



East Cambridgeshire District Council

NOTICE OF MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual Meeting of the **EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL** will be held on **THURSDAY 23 MAY 2024** in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER** at **THE GRANGE, NUTHOLT LANE, ELY, CB7 4EE**, 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

Prior to the commencement of the formal business, prayers will be delivered by Reverend Eleanor Whalley, Soham Parish Church

Agenda

- 1. Public Question Time** **[oral]**
The meeting will commence with up to 15 minutes Public Question Time (PQT) – questions/statements can be submitted in advance or placed in the PQT box in the Council Chamber prior to the commencement of the meeting – see Notes below for further information on the PQT scheme.

- 2. Election of Chair 2024/25**

Nomination	Proposed by	Seconded by
Cllr Mark Goldsack	Cllr Anna Bailey	Cllr Julia Huffer
Cllr Gareth Wilson	Cllr Lorna Dupré	Cllr Charlotte Cane

- 3. Apologies for absence** **[oral]**

- 4. Election of Vice-Chair 2024/25**

Nomination	Proposed by	Seconded by
Cllr David Brown	Cllr Anna Bailey	Cllr Julia Huffer
Cllr Christine Whelan	Cllr Lorna Dupré	Cllr Charlotte Cane

- 5. 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.

- 6. Minutes – 20 February 2024**
To confirm as a correct record.

7. Ely West Ward District By-Election Result

To note the election of Councillor Ross Trent as a District Councillor for the Ely West Ward.

8. Chair's announcements **[oral]**

9. To receive Petition(s) **[oral]**

10. Notice of Motions under Procedure Rule 10 **[oral]**

(i) Preventing Abuse and Intimidation of Public Officials

East Cambridgeshire District Council, hereinafter referred to as the 'Council', notes that:

- It is a privilege and a responsibility to be elected to a public office, which Members feel proud to enter into. It is an equal privilege and responsibility to serve local government as an officer.
- The intimidation and abuse of councillors and candidates, of any party or none, in person or otherwise, undermines democracy, prevents elected Members from representing the communities they serve and deters individuals from standing for election. It also undermines effective discussion, understanding and accountability for the benefit of local people.
- According to the Local Government Association, this intimidation and abuse is greatly increased with respect to social media, which has greater implications for younger people becoming or serving as councillors or officers.
- Increasing levels of toxicity in public and political discourse, towards both officers and Members, distracts from the material priorities of local communities, and is preventing the engagement of a wide range of people and viewpoints in the democratic process.
- Preventative actions, support and responses should be in place to ensure that Members, candidates and officers feel safe and able to fulfil their obligations to the best of their judgement and ability.

The Council resolves, in response to this information, to:

- Officially subscribe itself to the Local Government Association's Debate Not Hate campaign, which endeavours to raise public awareness of the role of councillors in local communities, encourage healthy debate and support those in public life more generally who may face abuse and/or intimidation.
- Use the LGA template letter to write to Lucy Frazer MP and Steve Barclay MP to ask them to work with His Majesty's Government and the LGA to develop and implement a plan to address abuse and intimidation of public officials at every level of government.
- Subsequently, instruct the Chief Executive to publicise the Council's membership thereof to all Staff and Members and display the LGA Debate Not Hate posters at The Grange Reception and Council Chamber, and to actively encourage its Parish Councils to do the same, citing the above information.
- Instruct the Chief Executive and Democratic Services Manager to undertake a 4-yearly review (before each full election to the Council) of the support available to councillors, officers and election candidates in relation to abuse, intimidation and safety, and report this to the Finance and Assets Committee and to all candidates.
- To have this information uploaded to a page as part of the new website development, and to display the LGA's Debate Not Hate logo in the website footer.

- Work with the local Police and the East Cambs Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to ensure there is a clear and joined-up mechanism for reporting threats and other concerns about the safety of public officials and their families, including prevention.
- Take a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of councillors, candidates and officers, whether in person or otherwise, and support them to uphold the most exemplary standards of respectful debate, individual accountability and public service.

Proposer: Councillor Lucius Vellacott

Seconder: Councillor Mary Wade

(ii) Two Child Limit to Benefit Payments

The Two Child limit to benefit payments was introduced in 2017. It prevents families from claiming Child Tax Credit or Universal Credit for more than two children in the household.

Council notes the recent [research conducted by the End Child Poverty Coalition](#) which has found that:

- 1.5 million children in the UK live in households subject to the two-child limit on benefit payments. That is roughly one-in-ten children in the UK.
- In 2023/24 the two-child limit cost families up to £3,235 per child each year.
- There is a strong correlation between families affected by the two-child limit and those who are living in poverty.
- Scrapping the two-child limit would lift 250,000 children out of poverty overnight, and significantly reduce the level of poverty that a further 850,000 children live in.
- Scrapping the two-child limit would cost £1.3 billion, however it is estimated that child poverty costs the economy £39 billion each year.

In East Cambridgeshire, 1,160 children in 330 households are currently affected by the two-child limit to benefit payments. That is 6 per cent of all children in the authority area. At the same time 3,226 local children are living in poverty.

Council strongly believes that the two-child limit to benefit payments is a cruel and harmful policy that should be scrapped. [Research from the University of York](#) has shown its introduction has had no positive impacts on employment and earnings. Instead it has dragged hundreds of local families into poverty.

