table as shown below uses the existing pre-application advice costs as a guide, linking the usual level of officer allocated to each type as a clear guide as to the commensurate charge per hour that should be made for their time.
11. In addition to the above, Legal advice will be required at various stages of the DCO process. Given the specialist nature of the Planning Act 2008 and that in-house experience in many councils will be limited, both internal legal team time and external legal representation are costs that should be factored in. For example, legal support may be required where:
 - the draft DCO includes complex Requirements, powers or Protective Provisions.
 - novel legal, environmental or procedural issues arise (for example, related to habitats, compulsory acquisition, or environmental assessment).
 - the applicant raises legal arguments or proposes drafting that requires specialist scrutiny; or
 - the host local authority wishes to ensure that Statements of Common Ground, Local Impact Reports or other examination documents it produces are robust and defensible.
 - Specialist legal advice can streamline the examination, improve drafting accuracy within the DCO and Requirements and help resolve issues early, contributing to a more efficient and cost-effective process overall.
12. For clarity, it is also proposed to have a statement on the charging schedule in relation to any work that is required to be contracted out, such as landscaping, urban design or other such advice or reports. There will be a requirement for the Council to obtain between 2-3 quotes for such work, with the applicant being able to have input (to avoid any conflicts of interest) on the final chosen supplier, who would be

instructed and managed by the Council, with any invoices then passed over to the applicant.

13. It is proposed that, due to the need to ensure that resources are in place at an early stage for the advantage of the applicant and the Project team, an upfront charge of £20,000 is proposed. This amount will be in effect as an advance payment to be used against costs incurred and recorded by the Council. The Council will bill either monthly or bi-monthly (in agreement with the applicant) with a statement of hours spent with associated details, which will be available upon request.
14. Officers consider that the additional charges will ensure cost recovery, resource availability and minimal impacts on our day-to-day operational and service requirements whilst ensuring that we are best positioned to be able to robustly engage with the NSIP process to the benefit of our residents.

15. FEE TABLE

Officer Level	Hourly Rate/Charge
Major Projects Officer / Strategic Planning & Development Management Manager / Team Leader(s)/Legal Officer(s)	£107.65
Senior Planner / Specialists i.e Conservation Officer/Arboricultural Officer/Ecologist/Environmental Protection Officer(s)	£80
Planning Officer / Assistant Planner	£58.45
Legal Services Fees: Director Legal Services:	£192.14
Legal Assistant	£156.83
Senior Legal Assistant	£166.66
Land Charges & Paralegal	£63.40
Information Officer	£69.29

16. Additional Implications Assessment

Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Human Resources (HR) Implications
Yes	No	No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA)	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)
No	No	No

Appendices

None

Background documents

Current Pre-App Fee Schedule

TITLE: Gender Pay Reporting 2025-26

Committee: Finance and Assets Committee

Date: 24 September 2026

Author: HR Manager

Report number: AB74

Contact officer: Nicole Pema, HR Manager, nicole.pema@eastcambs.gov.uk
01353 616325, Room 118, The Grange, Ely

Issue

1. To provide the Committee with some measurable data on gender pay at the Council.

Recommendations

2. That the Committee notes the content of the information report.

Background/Options

3. The gender pay gap measures the difference between the average hourly pay of male and female employees across the workforce. A pay gap may arise from a range of workforce factors, including the distribution of male and female employees across grades, occupations, working patterns and seniority levels.
4. Gender pay reporting legislation requires employers with 250 or more employees to publish statutory calculations every year showing how large the pay gap is between their male and female employees.
5. As the Council has fewer than 250 employees, we are not required to comply with the regulations, but Council Members have requested some measurable data to be provided on gender pay, including – (1) mean gender pay gap in hourly pay; (2) median gender pay gap in hourly pay; and (3) proportion of males and females in each pay quartile. Calculations are based only on employees on the Council's establishment.
6. The gender pay gap shows the difference between the average (mean or median) earnings of men and women. Mean is the difference between the average of men's and women's pay. Median is the difference between the midpoints in the ranges of men's and women's pay

Arguments/Conclusions

7. As of 31 March 2026, the women's mean hourly rate was £20.29 per hour, 3.88% lower than the male's mean hourly rate of £21.11 per hour. Expressed as a pay ratio, the mean hourly pay for female employees was £0.96 for every £1 of mean hourly pay for male employees

8. As at 31 March 2026, the women's median hourly rate was £17.85 per hour, 9.9% lower than the male's median hourly rate of £19.81 per hour. Expressed as a pay ratio, the median hourly pay for female employees was £0.90 for every £1 of median hourly pay for male employees.
9. In order to calculate the proportion of men and women in each pay quartile, employees were ranked from highest to lowest paid and divided into 4 equal parts (quartiles) – Upper Quartile; Upper Middle Quartile; Lower Middle Quartile; and Lower Quartile. Table 1 shows the percentage of men and women in each quartile.

Table 1: % of Men and Women in each Quartile as at 31/03/2026

Quartile	Males (%)	Females (%)	Salary banding
Upper	22 (44%)	28 (56%)	£45,091 to £139,197
Upper Middle	14 (28%)	36 (72%)	£35,412 to £42,839
Lower Middle	12 (24%)	38 (76%)	£31,022 to £35,421
Lower	16 (32%)	34 (68%)	£24,413 to £31,022

10. As of 31 March 2026, there were 200 employees on the council's establishment, comprising 136 females and 64 males

Year	Mean	Median
2023/24	9%	10.3%
2024/25	12.5%	17.6%
2025/26	3.9%	9.9%

11. The last 3 years, the Council's gender pay gap has changed as follows:
12. Some conclusions that can be drawn from the evidence above are:
 - The council has a high proportion of female employees across the whole organisation - 68% of the total workforce.
 - Females are well represented across each of the quartiles, but the lowest representation is in the upper quartile - 56% females and 44% males.
 - Male employees account for a larger proportion of the upper quartile than of any other pay quartile.
 - The Council's Corporate Management Team comprises of one female Chief Executive, three female Directors and one male Director.
 - Female employees are disproportionately represented in the lower and lower-middle pay quartiles, accounting for 68% and 76% respectively. These quartiles include a number of occupational groups, including cleaning and administrative roles.
 - Because the Council has a relatively small workforce, individual appointments, departures or promotions, particularly within higher-paid roles, can materially affect the mean and median figures from one year to the next. The annual figures should therefore be considered alongside longer-term trends and the distribution of employees across pay quartiles.
13. The Council will continue to build on actions aimed at reducing the gender pay gap, including:

- Encouraging applications by reaching out to a wider talent pool, particularly for traditionally male- or female-dominated roles
- Ensuring shortlists for recruitment and promotion opportunities include women.
- Using skills-based assessment tasks in recruitment to assess a candidate's suitability for the role and to ensure fairness.
- Using structured interviews for recruitment and promotions to prevent unfair bias from influencing decisions.
- Publishing salary ranges and applying clear, objective and consistently documented criteria when determining starting salaries, progression and any pay-related allowances.
- Promoting flexible working options across the organisation, including within senior and progression roles, while considering requests consistently in accordance with service requirements and the Council's flexible working arrangements.
- Keeping under review the support available to employees with caring responsibilities, recognising that caring responsibilities may be held by employees of any sex.
- Investing in training and development opportunities to all employees, regardless of gender, particularly in areas where women may be underrepresented.
- Helping women progress in their careers through a clear conversation approach towards performance management, which encourages line managers to have an open ongoing dialogue with staff on career development and progression.

14. Tables 2, 3 and 4 provide a comparison of the Council's gender pay gap against other local authorities for the last 3 years.

Table 2: Gender Pay Gap Comparison data 2023/24

Employer	Employer Size	Difference in hourly rate		Proportion of women in each pay quartile			
		Mean	Median	Lower Quartile	Lower Middle Quartile	Upper Middle Quartile	Upper Quartile
East Cambridgeshire District Council	Less than 250	9%	10.3%	77%	72%	77%	55%
South Cambridgeshire District Council	500 to 999	-7.3%	-18.1%	27%	56%	62%	56%
West Suffolk Council	500 to 999	-2.3%	-1.9%	35.5%	57.6%	49.2%	48.9%
Cambridge City Council	500 to 999	1%	6.8%	52%	52%	46%	43%
Fenland District Council	250 to 499	7.7%	-11.6%	47%	65%	58%	39%
Huntingdonshire District Council	500 to 999	1.8%	-5.8%	43.7%	55.6%	54.3%	52.7%
Cambridgeshire County Council	1000 to 4999	10.1%	8.4%	81%	85%	80%	74%

Table 3: Gender Pay Gap Comparison data 2024/25

Employer	Employer Size	Difference in hourly rate		Proportion of women in each pay quartile			
		Mean	Median	Lower Quartile	Lower Middle Quartile	Upper Middle Quartile	Upper Quartile
East Cambridgeshire District Council	Less than 250	12.5%	17.6%	72%	81%	70%	50%
South Cambridgeshire District Council	500 to 999	-8.6%	-16.8%	25%	57%	62%	57%
West Suffolk Council	500 to 999	-2.3%	0%	39.4%	52.7%	45.7%	50.5%
Cambridge City Council	500 to 999	3.86%	8.09%	53%	50%	47%	45%
Fenland District Council	250 to 499	6.4%	-0.5%	39.2%	65.8%	59.5%	44.3%
Huntingdonshire District Council	500 to 999	-1.6%	-9.5%	48.5%	48.8%	59.5%	53.6%
Cambridgeshire County Council	1000 to 4999	10.46%	10.8%	83.6%	82.7%	75.7%	70.5%

