



# EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

MEETING: **OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**  
TIME: 4.30pm  
DATE: 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021  
VENUE: Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely  
ENQUIRIES REGARDING THIS AGENDA: Adrian Scaites-Stokes  
DIRECT DIAL: (01353) 665555 EMAIL: [adrian.scaites-stokes@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:adrian.scaites-stokes@eastcambs.gov.uk)

## Membership:

### Conservative Members

Cllr David Ambrose Smith  
(Chairman)  
Cllr Julia Huffer  
(Vice Chairman)  
Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith  
Cllr Lis Every  
Cllr Joshua Schumann  
Cllr Jo Webber

### Liberal Democrat Members

Cllr Victoria Charlesworth  
Cllr Mark Inskip  
(Lead Member)  
Cllr John Trapp  
Cllr Christine Whelan

### Independent Member

Cllr Paola Trimarco  
(Lead Member)

### **Substitutes:**

Cllr Anna Bailey  
Cllr Dan Schumann  
Cllr Lisa Stubbs

### **Substitutes:**

Cllr Matthew Downey  
Cllr Simon Harries  
Cllr Alison Whelan

### **Substitute:**

Cllr Sue Austen

### **Lead Officers:**

Jo Brooks, Director Operations

**Quorum:** 5 Members

# A G E N D A

- 1. Public Question Time**  
The meeting will commence with up to 15 minutes public question time
- 2. Apologies and Substitutions**
- 3. Declarations of Interest**  
To receive declarations of interest from Members for any items on the Agenda in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct.

- 4. Minutes**  
To approve the minutes of the meetings held on (a) 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 & (b) 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021
- 5. Chairman's Announcements**
- 6. Voluntary Community Action East Cambridgeshire Update**
- 7. Service Presentation – Environmental Services**
- 8. ECDC Environment Plan and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (June 2021 Edition)**
- 9. Sub-Regional Lettings Policy Review**
- 10. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Against Scams Partnership**
- 11. Quarter 4, 2020/21 Performance for the Waste and Street Cleansing Services**
- 12. Annual Reports of Representatives on Outside Bodies**
- 13. Anglia Revenues Joint Committee Minutes**
- 14. Forward Agenda Plan**

**NOTES:**

1. In order to comply with current COVID-19 regulations and guidance, sufficient social distancing of all attendees must be maintained and therefore total numbers will necessarily be limited. The maximum capacity for meetings in the Council Chamber while COVID-19 restrictions are in place has been set at 23 by the Health & Safety Officer. Allowing for Member/Officer/Press attendance, this will normally give a capacity for public attendance of 5 socially-distanced seated people.

Members of the public who wish to attend the meeting are therefore asked, where possible, to notify the Democratic Services ([democratic.services@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@eastcambs.gov.uk)) of their intention to attend in order that we can endeavour to accommodate everyone and the necessary health and safety precautions can be shared. Face coverings must be worn at all times except when seated and no one should move around the room unnecessarily. Members of the public should enter via the door in the glass atrium at the back of the building.

The Council has a scheme to allow Public Question Time at the start of the meeting. If you wish to ask a question or make a statement, please email Adrian Scaites-Stokes, Democratic Services Officer, at [adrian.scaites-stokes@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:adrian.scaites-stokes@eastcambs.gov.uk) by 5pm at least 48 hours before the start of the meeting. If you are not able to access the meeting your question/statement may be read out on your behalf at the Committee meeting.

2. The meeting will be webcast and available via the Council's website, on the meeting's webpage, 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)."

## In-person Council and Committee Meeting Protocol

### Background

This protocol applies to in-person meetings held whilst restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic are in place. This protocol has been written to align to Government guidance and regulations and will be updated as these evolve.

### General Principles

The Council will seek to hold its public meetings in ways that are lawful, transparent and safe for all who are involved.

Whilst coronavirus restrictions are in place, this means:

- Holding meetings in person when we are legally required to do so, or there is a clear necessity to do so.
- Holding meetings virtually in all other situations.

### Practices when operating in-person meetings

Prior to the meeting, the room will have been set up by the Facilities Management staff and no furniture should subsequently be re-arranged. All desks and microphones will have been sanitised for your use. There will be a dedicated desk and microphone for public speaking and both will be sanitised between uses. Disposable masks will be available for anyone who doesn't have their own and hand sanitiser will be provided.