Council resolves to:

- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister indicating East Cambridgeshire's strong belief that the two child limit to benefit payments should be scrapped—which would help 1,160 children living in East Cambridgeshire.
- Further instruct the Chief Executive to write to both MPs covering the East Cambridgeshire area, asking them to commit their public support to the campaign to end the two child limit to benefit payments.

Proposer: Cllr Charlotte Cane

Seconder: Cllr Mark Inskip

(iii) Accessible Play

This Council:

Acknowledges the Essential Role of Play: Believes that opportunities for outdoor play should be accessible to and inclusive of all children and young people. Recognizes its role in ensuring this is the case for playgrounds under its control and in promoting high standards of inclusivity in playgrounds maintained by other bodies, including parish councils.

Addresses Accessibility Concerns: Notes with concern that not all current playgrounds meet the needs of children and young people with disabilities, including but not limited to children and young people using wheelchairs or special educational needs, including but not limited to children and young people with autism, and commits to addressing these gaps.

Playgrounds as Essential Community Hubs: All children and young people have a right to play, which must be supported and reflected in our playgrounds. They are essential for community engagement and childhood development and must be designed and built with inclusivity as a foundational principle.

This Council resolves to:

1. **Audit and Assess:** Undertake or commission an audit of all playgrounds within East Cambridgeshire, including those managed by external bodies, to assess levels of inclusive provision and identify areas needing improvement.
2. **Strategic Reporting:** Receive a report to the appropriate Committee detailing the outcomes of the audit, along with a proposed council policy on inclusive play that sets specific, actionable standards for all playgrounds in the East Cambridgeshire area.
3. **Funding and Implementation:** Cost a programme to increase the inclusivity of its playgrounds to the standards agreed in the policy. Identify potential sources of funding and explore the feasibility of directing specific funds to parish councils for the development or enhancement of their playground facilities and consider how to fund accessibility improvements in play areas maintained by developers.
4. **Community and Parish Council Engagement:** Develop and implement a comprehensive plan to increase awareness and knowledge of inclusive play needs among all local parishes in East Cambridgeshire. Encourage parish councils to apply these inclusivity standards in their playground projects, ensuring local community involvement in the planning process, especially when developers are required to provide play areas.
5. **Planning and Collaboration:** Work closely with its planning department to integrate inclusivity expertise into the planning and approval processes for new developments. Ensure that new playgrounds meet high standards of inclusivity from the outset. Actively consult with parents and carers of children and young people with SEND needs in collaboration with the Parish Council during the planning and design phases of the playground.
6. **Transparency:** Ensure the local community is made aware of accessible features and inclusive equipment in local playgrounds via effective channels, including the ECDC website, social media platforms, and information boards.

Proposer: Cllr Chika Akinwale

Secunder: Cllr Lorna Dupré

11. Notice of Rescission Motion under Procedure Rule 20

The Council formally rescinds paragraph (iii) of the motion in relation to the Constitutional Review Working Party (ref: 20 February 2024, Agenda Item 17 paragraph (iii)).

The Council notes the application of Council procedure rules to the Council's Committees as defined in the Constitution (ref: 4 (1a) paragraph 27.2).

The Council instructs the Chief Executive to produce a written guidance note to members, specifically to:

- reiterate the Council procedure rules as they apply to Council committees.
- confirm the cessation of written questions from members to officers.
- confirm that questions from members to officers without notice should be pertinent to the recommendations of the specific agenda item and at the discretion of the Chair.
- recognise the necessary discretion to the Chairs of the Council's Regulatory committees.
- confirm the requirement for a pre-Committee briefing between opposition spoke persons and the lead Committee officer, in addition to the requirement for a pre-Committee briefing with the Chair/Vice-Chair and the lead Committee officer.

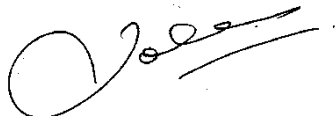
Proposer: Councillor Anna Bailey
Seconder: Councillor Julia Huffer
Councillor: Councillor Alan Sharp
Councillor: Councillor Kelli Pettitt
Councillor: Councillor Lucius Vellacott

- 12. To answer questions from Members** **[oral]**
- 13. Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, Group Leaders and Deputy Group Leaders**
- 14. Political Proportionality**
- 15. Membership of Committees and Sub-Committees (including Substitutes) and Other Member Bodies 2024/25**
- 16. Schedule of items recommended from Committees and other Member bodies:**
- **Audit Committee Annual Report**
- 17. East Cambs Trading Company (ECTC) and East Cambs Street Scene (ECSS) matters**
- 18. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority:**
- (a) Appointments to Combined Authority**
 - (b) update report – March 2024**
- 19. Actions taken on the grounds of urgency**

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 3 and 4 of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

20. Actions taken on the grounds of urgency – Exempt appendices



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 Chair and a Vice-Chair, etc, for 2024/25:

- **Finance and Assets Committee**
- **Operational Services Committee**
- **Audit Committee**
- **Licensing Committee**
- **Planning Committee**

NOTES:

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

The meeting will be webcast and a live stream of the meeting will be available. Further details can be found at www.eastcambs.gov.uk/meetings/council-230524. Please be aware that all attendees, including those in the public gallery, will be visible on the livestream.

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

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

Fire instructions for meeting: The instructions in the event of a fire at the venue will be announced at the commencement of the meeting.

Reports are attached for each agenda item unless marked “oral”.

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

If the Committee wishes to exclude the public and press from the meeting, a resolution in the following terms will need to be passed:

“That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining item no(s). X because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the item(s) there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Category X of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).”