Table 4: Gender Pay Gap Comparison data 2025/26

Employer	Employer Size	Difference in hourly rate		Proportion of women in each pay quartile			
		Mean	Median	Lower Quartile	Lower Middle Quartile	Upper Middle Quartile	Upper Quartile
East Cambridgeshire District Council	Less than 250	3.9%	9.9%	68%	76%	72%	56%
South Cambridgeshire District Council	500-999	-6.2%	-12.9%	27.1%	63.1%	59.7%	55.8%
West Suffolk Council	500-999	-1.4%	-1.5%	39.2%	53.4%	45.5%	51.3%
Cambridge City Council	500-999	4.9%	8.1%	55%	51%	49%	42%
Fenland District Council	250-499	8.2%	2.4%	43%	68%	64%	42%
Huntingdonshire District Council	1000-4999	-2.4%	-14.5%	49.8%	43.9%	60.2%	55.9%
Cambridgeshire County Council	1000-4999	8.2%	8.8%	79.8%	81.8%	74.8%	71.3%

Additional Implications Assessment

Financial Implications	Legal Implications	Human Resources (HR) Implications
No	Yes	No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA)	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)
No	No	No

(a) Legal implications

15. The Supreme Court's judgment in *For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers* clarified that, for the purposes of the Equality Act 2010, "sex" means biological sex. As gender pay gap reporting regulations operate under the Equality Act 2010, the Government has subsequently revised its statutory guidance to state that gender pay gap reporting should be based on employees' biological sex.

Appendices

None

Background documents

None

TITLE: CIL LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING REQUEST

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 24 September 2026

Author: Community Infrastructure Manager

Report number: AB75

Contact officer: Lucy Flintham, Community Infrastructure Manager
Lucy.flintham@eastcambs.gov.uk, 01353 616303, Room 11, The Grange, Ely

Issue

1. To consider the allocation of up to £400,000 Community Infrastructure Levy funding to the Walter Gidney Pavilion Phase 2 project.

Recommendations

2. Members are requested to approve the allocation of up to £400,000 Community Infrastructure Levy funding to the Walter Gidney Pavilion Phase 2 expansion project.

Background/Options

3. East Cambridgeshire District Council introduced the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on 1 February 2013. The contributions raised through this levy are used to fund, in whole or in part, the necessary infrastructure to support growth and development in the district.
4. On 24 February 2026, the Council approved a new funding scheme to make receipts available to local infrastructure projects, with the eligibility and scoring criteria approved at Finance and Assets on 26 March 2026. The scheme opened on 13 April 2026.
5. Soham Town Council is requesting a funding contribution of £400,000 towards the Phase 2 project to deliver a new rear hall, kitchen, toilet and storage area. These works will increase the asset's usability and provide a much-needed, fully equipped kitchen available to all users.
6. Soham Town Council successfully gained planning permission for the proposal under 20/01636/FUL and varied under 24/01013/VAR. Planning permission has been implemented with the demolition of the condemned kitchen area. The kitchen facilities are currently being provided in a temporary modular facility; however, they are only available to Soham Town Council workers.
7. Soham Town Council are part funding the project from their reserves and savings, including a meaningful proportion from CIL receipts collected for development within Soham and from underspend on various other projects. The Town Council will therefore be committing a total of £670,000; the remaining funding will be obtained from the Public Works Loan Board to complete the £1.35m project. The application included letters of support from a number of current and potential users of the space

and has been agreed by Soham Town Council as a priority project for the Town Council to complete. The project has recently been out for tender and will be completed in August 2028.

Arguments/Conclusions

8. The project will deliver improved facilities at an existing community facility and as such can benefit from CIL funding.
9. The project contributes to the delivery of the District Council's Corporate Plan under the 'Sustainable Communities' heading and improves the community infrastructure for Soham and surrounding villages. It also meets the requirements of the Soham Vision Statement of the Local Plan 2015 (as amended) and Policy SBBP9 of the Soham and Barway Neighbourhood Plan Oct 2024.
10. There are sufficient funds in the CIL account to meet this request and as such, for the reasons set out above, Members are recommended to approve the funding allocation.

Additional Implications Assessment

Financial Implications NO	Legal Implications NO	Human Resources (HR) Implications NO
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) NO	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) NO	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) NO

Appendices

None

Background documents

Council – 24 February 2026 (Agenda Item 14)

Finance & Asset Committee – 26 March 2026 (Agenda Item 9)

TITLE: Medium-Term Financial Strategy Update

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 24 September 2026

Author: Director, Finance

Report No: AB76

Contact Officer: Jude Antony, Director, Finance & S151 Officer
jude.antony@eastcambs.gov.uk phone: 01353 616470, Room 127, The Grange, Ely

Issue

1. To provide the Committee with an update on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) since the 2026/27 budget was approved in February 2026.

Recommendations

2. Members are requested to note the contents of the report.

Background

3. The Council approved the budget for 2026/27, together with the MTFS for 2027/28 to 2030/31, at its meeting on 24 February 2026. At that point, through the use of its Surplus Savings Reserve, the Council had a balanced budget for 2026/27 and 2027/28, but significant savings were required in the following years.
4. The Budget / MTFS was approved on the basis that the Council would not put up Council Tax in the budget year, but then put it up by the maximum allowed, £5 per year, each subsequent year.
5. The Government's position on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) has recently changed. On 7 September 2026, the Government announced that its previous approach to LGR is being reviewed, with Cambridgeshire & Peterborough included within the areas to be considered. No decision has yet been taken on reorganisation in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough and, consequently, the timing and form of any future reorganisation remain uncertain.
6. In light of this uncertainty, the MTFS has been prepared through to 2030/31 to provide a complete view of the Council's potential financial position over the medium term. This ensures that the Council's financial planning remains robust should the timing or form of LGR change, including if reorganisation is delayed or does not proceed as previously anticipated.
7. The MTFS does not currently include any specific provision for costs arising from LGR. Given the uncertainty over the timing, scope and outcome of the Government's review, it is not considered appropriate to include specific LGR-related expenditure at this stage. The financial implications will be assessed once there is greater clarity on the Government's proposals and the Council's position,

and the MTFS will be updated accordingly as further information becomes available.

Changes to previous years

8. The Council ended the 2025/26 financial year with an underspend of £3,049,102. This underspend was added to the Surplus Savings Reserve and is available to support the MTFS in future years.
9. The Council is currently forecasting a year-end underspend of £199,000 in 2026/27. This will also be transferred into the Surplus Savings Reserve at year-end and has been included in the figures detailed in this paper.

Changes made to the 2027/28 Budget

Fair Funding Review

10. The Fair Funding Review and associated Business Rates baseline reset have now been implemented and reflected in the Council's updated Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The confirmed funding arrangements cover the period to 2028/29. Revenue Support Grant is estimated at £3.509 million in 2027/28, reducing to £2.415 million in 2028/29. In the absence of confirmed funding allocations beyond 2028/29, the Council has used the Pixel modelling assumptions for the remainder of the MTFS period, with Revenue Support Grant estimated at £2.810 million in 2029/30 and £2.840 million in 2030/31.
11. The reduction in central government funding, together with the ongoing impact of the Business Rates reset, increases the financial pressure on the Council over the medium term. The updated MTFS therefore continues to recognise the need to identify and deliver savings and efficiencies to maintain a balanced budget throughout the period to 2030/31.

Inflation

12. Officers have made specific assumptions regarding inflation across individual budget lines. Given the stabilisation of inflationary pressures, a general inflationary increase has not been applied to all budgets. Where appropriate, individual budgets have been reviewed, and inflation has been applied based on the specific circumstances and expected cost pressures.
13. A 3% annual inflationary pay increase has been assumed on salary budgets for each year of the MTFS period from 2026/27 to 2030/31. This assumption recognises the ongoing pressure on pay costs, while allowing for the impact of staff vacancies and turnover within the Council's overall salary budget.

Council Tax

14. The Council and all other preceptors determine, as part of their budget preparations, how much they wish to collect in Council Tax and subsequently set their tax level in February prior to the year of collection, at a value to ensure that the required amount is collected. In year, this Council (as the collection authority) will pay across to the other preceptors and indeed ourselves, the budgeted value from the Council Tax Collection Fund.

15. The amount of Council Tax collected is determined by three factors: the Council Tax value for a Band D property as determined by the Council, the number of Band D equivalent properties in the District and the Council's calculation as to how much of the money will be collectable.
16. It is assumed at this stage that the value of Council Tax in 2027/28 for a Band D property will be increased by £5 to £147.14, in line with the decision made in February 2026.
17. An initial calculation of the number of equivalent Band D properties in the district will be undertaken shortly, to which officers will make a judgement as to the amount which will be collectable. This figure will be reviewed and updated over the Autumn period.

Business Rates

18. Councils are required to prepare an NNDR1 return each year, setting out the amount of Business Rates they anticipate collecting during the following financial year. The final budget presented to Council will reflect the figures included in the NNDR1 return.
19. The Business Rates assumptions included within this MTFS have been updated to reflect the latest forecasts and the impact of the Business Rates baseline reset implemented as part of the Fair Funding Review. The MTFS assumes the funding arrangements arising from the Fair Funding Review for the initial three-year period, with the latest Business Rates forecasts incorporated for the remainder of the MTFS period.
20. The Business Rates position will continue to be reviewed as part of the annual budget-setting process and updated for any changes in the NNDR1 forecast.

