



# EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

THE GRANGE, NUTHOLT LANE,  
ELY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB7 4EE  
Telephone: 01353 665555

## NOTICE OF MEETING

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the Annual Meeting of the **EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held on **THURSDAY 29 APRIL 2021** commencing at **6.00pm** with up to 15 minutes of Public Question Time, immediately followed by the formal business, and you are summoned to attend for the transaction of the following business.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Due to the introduction of restrictions on gatherings of people by the Government due to the Covid-19 outbreak, this meeting will be conducted remotely facilitated using the Zoom video conferencing system. There will be no access to the meeting at the Council Offices, but there will be Public Question Time at the commencement of the meeting in accordance with the Council's Public Question Time Scheme, as modified for remote meetings. Details of the public viewing arrangements for this meeting are detailed in the Notes box at the end of the Agenda.

**Prior to the commencement of the meeting, the Chairman will deliver a tribute and a minute's silence will be held as a mark of respect following the passing of HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh**

## AGENDA

### 1. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME [oral]

The meeting will commence with up to 15 minutes Public Question Time

**Please Note:** due to this being a remote meeting, questions from the public should be e-mailed to [tracy.couper@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:tracy.couper@eastcambs.gov.uk) by 5pm on Tuesday 27 April 2021 (see Notes box at the end of the Agenda)

### 2. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 2021/22

#### Nomination

Cllr Alan Sharp  
Cllr Gareth Wilson

#### Proposed By

Cllr David Brown  
Cllr Charlotte Cane

#### Seconded By

Cllr Amy Starkey  
Cllr Mark Inskip

### 3. VOTE OF THANKS TO OUTGOING CHAIRMAN AND PRESENTATION OF PAST CHAIRMAN'S MEDALLION AND SCROLL

### 4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE [oral]

### 5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [oral]

To receive declarations of interest from Members for any items on the Agenda in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct

**6. MINUTES – 23 FEBRUARY 2021**

To confirm as a correct record

**7. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN 2021/22**

<b>Nomination</b>	<b>Proposed By</b>	<b>Seconded By</b>
Cllr Daniel Schumann	Cllr Alan Sharp	Cllr Julia Huffer

**8. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS** [oral]

**9. TO RECEIVE PETITION(S) (if any)** [oral]

**10. NOTICE OF MOTIONS UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 10** [oral]

**(a) Endorsement of the Fenland Flag**

Inspired by the success of the Black Country flag, adopted in 2012, and aware of the strong sense of identity in the people of the Fens, East Cambridgeshire resident and vexillographer Mr James Bowman embarked on the design and promotion of a flag for the Fenland area in 2016.

The area that Mr Bowman intends the flag to cover is that defined by Natural England as the National Character of the Fens, stretching north to the fens of Lincolnshire, taking in Fenland and most of East Cambridgeshire to the south.

Mr Bowman writes that the symbol of the Fens is the Fen Tiger and that this designation derives from the, sometimes violent, opposition of the local population to the fen drainage schemes of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. 'Fen Tiger' is a well-known and well used nickname for someone from the Fens; many associations and businesses in the area use the term, sometimes with logos that feature tigers.



Mr Bowman, aided by a number of people, has run a successful campaign since 2018 to encourage take up and usage of the flag, with the ultimate aim of having the flag officially recognised through inclusion in the registry of the Flag Institute. The flag is promoted online on social media and via direct canvassing for support and has steadily increased in visibility with flags being displayed in a number of locations as well as through the use of supporting materials such as postcards, stickers, keyrings and other items.

Businesses and organisations supporting the flag campaign include those from the travel and tourism sector, food manufacturing, catering, and boating, as well as community clubs, the private boating community, FACT Community Transport, and Ely Tourist Information Centre. There is good evidence of widespread use of the flag and it is included on the British County Flags website.

This Council:

- Thanks and congratulates Mr Bowman and his colleagues on the success to date of the promotion of a flag for Fenland
- Encourages and endorses the inclusion of the flag in the registry of the Flag Institute
- Wishes Mr Bowman the best of luck in his efforts to have the flag recognised by the Flag Institute

Proposer: Cllr Anna Bailey

Seconder: Cllr Julia Huffer

## **(b) Virtual Council Meetings**

During the period of the COVID-19 restrictions this Council has successfully held meetings virtually using Zoom. It was one of the first Councils to introduce virtual or online meetings, initially for Planning Committee meetings, before being used for all Committee and full Council meetings.

The Government is not currently planning to extend the temporary power to hold virtual meetings beyond 7 May 2021. This Council notes there have been occasions where face to face meetings would have been preferred, but this Council notes the advantages of being able to hold remote meetings.