Waste

21. The Waste and Street Cleansing Service changes approved by Full Council on 17 October 2024 have now been implemented, with the ongoing financial impact incorporated into the Council's base budget and updated MTFS.
22. The MTFS includes the latest expenditure estimates for the Waste and Street Cleansing service and assumptions regarding funding received through the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) scheme. EPR funding of £942,955 has been assumed for 2027/28, with reducing levels of funding assumed over the remainder of the MTFS period.
23. The EPR funding assumptions will be reviewed as further information becomes available from Government and PackUK, including the confirmed payment for 2027/28.

Enterprise Zone Business Rates

24. Business Rates generated from the Lancaster Way Enterprise Zone provide an important source of funding for the Council. Following changes to the arrangements

governing the use of these receipts, the Council has greater flexibility over the use of its share of Enterprise Zone Business Rates.

25. The MTFS assumes that Enterprise Zone Business Rates will continue to be used to support the Council's economic development activity, with the cost of the Economic Development Team funded from these receipts.
26. The MTFS includes £2.037 million of NNDR income from renewables and the Enterprise Zone in 2027/28, with the level of income assumed to remain broadly consistent over the MTFS period.

Pension Costs

27. The three-yearly actuarial valuation of the Cambridgeshire Pension Fund was undertaken as of 31 March 2025. The valuation showed a significant improvement in the funding position of the Fund and resulted in revised employer contribution rates being agreed for the period from April 2026.
28. From April 2026, the Council's employer contribution rate is 18.5% of pensionable salary costs, with no additional lump sum contribution. This rate has been incorporated into the Council's salary budgets and the MTFS projections for 2027/28 to 2030/31.

Impact on the MTFS

29. The updated MTFS incorporates the latest information available on the Council's funding, expenditure and income assumptions, including the confirmed impact of the Fair Funding Review and associated Business Rates baseline reset.
30. Whilst there remains some uncertainty over the Council's longer-term financial position, particularly in relation to future Government funding and Business Rates income, the updated figures provide a clearer basis for assessing the Council's financial position over the MTFS period to 2030/31. The projections will continue to be reviewed and updated as further information becomes available.
31. The updated MTFS assumes the use of the Surplus Savings Reserve to support the Council's financial position in 2027/28 and 2028/29, with contributions of £4.379 million and £4.141 million respectively. This will use the remaining balance of the reserve by the end of 2028/29. From 2029/30 onwards, the MTFS does not assume any further use of the reserve and significant savings will therefore need to be identified and delivered to balance the budget.
32. The Council is able to set a balanced budget for 2027/28, with the position supported by a contribution of £4.379 million from the Surplus Savings Reserve. A further £4.141 million is currently forecast to be required from the reserve in 2028/29.
33. The reserve is a finite resource and is not available to provide ongoing support beyond 2028/29. The MTFS therefore identifies a savings requirement of £0.839 million in 2028/29, increasing to £6.488 million in 2029/30 and £6.789 million in 2030/31.

34. It is therefore important that work continues to identify and implement savings, efficiencies and opportunities to increase income at the earliest opportunity. This will reduce the Council's reliance on the Surplus Savings Reserve and strengthen the Council's financial resilience over the remainder of the MTFS period.
35. To address the financial pressures identified within the MTFS, the Council will need to continue to identify and deliver a range of savings and income-generating opportunities. These will include:
- Efficiencies in the delivery of services
 - Changes to service delivery and, where necessary, reductions in service levels
 - Increases in fees and charges, where appropriate
 - Further opportunities to generate income through the Council's trading companies
36. The early identification and delivery of these measures will be important in reducing the Council's reliance on reserves and ensuring that the MTFS remains financially sustainable over the period to 2030/31.

Additional Implications Assessment

Financial Implications Yes	Legal Implications No	Human Resources (HR) Implications No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) No	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) No	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) No

Appendix

Appendix 1 – MTFS Model as of 3 September 2026.

Background Documents:

2026/27 Budget as approved by Full Council on 24 February 2026.

TITLE: Finance Report

Committee: Finance & Assets Committee

Date: 24 September 2026

Author: Director, Finance

Report number: AB77

Contact officer: Jude Antony, Director, Finance
(01353) 616470 jude.antony@eastcambs.gov.uk Room 127. The Grange, Ely

Issue

1. This report provides Members with budget information for services under the Finance & Assets Committee and then, as part of its corporate remit, for the Council as a whole.

Recommendations

2. Members are requested to note:
 - The Committee is currently forecasting an underspend of £85,000 at year-end when compared to its approved revenue budget of £8,284,422.
 - The Council is forecasting an overall underspend of £199,000 at year-end when compared to its approved revenue budget of £21,585,345.
 - That the overall position for the Council on capital is an outturn of £13,787,601, which is an overspend of £289,021 when compared to the revised budget including slippage from 2025/26.
 - The Treasury Management update report in Appendix 5.

Background/Options

Budget Monitoring

3. Under Financial Regulations, each policy committee is required to consider projections of financial performance against both its revenue and capital budget on a quarterly basis, with this Committee further considering the overall Council position.
4. This is the first report for the 2026/27 financial year and details actual expenditure incurred and income received as of 30 June 2026, and projections as to the year-end position at this time.

Revenue

5. Appendix 1 details the overall revenue position for both this Committee and the Council overall. In Appendix 1, the budget lines under the stewardship of this

Committee and the funding lines are shown in detail, with the Operational Services Committee position shown in summary.

6. Appendix 2 shows the detailed revenue position for the Operational Services Committee. The Committee reported a net underspend of £114,000 against its approved budget for 2026/27. The most significant variances relate to Licensing (£100,000), Planning (£70,000), Emergency Planning (£16,000), and Building Regulations (£40,000). The Operational Services Committee received further details of these and other year-end variances on 14 September 2026.

Service	Variance	Explanation
Climate Change	(£63,533)	Grant income from the Combined Authority for biodiversity studies was received in advance of the associated expenditure. The unspent grant has therefore been rolled forward into 2026/27 to align the funding with the expected timing of expenditure.
Corporate Management Policy Research / Review	(£245,708)	Accruals relating to external audit fees for the previous financial year remain outstanding at Quarter 1. The associated invoices are expected to be settled during 2026/27.
Cost of Other Elections	£58,933	Expenditure incurred in relation to external elections will be fully recovered during 2026/27.
Economic Development	£16,603	Grant funding has been awarded for Digital Inclusion initiatives in 2026/27. The associated funding from the CPCA is currently awaited and is expected to be received during the financial year.
Enterprise Zone	(£64,408)	The favourable variance is due to payments being made later than originally anticipated. This is a timing difference.
Housing Benefits	(£823,879)	The current variance reflects the profile of expenditure based on calculations from the 2025/26 return. The profile is expected to catch up later in the financial year and does not represent an underlying budget pressure.
Housing Strategy	£390,648	Section 106 expenditure will be transferred to the relevant reserve at the end of the financial year.
Information Technology	£269,285	The budget has been profiled evenly across the financial year; however, prepayments for IT licences were made earlier than anticipated, resulting in an adverse variance against the current profile.

Land Charges Administration	(£37,986)	The MHCLG grant has been rolled forward into 2026/27, with the funding remaining ring-fenced for expenditure in accordance with the applicable grant conditions.
Legal Services	(£29,323)	An unclassified income receipt was identified in Quarter 1 and is currently being investigated to determine its source and appropriate treatment.
Local Elections	(£70,920)	The MHCLG grant rolled forward from 2025/26 will be utilised during 2026/27 in accordance with the applicable grant conditions.
Local Plans	(£116,922)	Income relating to the previous financial year has been rolled forward into 2026/27.
Misc. Finance	(£1,049,865)	The current favourable variance is primarily due to the timing of expenditure. MRP is posted at year-end and is therefore not reflected in the current profile. The forecast outturn reflects the full-year budget position, including the MRP charge.
Office Accommodation	(£42,641)	Rates for The Grange were significantly lower than budgeted and are being reviewed to establish the cause of the variance.
Parking of Vehicles	£71,605	Asset Management costs will be transferred as part of the 2026/27 financial year-end close-down process.
Parks & Gardens Team	(£145,064)	Section 106 expenditure will be transferred to the relevant reserve as part of the year-end close-down process.
Payroll	£56,885	The variance is due to a payment to the payroll company being made earlier than originally profiled.
Registration of Electors	(£37,294)	The budget is profiled quarterly; however, expenditure is expected to be incurred later in the financial year, resulting in a timing difference against the current profile.
Reprographics	(£11,516)	The variance in subscription expenditure is attributable to payments being incurred later in the financial year compared with 2025/26.
Sport & Recreation Admin	(£85,991)	Grants rolled forward from 2025/26 will be utilised during 2026/27. Any unspent grant funding at year-end will be rolled forward into the following financial year, subject to the applicable grant conditions.

Forecast

7. The Council is currently forecast to report an overall revenue underspend of £199,000 against its approved budget for 2026/27. This position reflects variances across services, including a forecast underspend of £85,000 within the Finance & Assets Committee's remit. The principal variances contributing to the overall outturn are summarised in the table below.

Interest & Financial Transactions	(£60,000)	Interest income remains above the budgeted level, reflecting interest rates being higher than anticipated when the budget was prepared in October 2025, together with the level of funds available for investment.
Member & Committee Support	(£35,000)	The favourable variance is primarily due to staff vacancies during the first quarter of 2026/27, resulting in lower salary expenditure than originally profiled.
Public Conveniences	£10,000	The adverse variance is due to increased cleaning costs arising from additional cover required for staff annual leave and sickness at public toilets across the district.

Capital

8. The Council's overall capital budget stands at £13,498,580, including £6,023,698 of slippage brought forward from 2025/26.
9. The Council's outturn position is forecast to be £13,787,601, an overspend of £289,021. This forecast relates to the roll-out of Wheeled Bins and Food Caddies during the first quarter of the year.

Treasury Management

10. Under the revised Treasury Management requirements introduced in 2023/24 and set out in the CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Code of Practice for Treasury Management 2021, councils are required to report their treasury management activity on a quarterly basis. While the Strategy, mid-year review and year-end reports need to go to Full Council for approval, the reports at the end of quarter one and three only need to go to Committee for noting. These reports will therefore be included as part of this Finance Report at the end of these quarters.
11. The treasury management update report is included as Appendix 5, which details that the Council had cash holdings of £21,675,102 at the end of June 2026 and

had received £200,511 in interest on its cash investments during the first quarter, which is £74,000 above the profiled budget.

12. To note, the economic update in the report reflects the position at the end of June 2026.

Arguments/Conclusions

13. The Council is currently forecasting a net revenue underspend of £199,000 against the approved budget. This will be added to the Council's Surplus Savings Reserve and will be available to support budget balancing in future years.

Additional Implications Assessment

Financial Implications Yes	Legal Implications No	Human Resources (HR) Implications No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) No	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) No	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) No

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Summary Budget Monitoring Report – 30 June 2026

Appendix 2 – Operational Services Budget Monitoring Report – 30 June 2026

Appendix 3 – Capital Budget Monitoring Report – 30 June 2026

Appendix 4 – Reserve Balances – 30 June 2026

Appendix 5 – Treasury Management Update – 30 June 2026

Background documents

Council Budget approved by Full Council on 24 February 2026

								Agenda Item 15 - Appendix 1					
Finance & Assets Committee - Budget Monitoring Report - 30th June 2026													
Revenue	Total Budget 2026-27	Profiled Budget to 30th June 2026	Adjustments	Profiled Budget to 30th June 2026	Actual to 30th June 2026	Actual to 30th June 2026	Variance	Forecast Outturn	Variance between Total Budget & Forecast Outturn				
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£					
Asset Management	153,442	--		--	(291)	(291)	(291)	153,442					
Award Ditches	11,697	2,924		2,924	2,323	2,323	(601)	11,697					
Civic Relations	19,212	4,800		4,800	3,788	3,788	(1,012)	19,212					
Climate Change	232,687	56,002		56,002	(7,531)	(7,531)	(63,533)	232,687					
Closed Churchyards	38,533	9,633		9,633	1,424	1,424	(8,209)	38,533					
Community Transport	15,000	3,750		3,750	1,000	1,000	(2,750)	15,000					
Corp.Man.Policy Research / Review	251,354	12,831		12,831	(232,877)	(232,877)	(245,708)	251,354					
Cost of Other Elections	--	--		--	58,933	58,933	58,933	--					
Council Tax Collection costs	625,991	159,929		159,929	150,531	150,531	(9,398)	625,991					
Data Management	138,122	37,003		37,003	43,722	43,722	6,719	138,122					
Depot	(76,530)		(19,133)	(19,133)	(17,504)	(17,504)	1,629	(76,530)					
Economic Development	(68,922)	(5,209)		(5,209)	11,394	11,394	16,603	(68,922)					
Enterprise Zone Business Rates	500,816	64,408		64,408		--	(64,408)	500,816					
Finance	396,762	97,967		97,967	99,529	99,529	1,562	396,762					
General Gang	60,838	14,708		14,708	16,539	16,539	1,831	60,838					
Health & Safety (Work)	29,900	7,475		7,475	4,589	4,589	(2,886)	29,900					
Housing Benefits	508,800	127,200		127,200	(696,679)	(696,679)	(823,879)	508,800					
Housing Strategic	193,762	45,941		45,941	436,589	436,589	390,648	193,762					
Human Resources (including Training)	300,371	67,382		67,382	60,491	60,491	(6,891)	300,371					
Information Technology	1,310,335	331,802		331,802	601,087	601,087	269,285	1,310,335					
Interest & Financial Transactions	(530,353)	(87,515)		(87,515)	(146,255)	(146,255)	(58,740)	(590,353)	(60,000)				
Internal Audit	89,548	753		753	--	--	(753)	89,548					
Land Charges Admin	(24,758)	(17,777)		(17,777)	(55,763)	(55,763)	(37,986)	(24,758)					
Legal Services	177,887	44,472		44,472	15,149	15,149	(29,323)	177,887					
Local Elections	25,000	6,250		6,250	(64,670)	(64,670)	(70,920)	25,000					
Local Plans	318,652	77,013		77,013	(39,909)	(39,909)	(116,922)	318,652					
Management Team	828,759	212,925		212,925	215,840	215,840	2,915	828,759					
Ely Markets	--	25,564	(21,194)	4,370	4,370	4,370	--	--					
Member & Committee Support	729,619	182,957		182,957	149,943	149,943	(33,014)	694,619	(35,000)				
Miscellaneous Properties	(54,229)	(4,093)		(4,093)	(8,639)	(8,639)	(4,546)	(54,229)					
Miscellaneous Finance	44,478	838,532		838,532	(211,333)	(211,333)	(1,049,865)	44,478					
NNDR Collection Costs	59,525	40,496		40,496	39,824	39,824	(672)	59,525					
Office Accommodation	657,707	291,875		291,875	249,234	249,234	(42,641)	657,707					
Out of Hours Call Out Service	14,000	3,500		3,500	2,094	2,094	(1,406)	14,000					
Parking of Vehicles	4,850	81,117		81,117	152,722	152,722	71,605	4,850					
Parks and Gardens Team	539,859	342,361		342,361	197,297	197,297	(145,064)	539,859					
Payroll	125,102	16,377		16,377	73,262	73,262	56,885	125,102					
Public Conveniences	222,249	51,968		51,968	63,135	63,135	11,167	232,249	10,000				
Refuse Collection	--	--		--	8,108	8,108	8,108	--					
Registration of Electors	50,644	12,661		12,661	(24,633)	(24,633)	(37,294)	50,644					
Reprographics	230,890	64,173		64,173	52,657	52,657	(11,516)	230,890					
Sport & Recreation Admin	132,823	31,206		31,206	(54,785)	(54,785)	(85,991)	132,823					
Finance & Assets Committee Total	8,284,422	3,253,361	(40,327)	3,213,034	1,154,705	1,154,705	(2,058,329)	8,199,422	(85,000)				
Operational Services Committee	8,368,382	2,108,783	--	2,108,783	1,793,062	1,793,062	(315,721)	8,254,382	(114,000)				
Other Spend													
Parish Precepts	3,843,212	960,803		960,803	1,925,981	1,925,981	965,178	3,843,212					
Internal Drainage Boards	824,471	206,118		206,118	373,343	373,343	167,225	824,471					
Movement in Corporate Reserves	264,858	64,408	--	64,408	--	--	(64,408)	264,858					
Revenue Budget Total	21,585,345	6,593,473	(40,327)	6,553,146	5,247,091	5,247,091	(1,306,055)	21,386,345	(199,000)				
													117

								Agenda Item 15 - Appendix 1				
Finance & Assets Committee - Budget Monitoring Report - 30th June 2026												
Revenue	Total Budget 2026-27	Profiled Budget to 30th June 2026	Adjustments	Profiled Budget to 30th June 2026	Actual to 30th June 2026	Actual to 30th June 2026	Variance	Forecast Outturn	Variance between Total Budget & Forecast Outturn			
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£				
Funding												
Council Tax	(8,740,006)	(2,185,002)		(2,185,002)	-.-	-.-	2,185,002	(8,740,006)				
Revenue Support Grant	(4,566,956)	(1,141,739)		(1,141,739)	(822,052)	(822,052)	319,687	(4,566,956)				
Business Rates	(4,498,429)	(1,124,607)		(1,124,607)	-.-	-.-	1,124,607	(4,498,429)				
Other Government Grants (NHB / RSG etc.)	(568,558)	(142,139)		(142,139)	(141,152)	(141,152)	987	(568,558)				
Budgeted draw from Surplus Savings Reserve	(3,211,396)	(802,849)		(802,849)	-.-	-.-	802,849	(3,211,396)				
Funding Total	(21,585,345)	(5,396,336)	-.-	(5,396,336)	(963,204)	(963,204)	4,433,132	(21,585,345)	-.-			
Revenue Total	-.-	1,197,137	(40,327)	1,156,810	4,283,887	4,283,887	3,127,077	(199,000)	(199,000)			