1. Many of East Cambridgeshire's District Councillors live quite a distance from Ely. For some it is an hour round trip to attend a Committee meeting. It isn't always easy, particularly during winter time to attend all the meetings because of inclement weather and work commitments. Often there are meetings in the morning, afternoon and evening with some time in-between. That time is not wasted if Members are able to attend remotely from home.
2. East Cambridgeshire District Council has declared a climate emergency and by attending meetings via Teams or Zoom we are not driving and using non-renewal resources but are cutting down on our carbon footprint – a priority of this Council.
3. Virtual meetings have saved the Council money during the past financial year as, for example, travel expenses have been very much reduced. As we are facing a significant shortfall in funding for the foreseeable future any saving is helpful.
4. Councillors wish to attend the East Cambridgeshire District Council Committees but are also keen to attend meetings of the Parish Councils within their wards. Some are also County Councillors and inevitably there is often a clash of dates. This means that Councillors have to choose which to attend. The result is less engagement with the District Council, or the County Council or the Parish Councils. Having remote meetings means that Councillors can more easily attend most of the meetings, to the advantage of all the Councils.
5. The engagement of the public and press has also generally increased. The level of reporting about Council business has increased as face to face or physical meetings often no longer attracted the local press due to cutbacks in their staff.

6. For some Councillors who have work commitments, mobility issues or are carers remote meetings have been easier for them to attend. This may well help to attract a wider age range of potential Councillors in future elections.

This Council would like to have the flexibility to hold remote or virtual, and physical or face to face meetings. We recognise that some meetings are better dealt with face to face and we also recognise that a hybrid model could also work successfully.

This Council therefore resolves to

1. Write to the *Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government* (MHCLG) urging that the temporary change to the meeting rules set out in the Local Government Act 1972 be made permanent so that after 7 May we have the flexibility to hold meetings remotely or physically or by using a combination of the two.
2. Write to our two MPs, the County Council and Parish Councils asking for support for this flexible approach to council meetings.
3. If our request is successful, to explore the use of technology to develop remote meetings even more in order to attract a wider audience.

Proposed: Cllr. Mark Inskip

Seconded: Cllr. Charlotte Cane

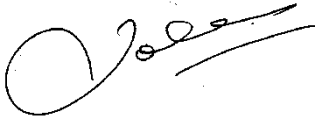
11. **TO ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS (if any) [oral]**
12. **LEADER AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE COUNCIL, GROUP LEADERS AND DEPUTY GROUP LEADERS**
13. **POLITICAL PROPORTIONALITY**
14. **MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES (INCLUDING SUBSTITUTES) AND OTHER MEMBER BODIES 2021/22**
15. **CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH COMBINED AUTHORITY**
  - (a) **Appointments to Combined Authority**
  - (b) **Update Report**
16. **THE FUTURE OF REMOTE MEETINGS**
17. **ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE ON THE GROUNDS OF URGENCY**
18. **LOAN FACILITY TO EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST (ECCLT)**

**EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRESS**

That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining item because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public

were present during the items there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Category 3 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

## **19. LOAN FACILITY TO EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST (ECCLT) – EXEMPT APPENDIX**



**J Hill**  
**Chief Executive**

To: All Members of the Council

### **NOTE:**

**AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING, THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES/SUB-COMMITTEES WILL MEET TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN AND A VICE-CHAIRMAN, ETC, FOR 2021/22:**

- **FINANCE AND ASSETS COMMITTEE**
- **OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**
- **AUDIT COMMITTEE**
- **LICENSING COMMITTEE**
- **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

### **NOTES:**

1. Since the introduction of restrictions on gatherings of people by the Government in March 2020, it has not been possible to hold standard face to face public meetings at the Council Offices. This led to a temporary suspension of meetings. The Coronavirus Act 2020 now has been implemented, however, and in Regulations made under Section 78 it gives local authorities the power to hold meetings without it being necessary for any of the participants or audience to be present together in the same room.

The Council has a scheme to allow Public Question Time at the start of the meeting using the Zoom video conferencing system. If you wish to ask a question or make a statement, please contact Tracy Couper, Democratic Services Officer for full Council [tracy.couper@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:tracy.couper@eastcambs.gov.uk) by 5pm on Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021. If you are not able to access the meeting remotely, or do not wish to speak via a remote link, your question/statement can be read out on your behalf at the Council meeting.

2. A live stream of the meeting will be available on YouTube at [www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/council-29042021](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/council-29042021) for public viewing.
3. Reports are attached for each agenda item unless marked “oral”.
4. If required all items on the agenda can be provided in different formats (e.g. large type, Braille or audio tape, or translated into other languages), on request, by calling Main Reception on (01353) 665555 or e-mail:

[translate@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:translate@eastcambs.gov.uk)

5. 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).”