Operational Services Committee - Budget Monitoring Report - June 2026

Revenue	Total Budget 2026-27	Profiled Budget to 30 June 2026	Actual to 30 June 2026	Variance	Forecast Outturn	Variance between Total Budget & Projected Outturn
	£		£	£	£	£
Building Regulations	45,677	(7,083)	(104,882)	(97,799)	85,677	40,000
CIL	0	0	(36,866)	(36,866)	0	
Community Projects & Grants	212,295	72,297	48,717	(23,580)	212,295	
Community Safety	73,219	35,113	39,288	4,175	73,219	
Cons. Area & Listed Buildings	77,144	19,286	21,194	1,908	77,144	
Crematorium	242,649	105,558	62,836	(42,722)	242,649	
Customer Services	649,638	169,537	167,069	(2,468)	649,638	
Dog Warden Scheme	50,674	12,194	15,138	2,944	50,674	
Emergency Planning	34,578	8,616	32,941	24,325	50,578	16,000
Environmental	53,377	13,344	5,012	(8,332)	53,377	
Environmental Health	708,373	177,851	83,240	(94,611)	708,373	
Care & Repair	(25,836)	73,986	129,978	55,992	(25,836)	
Homelessness	383,692	(550,977)	(255,398)	295,579	383,692	
Leisure Centre	(548,183)	0	500	500	(548,183)	
Licensing	(105,213)	(25,553)	(116,123)	(90,570)	(205,213)	(100,000)
Marketing & Grants	33,766	6,552	(19,314)	(25,866)	33,766	
Parish Forums	1,561	390	0	(390)	1,561	
Nuisances	119,898	29,975	29,262	(713)	119,898	
Planning	419,250	169,537	70,348	(99,189)	349,250	(70,000)
Public Relations	130,557	32,639	31,971	(668)	130,557	
Refuse Collection	1,438,796	335,191	312,413	(22,778)	1,438,796	
Refuse Recycling	3,048,931	1,100,283	932,653	(167,630)	3,048,931	
Street Cleansing	1,284,471	321,118	317,599	(3,519)	1,284,471	
Street Naming & Numbering	39,067	9,017	12,834	3,817	39,067	
Travellers Sites	0	(88)	12,652	12,740	0	
Revenue Total	8,368,382	2,108,783	1,793,062	(315,721)	8,254,382	(114,000)

Capital Monitoring 2026/27

Capital	Published Budget 2026-27	Slippage from 2025-26	Additions	Revised Budget 2026-27	Actual at 30 Jun 2026	Outturn	Variance between Revised Budget & Outturn
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
OPERATIONAL SERVICES							
Conservation Area Schemes - 2nd round		27,506		27,506	0	27,506	0
Refuse & Cleansing Vehicles	80,000	1,032,993		1,112,993	69,002	1,112,993	0
Waste - Wheelied Bins	40,000	786,909		826,909	993,669	993,669	166,760
Food Waste Caddies		168,147		168,147	290,408	290,408	122,261
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG)	697,299	188,116		885,415	319,015	885,415	0
Empty Properties, Discretionary DFGs, Minor Works, Home Repair Asst.	75,000	39,157		114,157	10,071	114,157	0
Vehicle Etc. Replacements	100,000			100,000	62,726	100,000	0
Bereavement Centre	2,482,583	3,529,235		6,011,818	2,291,032	6,011,818	0
Leisure Centre				0			0
Operational Services Total	3,474,882	5,772,063	0	9,246,945	4,035,923	9,535,966	289,021
FINANCE & ASSETS							
Solar Panels on Council Buildings		100,100		100,100		100,100	0
Depot		151,535		151,535	105,710	151,535	0
New Loan Agreement with ECTC	4,000,000			4,000,000	1,375,000	4,000,000	0
Finance & Assets Total	4,000,000	251,635	0	4,251,635	1,480,710	4,251,635	0
Total	7,474,882	6,023,698	0	13,498,580	5,516,633	13,787,601	289,021

SOURCES OF FINANCING	Published Budget 2026-27 £	Slippage from 2025-26 £	Additions £	Revised Budget 2026-27 £	Outturn £	Variances £
Operational Services						
Government Grants (DFG)	602,678	188,116		790,794	790,794	0
Government Grants (Food Waste)		894,065		894,065	894,065	0
Capital Receipts	209,621	66,663		276,284	276,284	0
Borrowing	(420,000)	1,093,984	0	673,984	963,005	289,021
Section 106 / CIL	3,082,583	3,529,235	0	6,611,818	6,611,818	0
Operational Services Total	3,474,882	5,772,063	0	9,246,945	9,535,966	289,021
Finance & Assets						
Revenue Contributions	0	0		0	0	0
Capital Receipts	0	100,100		100,100	100,100	0
Borrowing	4,000,000	151,535		4,151,535	4,151,535	0
Finance & Assets Total	4,000,000	251,635	0	4,251,635	4,251,635	0
Capital Funding Total	7,474,882	6,023,698	0	13,498,580	13,787,601	289,021

Capital Resources Forecast	Published Budget 2026-27 £	Slippage from 2025-26 £	Additions £	Revised Budget 2026-27 £	Outturn £	Variances £
Balance Brought Forward	1,471,421			1,471,421	1,471,421	
Add receipts from Sales of Assets	50,000			50,000	50,000	0
Less Capital Receipts Applied	(209,621)	(166,763)		(376,384)	(376,384)	0
Capital Reserves Carried Forward	1,311,800	(166,763)	0	1,145,037	1,145,037	0

Borrowing	Published Budget 2026-27 £	Slippage from 2025-26 £	Additions £	Revised Budget 2026-27 £	Outturn £	Variances £
Balance Brought Forward	12,461,538			10,820,810	10,820,810	
Less MRP Applied	(940,731)			(940,731)	(940,731)	0
Repayment from ECTC	(1,875,653)			(1,875,653)	(1,875,653)	0
Add additional Borrowing Applied	3,580,000	1,245,519	0	4,825,519	5,114,540	289,021
Borrowing Carried Forward	13,225,154	1,245,519	0	12,829,945	13,118,966	289,021

Reserve Accounts

Description	2026/27			
	Opening Balance 1 April	Transfers to Reserve	Contributions from Reserve	Forecast Balance 31 March
	£	£	£	£
District Elections	75,397	25,000		100,397
Housing Conditions Survey	40,000	5,000		45,000
Change Management	0			0
Major Project Development	100,000			100,000
Surplus Savings Reserve	11,532,328	199,000	(3,211,396)	8,519,931
Vehicle Replacements	74,240			74,240
Sports Facilities Funding Reserve	48,000			48,000
IT	227,209	60,000	(196,138)	91,071
CIL Admin	206,621	70,000	(100,000)	176,621
Asset Management	53,601			53,601
Community Fund Reserves	10,678			10,678
Housing	69,926			69,926
Historical Homelessness Grant	633,269		(104,992)	528,277
Affordable Housing	88,112			88,112
General Fund Balance	1,426,014	264,858		1,690,872
Commercial Invest to Save	20,000			20,000
CLT Grant Applications	20,000			20,000
Travellers' Sites	0	35,722		35,722
Enterprise Zone NNDR	1,592,576	250,408	(185,718)	1,657,266
Growth and Infrastructure Fund	1,500,329			1,500,329
Exceptional Hardship Fund	2,976			2,976
Community Transport	139,281			139,281
Climate Change	114,313			114,313
Other				
CIL	10,855,762	400,000	(2,482,583)	8,773,179
Section 106 Agreements	4,274,862		(500,000)	3,774,862
Internal Borrowing	(10,820,810)	(5,114,540)	2,816,384	(13,118,966)
Total Reserves	22,284,682	(3,804,552)	(3,964,443)	14,515,687
Total Reserves	17,974,868	909,988	(3,798,244)	15,086,612
General Fund	1,426,014	264,858	0	1,690,872
Earmarked Reserves	16,548,854	645,130	(3,798,244)	13,395,740

Treasury Management Update

Quarterly Report

30TH JUNE 2026

Contents

- 1. Economics update..... 3
- 2. Interest rate forecasts 5
- 3. Annual Investment Strategy 6
- 4. Borrowing 9
- 5. Compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits 9
- APPENDIX 1: Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2026-27 as of 30th June 2026 10

Treasury Management Update

Quarter Ended 30th June 2026

The CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Code of Practice for Treasury Management 2021 recommends that members be updated on treasury management activities at least quarterly. This report, therefore, ensures this Council is implementing best practice in accordance with the Code.

1. Economics update

- The first quarter of 2026/27 (April to June) saw:
 - The first sign that the economy is starting to falter with a 0.1% m/m fall in real GDP in April
 - The 3my rate of average earnings growth excluding bonuses stagnate at 3.4% in April
 - CPI inflation stuck at 2.8% in May, with a rise in core CPI inflation from 2.5% to 2.6%
 - The Bank of England leave interest rates unchanged at 3.75% as the economy remains weak
 - The 10-year gilt yield fluctuate between 5.18% and 4.69%, ending the quarter at 4.76%
- The economy performed well in the early stages of the energy shock, with GDP rising by a strong 0.6% q/q between January and March. But that will likely be the high point of the year. Indeed, the 0.1% m/m fall in real GDP in April was the first decline since August 2025 and brought the first signs that the economy is starting to crack.
- Services output contracted by 0.2% m/m in April and activity fell in eight of the 14 services sub-sectors, suggesting the sector is bearing the brunt of the Iran war fallout. Consumer-facing services recorded the biggest monthly fall in output since May 2025, causing the %3m/3m growth rate to ease from 0.9% in March to 0.6% in April, as households cut back on non-energy spending.
- Despite a weak headline number, digging deeper there were some signs of strength. Manufacturing output rose by 0.4% m/m but that was probably in part due to a temporary prop from precautionary stock building. Looking ahead, despite the announced ceasefire of the conflict in the Middle East, Capital Economics expect elevated prices to erode the real spending power of households and businesses, leaving growth to stagnate in Q2 and Q3 this year.
- The fall in the composite Purchasing Manager Index (PMI) from 49.7 in May to a 14-month low of 49.4 in June was entirely driven by services activity. Indeed, the services activity PMI fell from 49.3 to a 41-month low of 48.7 due to rising costs and political uncertainty weighing on consumer confidence. That weakness was partly offset by a rise in the manufacturing output for a third consecutive month but that was due to fears of shortages causing businesses to build stocks. Overall, the composite PMI suggests the strong start to the year will be followed by tepid growth at best. Various prices balances have edged lower more recently as falling oil prices feed through to an easing in cost pressures. While these prices remain too high for the Bank of England, it is clear the upward pressure on prices is easing.,
- With most of the 1.2% m/m rise in retail sales volumes in May driven by promotions and unusually warm weather, this surprisingly strong month is unlikely to be the start of a sustained upturn. Admittedly, the recent fall in oil prices should boost fuel sales as drivers become less cost sensitive, but the GfK measure of consumer confidence in June still points to total sales volumes falling by about 2.0% m/m in June. Moreover, while the war could be over, the expected further rises in inflation and unemployment yet to come through seem consistent with the annual growth rate of retail sales volumes easing from +3.2% in May to about -1.0 this year.
- Public sector net borrowing of £23.3bn in May was above the OBR's forecast of £17.7bn and £5.4bn above May's figure last year. The weak performance in May was mainly due to the strength of government spending, as the rise in Retail Prices Index inflation in March meant debt interest payments were £4.1bn higher than in May 2025, £3.3bn higher than the OBR anticipated in March and the highest in any May on record. Tax receipts of £85.5bn were also below OBR predictions.

- The weak performance in May has come before the full impact from the energy price shock hits. The combination of further energy price support, higher inflation and the weakening economy may cause borrowing to rise from 4.2% of GDP in 2025/2026 to 4.4% in 2026/2027, above the OBR's March forecast of 3.6%. If Chancellor Reeves is replaced, there is scope for borrowing to be even higher.
- The first quarter of 2026 saw significant weakening of the labour market. While the latest PAYE employment figure for May saw a 2,000 rise, that barely offset the big 53,000 drop in April and meant employment was still 64,000 (0.2%) lower than before the start of the Iran war and 0.4% lower than a year ago. Moreover, the number of job vacancies on the single-month measure fell for the fourth month in a row in May and the claimant count saw the largest monthly rise since July 2024.
- In addition to some signs of stabilisation in the labour market figures, the recent easing in pay growth appears to have stalled. Despite some further easing in the private sector pay below the 3.25% that the Bank of England considers consistent with CPI inflation falling to target, the 3myy growth rate of average earnings stayed at 4.4% in April. Excluding bonuses, it stayed at 3.4% whilst regular public sector pay growth accelerated from 4.8% 3myy to 5.1% 3myy.
- Like wage growth, CPI inflation held steady in May at 2.8%. There wasn't much support to inflation from energy effects. The 0.3% m/m fall in fuel prices was smaller than the 1.6% m/m drop last May and meant fuel inflation rose only a bit from 23.0% to 24.6%. After rising to 129.6%, heating oil inflation eased to 95.6%. And the 13.5% rise in the Ofgem utility price cap, which will add 0.6 percentage points (ppts) to CPI inflation, doesn't take effect until 1st July. With food & drink inflation easing to its lowest rate since late 2024, higher energy costs do not seem to be boosting other items of the CPI just yet.
- The delayed rise in utility prices and the lagged indirect energy effect will lift CPI inflation over the next nine months, perhaps to around 3.6%. Even so, the weak labour market and soft economic backdrop will prevent second-round effects, allowing inflation to fall to 2.0% next year.
- There were two monetary policy committee (MPC) meetings in Q2 2026 where Bank rate was yet again left unchanged at 3.75%. Even so, the tone in recent meetings has been increasingly hawkish, with two MPC members voting for a rate hike in June compared to just one in April. While energy prices may be falling, the MPC won't want to unwind some of the tightening in financial conditions priced into the markets. And while there is quite a difference between this energy shock and the one following the Russia-Ukraine war in 2022, the Bank of England will want to steer clear of allegations of taking too long to act. Nevertheless, we suspect a weak labour market, and soft activity will keep rates at 3.75% this year, with cuts thereafter leaving Bank rate at 3.5% by the end of next year and 3.25% by the spring of 2028.
- April to June brought more volatility for 10-year Gilt yields. After ending March at 4.92%, the 10-year Gilt shot up to 5.18% in mid-May, its highest level since 2008. While that largely reflects the surge in energy prices, sticky domestic inflation concerns and a rising UK political risk premium also put some upward pressure on the yield at the margin.
- Since, positive developments in the US-Iran conflict has led to a fall in oil and gas prices. The 10-year Gilt yield has generally traced that move, falling back to 4.7% in June. This rally in Gilts has also been supported by the Bank of England keeping rates on hold and some reassurance on the fiscal outlook from the likely replacement of Starmer's leadership with Burnham's. Indeed, while financial markets had been pricing in around four policy rate hikes over the next year or so, they are now pricing in just one rate hike over the coming year. While the full inflationary impact of the war in Iran is yet to be felt, we still think a weaker labour market and subdued growth will prevent second-round effects.
- The FTSE 100 has been slowly gaining back some of the losses of the previous quarter. While the index dropped from an all-time high of around 10,900 in late February to 10,176 by the end of March as the ongoing war weighed on sentiment, the FTSE 100 regained some ground by the end of June. Indeed, the index has increased by around 3.3% over the quarter, rising from 10,176 to 10,516 and volatility has returned to historical norms.
- Nonetheless, with stocks in the energy sector generally providing negative returns amid falling energy prices, the large weighting of the sector in the FTSE 100 has led the index to underperform most peers in common currency terms. But returns from stocks in other sectors, particularly financials, helped to offset some of this weakness. Looking ahead, Capital Economics expect tech sectors to outperform as enthusiasm for AI builds, potentially pushing the FTSE 100 index up above 11,000 before a bursting of the AI bubble causes the index to fall back to 10,500 in 2027.

MPC meetings: 30th April & 18th June 2026

- There were two Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meetings this quarter. The first, on 30th April, saw Bank Rate stay at 3.75% with an 8-1 split vote in favour of that decision. One member dissented and voted for a 0.25% increase to 4%, citing inflation concerns, something generally noted as a primary concern within the minutes and reflecting heightened caution due to potential energy supply shocks caused by the Middle East conflict.
- By the time the MPC next met on 18th June, the hawkish split widened, with two members voting to raise rates to 4%. However, with headline CPI inflation sticking at 2.8%, the market's sentiment that there may, but only may, be a need for a single rate increase over the next few months seems to be aligned to the way the MPC is thinking and is also similar to our own view of rates staying at 3.75% but with upside risk.

2. Interest rate forecasts

The Council has appointed MUFG Corporate Markets as its treasury advisors and part of their service is to assist the Council to formulate a view on interest rates. The PWLB rate forecasts below are based on the Certainty Rate (the standard rate minus 20 bps) which has been accessible to most authorities since 1st November 2012. For Housing Revenue Account authorities, the lower Housing Revenue Account (HRA) PWLB rate has also been available since 15 June 2023 (standard rate minus 60 bps) but is available for HRA borrowing only.

The latest forecast was updated on 25th March 2026:

MUFG Corporate Markets Interest Rate View 25.03.26												
	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27	Jun-27	Sep-27	Dec-27	Mar-28	Jun-28	Sep-28	Dec-28	Mar-29
BANK RATE	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.50	3.50	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25
3 month ave earnings	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.80	3.70	3.50	3.50	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30
6 month ave earnings	4.20	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.90	3.70	3.70	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.50
12 month ave earnings	4.60	4.50	4.40	4.20	4.20	4.00	4.00	3.80	3.80	3.80	3.80	3.80
5 yr PWLB	5.00	5.00	4.90	4.80	4.60	4.40	4.20	4.20	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10
10 yr PWLB	5.50	5.50	5.40	5.30	5.10	4.90	4.70	4.70	4.60	4.60	4.60	4.60
25 yr PWLB	6.00	6.00	5.90	5.80	5.60	5.40	5.20	5.20	5.20	5.20	5.10	5.10
50 yr PWLB	5.80	5.80	5.70	5.50	5.40	5.20	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.90	4.90

- Money market yield forecasts are based on expected average earnings by local authorities for 3 to 12 months.
- The MUFG Corporate Markets forecast for average earnings are averages i.e., rates offered by individual banks may differ significantly from these averages, reflecting their different needs for borrowing short-term cash at any one point in time.

The forecast has proved robust over the period since the end of March, setting out a central view that short and long-dated interest rates will start to fall once it is evident that the Bank of England will not have to contend with second-round inflationary effects emanating from the conflict in the Middle East. Nonetheless, the longer dated part of the forecast also reflects the poor state of the public finances and the uncertainty pertaining to the likely Prime Ministership of Andy Burnham from 20th July.

Overall, our central view is that monetary policy is sufficiently tight for the likely uptick in CPI inflation through the remainder of 2026 if growth remains tepid. We forecast the next reduction in Bank Rate to be made in H2 2027, with Bank Rate falling to a low of 3.25% during 2028.

3. Annual Investment Strategy

The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2026/27, which includes the Annual Investment Strategy, was approved by the Council on 24th February 2026. In accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Management Code of Practice, it sets out the Council's investment priorities as being:

- Security of capital
- Liquidity
- Yield

The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return (yield) on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity, aligned with the Council's risk appetite. In the current economic climate, over and above keeping investments short-term to cover cash flow needs, there is a benefit to seeking out value available in periods up to 12 months with high credit rated financial institutions, using the MUFG Corporate Markets suggested creditworthiness approach, including a minimum sovereign credit rating and Credit Default Swap (CDS) overlay information.

As shown by the charts below and the interest rate forecasts in section 2, investment rates have remained elevated during the first quarter of 2026/27 and are only expected to fall back once it is clear that inflation will not take a strong foothold in H2 2026. A peak in CPI inflation of 3.6% is currently forecast by Capital Economics.

Creditworthiness.

There have been few changes to credit ratings over the quarter under review. However, officers continue to closely monitor these, and other measures of creditworthiness to ensure that only appropriate counterparties are considered for investment purposes.

Investment counterparty criteria

The current investment counterparty criteria selection approved in the TMSS is meeting the requirement of the treasury management function.

CDS prices

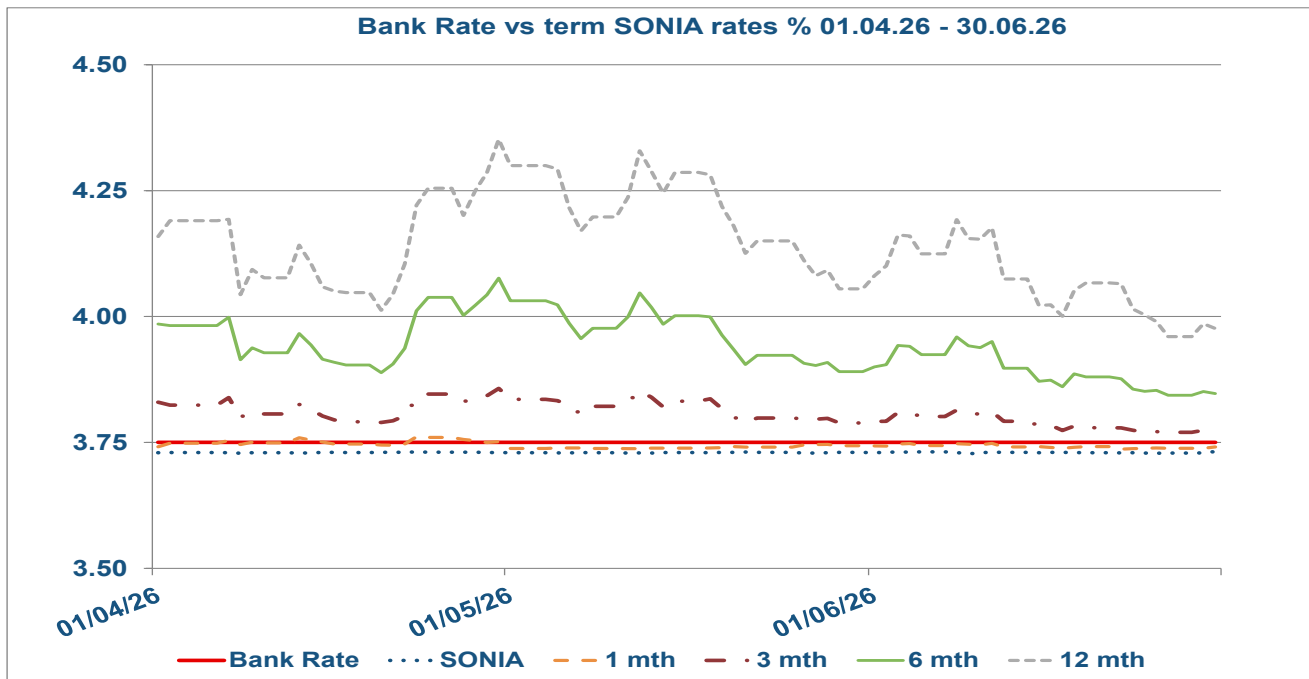
For UK and international banks, these have remained low, and prices are not misaligned with other creditworthiness indicators, such as credit ratings. **Nevertheless, it remains important to undertake continual monitoring of all aspects of risk and return.**

Investment balances

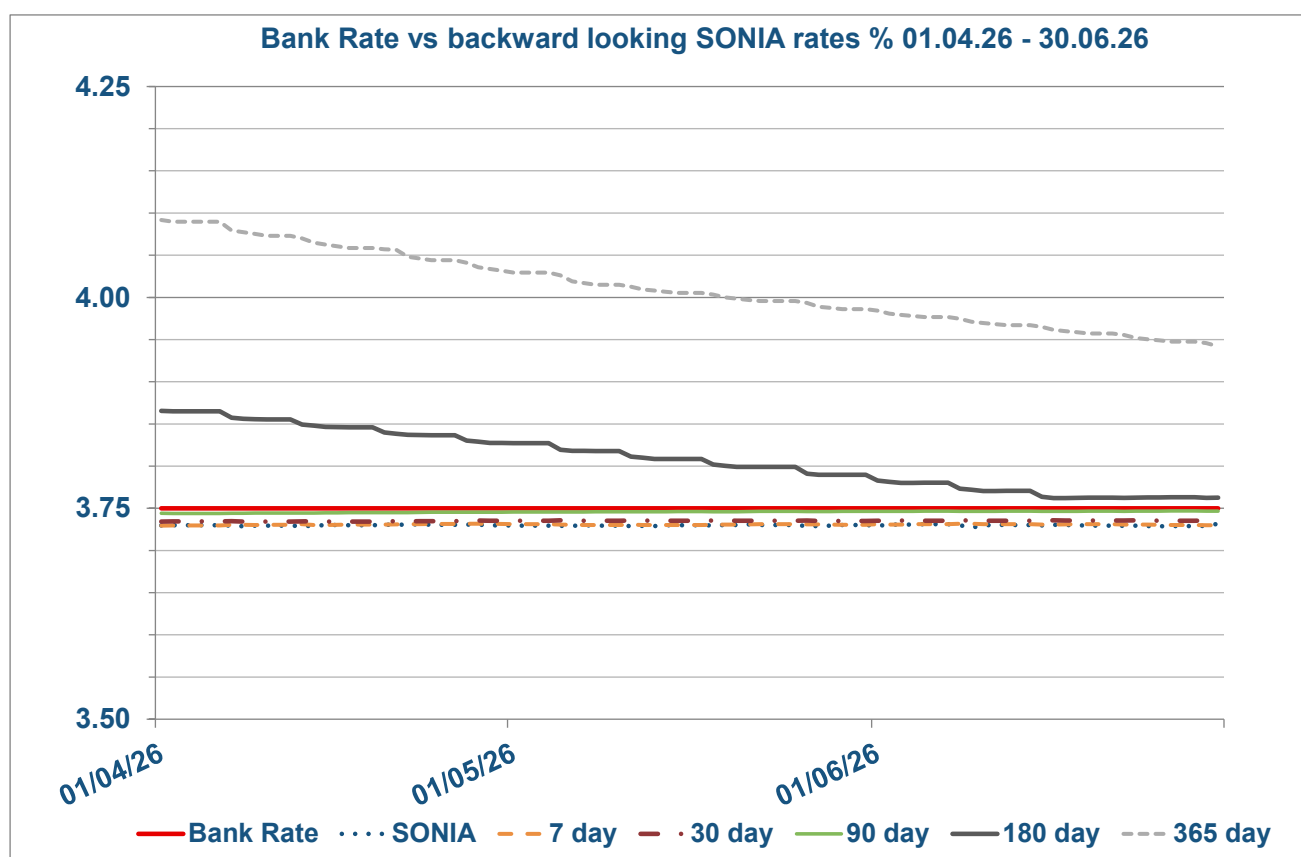
The average level of funds available for investment purposes during the quarter was **£25.03m**. These funds were available on a temporary basis, and the level of funds available was mainly dependent on the timing of precept payments, receipt of grants and progress on the capital programme. The Council currently holds significant funds relating to CIL and Section 106 agreements.

As highlighted previously, we are now using the Sterling Overnight Index Averages. The backward-looking benchmark reflects where the market was positioned when investments were placed.

Investment performance year to date as of end-June 2026



FINANCIAL YEAR TO QUARTER ENDED 30/06/2026						
	Bank Rate	SONIA	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
High	3.75	3.73	3.76	3.86	4.08	4.35
High Date	01/04/2026	30/06/2026	23/04/2026	30/04/2026	30/04/2026	30/04/2026
Low	3.75	3.73	3.74	3.77	3.84	3.96
Low Date	01/04/2026	09/06/2026	22/06/2026	26/06/2026	26/06/2026	26/06/2026
Average	3.75	3.73	3.74	3.81	3.94	4.14
Spread	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.09	0.23	0.39



FINANCIAL YEAR TO QUARTER ENDED 30/06/2026

	Bank Rate	SONIA	7 day	30 day	90 day	180 day	365 day
High	3.75	3.73	3.73	3.74	3.75	3.87	4.09
High Date	01/04/2026	30/06/2026	09/06/2026	06/05/2026	26/06/2026	01/04/2026	01/04/2026
Low	3.75	3.73	3.73	3.73	3.74	3.76	3.94
Low Date	01/04/2026	09/06/2026	01/04/2026	01/04/2026	02/04/2026	16/06/2026	30/06/2026
Average	3.75	3.73	3.73	3.74	3.75	3.81	4.01
Spread	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.15

The Council has budgeted investment returns of £0.530 million for 2026/27. At the end of Q1, investment income is £200.5k against a profiled budget of £126k, resulting in a favourable variance of £74k. While returns are expected to moderate over the remainder of the year as the Council's cash balances reduce, particularly as expenditure on the Bereavement Centre progresses, the full-year outturn is currently forecast to be approximately £60k above the annual budget.

The list of investments held on 30th June 2026

	Value £	Interest Rate
NatWest Bank Current Account	155,102	2.50%
Money Market Funds – Insight	5,000,000	3.87%
Money Market Funds – Aberdeen Standard	4,520,000	3.85%
Standard Chartered Bank	6,000,000	3.83%
SMBC Bank	6,000,000	3.98%
TOTAL	21,675,102	3.88%

Approved limits

Officers can confirm that the approved limits within the Annual Investment Strategy were not breached during the quarter ended 30th June 2026.

4. Borrowing

The Council had no external borrowing carried forward from 2025/26 and none was undertaken during the quarter ended 30th June 2026 and it is further anticipated that no external borrowing will be needed during the remainder of the financial year.

5. Compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits

The prudential and treasury Indicators are shown in Appendix 1.

It is a statutory duty for the Council to determine and keep under review the affordable borrowing limits, During the quarter ended 30th June 2026, the Council has operated within the treasury and prudential indicators set out in the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2026/27. The Director of Finance reports that no difficulties are envisaged for the current or future years in complying with these indicators.

All treasury management operations have also been conducted in full compliance with the Council's Treasury Management Practices.

APPENDIX 1: Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2026-27 as of 30th June 2026

Treasury Indicators	Actual	Actual
	30 th June 2026	31 st March 2026
	£0	£0
Authorised limit for external debt	8,000	8,000
Operational boundary for external debt	0	0
Gross external debt	0	0
Investments	(21,675)	(30,131)
Net borrowing/(Investment)	(21,675)	(30,131)

Prudential Indicators	Forecast Yearend Position as at 30 th June 2026	Actual
	£'000	31 st March 2026
		£'000
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) – Brought forward	10,821	10,197
Capital Expenditure funded from Borrowing	5,114	4059
Minimum Revenue Provision & Repayment of Loan from ECTC	(2,816)	(3,435)
Annual change in CFR	2,298	624
Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) – Carried forward	13,119	10,821

Title: East Cambridgeshire Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) for 2026/27

Committee: Finance and Assets

Date: 24 September 2026

Author: Theresa Mann, Head of Billing, Benefits and Business Rates

Report No: AB78

Contact officer: Jude Antony, Director, Finance
(01353) 616470 jude.antony@eastcambs.gov.uk Room 127. The Grange, Ely

Issue

1. Each year the Council is required to review its Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS). This report details the annual review of the Scheme and considers whether any changes are needed for 2027/28.

Recommendations

2. The Committee is asked to approve the annual review of the LCTRS and the recommendation that no changes are needed to the Scheme in 2027/28.

Background / Options

3. We are now in the fourteenth year of LCTRS, a locally set scheme that replaced the previous nationally set Council Tax Benefit (CTB) scheme from April 2013.
4. In 2013/14 the Council took advantage of a one-off Government grant that compensated in part for the reduction in Government funding for the Working Age scheme. This meant that the maximum LCTRS awarded was 91.5%.
5. For 2014/15 to 2017/18, the Council retained the original scheme, except that those allowances and premiums (the amounts of income from state-administered benefits such as Jobseekers' Allowance) were increased in line with other benefits such as Housing Benefit.
6. For the 2018/19 scheme, the Council harmonised the scheme with DWP welfare reforms introduced for Housing Benefit and LCTRS for Pensioners and introduced closer links to Universal Credit data sharing for claims, thereby removing the requirement to make a separate claim.
7. For 2019/20 the Council made no changes to the scheme.
8. For 2020/21 the Council introduced a fluctuating earnings rule to the treatment of Universal Credit (UC). A weekly tolerance level of £15 (£65 monthly) was introduced

to reduce the number of monthly reassessments that impacted customers every time a revised Universal Credit notification was received.

9. For 2021/22 there were no changes implemented.
10. For 2022/23 there were four amendments made to the scheme. Reducing the capital threshold from £16,000 to £10,000 and abolishing tariff income for those with under £10,000. Applying a fixed-rate, non-dependent deduction of £7.40 per week. Streamlining the Council Tax Support application process by signposting customers to claim Universal Credit and Council Tax Support at the same time. Increasing the Universal Credit income variation rule from £65 to £100 each month.
11. For 2023/24 and 2024/25, the 8.5% minimum contribution scheme was retained for working-age residents with no changes.
12. For 2025/26, a change was made to the Scheme to enable cases to be re-assessed where evidence has been obtained by the Fraud Team relating to DWP passported benefit in payment. Previously, the Scheme prevented re-assessing LCTRS entitlement for passported cases where a Council Fraud investigation had been completed, unless the DWP confirmed the case was also under investigation with them. However, the DWP rarely confirmed an investigation was underway, which prevented the Council from re-assessing customers' LCTRS entitlement. The change continued the process of requesting the DWP to join the Council's investigations, but permitted the Council, based on the evidence gathered, to re-assess LCTRS for those customers in receipt of passported benefit without requiring DWP confirmation that an investigation is in progress. The 91.5% Scheme was continued.
13. For 2026/27, the 8.5% minimum contribution scheme was retained for working-age residents with no changes.

Arguments / Conclusions

14. No process changes are proposed for 2027/28, and the recommendation is to retain the current scheme with the 8.5% minimum contribution level.
 - To ensure that the principle of everyone making at least a small contribution towards their Council Tax charge is maintained.
 - To maintain a level of Council Tax income to continue to provide funding for services at district and county level.
 - There is other support available for those on low incomes and impacted by the cost-of-living crisis within the Housing Team, and those affected should also be signposted to maximise benefit take-up, reviewing discounts and exemptions and providing Exceptional Hardship Payments where there is a need, utilising vulnerability information through applications such as the Low Income Family Tracker and providing bespoke support across all areas of Council Tax, Benefits and Recovery

Additional Implications Assessment

Financial Implications Yes	Legal Implications No	Human Resources (HR) Implications No
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) No	Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) No	Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) No

Appendices

15. None

Background Documents

16. None

FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE
ANNUAL AGENDA PLAN

AGENDA ITEM NO 17

LEAD OFFICER: Sally Bonnett, Director Community

Democratic Services and Elections Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer: Jane Webb

Thurs 25 June 2026	4:30pm
Chair's Announcements	Chair
Actions taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of urgency (if any)	DSO
Forward Agenda Plan	DSO
Write-off of unrecoverable debt (if any)	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Climate and Nature Strategy	Climate Change and Natural Environment Manager
Assets Update	Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
Bereavement Centre Fees and Charges	Crematorium and Bereavement Service Manager
Appointments, Transfers, Resignations [EXEMPT]	HR Manager
ECTC Management Accounts (Jan-March 2026) [EXEMPT]	ECTC Finance Manager
Annual Reports of Representatives on Outside Bodies	DSO
Financial Outturn Report 2025/26	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Treasury Operations Annual Performance Review	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Thurs 24 September 2026	4:30pm
Chair's Announcements	Chair
Write-Off of Unrecoverable Debt (if any)	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Draft Inclusive Play Strategy	Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
Assets Update	Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
Local Council Reduction Scheme Policy Review	Director Finance and S151 Officer
MTFS Update	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Budget Monitoring Q1	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Gender Pay Report	HR Manager
Actions Taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of Urgency (if any)	DSO
Forward Agenda Plan	DSO
EXEMPT – ECTC Management Accounts	ECTC Finance Manager
Thurs 26 November 2026	4:30pm
Chair's Announcements	Chair
Service Delivery Plans – 6-Month Performance Update	Service Leads
Write-Off of Unrecoverable Debt (if any)	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Finance Report	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Q2 Budget Monitoring	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Treasury Management Update	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Assets Update	Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
Annual Infrastructure Funding Statement	Director Community

Notes:

- 1. Agenda items which are likely to be "urgent" and therefore not subject to call-in are marked ***
- 2. Agenda items in italics are provisional items / possible items for future meetings.**

FINANCE & ASSETS COMMITTEE
ANNUAL AGENDA PLAN

AGENDA ITEM NO 17

LEAD OFFICER: Sally Bonnett, Director Community

Democratic Services and Elections Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer: Jane Webb

ECTC Half Yearly Report	Director Commercial
Open Spaces Transfers	
Health and Safety Annual Report	Health & Safety Manager
Actions Taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of Urgency (if any)	DSO
Forward Agenda Plan	DSO
EXEMPT – ECTC Management Accounts	ECTC Finance Manager
Thurs 28 January 2027	4:30pm
Chair's Announcements	Chair
Write-Off of Unrecoverable Debt (if any)	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Assets Update	Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
2027/28 Annual Treasury Management Strategy MRP & AIS	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Q3 Budget Monitoring	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Revenue Budget 2027/28	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Actions Taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of Urgency (if any)	DSO
Forward Agenda Plan	DSO
EXEMPT – Appointments, Transfers, Resignations	HR Manager
Thurs 22 March 2027	4:30pm
Chair's Announcements	Chair
Service Delivery Plans 2027/28	Service Leads
Write-Off of Unrecoverable Debt (if any)	Director Finance and S151 Officer
Assets Update	Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
Assets Management Plan 2027/28	Open Spaces & Facilities Manager
Annual Review RIPA Policies	Director Legal
ECTC Annual Business Plan 2027/28	ECTC Finance Manager
ECTC Management Accounts	ECTC Finance Manager
Actions Taken by the Chief Executive on the grounds of Urgency (if any)	DSO
Forward Agenda Plan	DSO

Notes:

1. Agenda items which are likely to be "urgent" and therefore not subject to call-in are marked *
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