Government guidelines encourage all adults without COVID-19 symptoms to take regular rapid lateral flow tests in order to help prevent the spread of infection as restrictions ease. Tests can be obtained easily in the following ways:

- By going to a test centre. In East Cambs there is a test site at Soham Town Rangers Football Club, Julius Martin Lane, Soham, Ely, East Cambridgeshire, CB7 5EQ
- By collecting a free pack of tests from many pharmacies – more information about local collection points is available at <https://maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk/>
- By ordering a free set of tests online at <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>

Arriving at the meeting:

- Please arrive no more than 10 minutes before the start of the meeting (or, if you are only attending for part of the meeting, the time you have been advised by Officers).
- Please wear a facemask upon entry to the building and follow all instructions such as the one-way system and lift capacity. Where applicable, these are clearly indicated on signs throughout the building.
- Please maintain social distancing when inside the building.
- Please record your attendance via the track and trace function that will be available upon arrival at the meeting room.
- Please use hand sanitiser from the station or bring your own if you prefer.
- Please take a seat in the public seating area promptly and do not wander around.
- Once you are seated, you may remove your facemask.

In the meeting:

- If you are registered to speak at the meeting then please remain seated until the Chairman invites your contribution. Please wear your mask when moving between the seating area and the public speaking desk.
- Please bring a drink with you. You are welcome to bring hot or cold drinks but no drinks will be supplied in order to reduce handling and avoid congestion.

- If a meeting is due to last for a long period, there will be designated breaks which will be announced at the meeting. Please follow instructions from the Officers and endeavour to maintain social distancing. Please wear your mask whenever you move away from your seat.
- You are welcome to use the facilities at any time. Remember to put your mask back on to do so.

#### After the meeting

- Please put your mask back on as soon as you leave your seat.
- Please take all belongings and any rubbish with you.
- Please leave the meeting promptly in accordance with the instructions from Officers.

#### FAQs

Many of us have already been vaccinated. Do we really need some of the suggested restrictions and protocols?

As a Council, it is important that we support efforts to restrict the spread of the coronavirus. Even though many people have been vaccinated, they can still spread the disease and catch it.

When we run Committee meetings in person, we have to comply with the current guidance on holding meetings in the workplace. This requires us to keep attendees to only those who are necessary, have 2m social distancing between participants (or 1m+ with risk mitigation), and enact these types of protocols.

Why are we so restricted in the amount of people in committee meetings when indoor venues can now operate events with higher capacity?

The government has different guidance according to the type of events being held. The guidance related to holding workplace meetings recommends 2m distance between participants, or 1m+ with risk mitigation where 2m is not viable. This in turn restricts the capacity of venues.

What about public participation?

By law all meetings have to be "open to the public" and of course, we want to make our meetings as open and transparent as we can. We have to balance the requirement to be open to the public with government guidance and health and safety restrictions. We are therefore encouraging the public to register in advance, where possible, so that we have an idea of expected numbers, and to consider attending only for the specific item(s) of relevance to them rather than for the whole meeting.

Why are some meetings being held in person and some meetings virtually?

Our meetings work under different legal frameworks.

The High Court has decided that Council, and meetings of Council Committees (such as Planning Committee), must be held in a specific, geographic place and those attending the meeting must be physically present at that place. It has also ruled that any meetings which require public attendance must be in-person too. If we continued to meet virtually, any decisions we make could be legally challenged.

Meetings that do not make decisions and/or do not require public attendance can continue to operate virtually.

There is a specific exemption relating to premises hearings under the Licensing Act 2003: they can continue to meet virtually.



## **AGENDA ITEM NO. 4(a)**

Minutes of a meeting of the Operational Services Committee facilitated via the Zoom Video Conferencing System at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021.

### **PRESENT**

Cllr Julia Huffer (Chairman)  
Cllr Victoria Charlesworth  
Cllr Lis Every  
Cllr Mark Inskip  
Cllr Dan Schumann (as a Substitute)  
Cllr Paola Trimarco  
Cllr Jo Webber  
Cllr Christine Whelan

### **OFFICERS**

Lewis Bage – Communities & Partnerships Manager  
Jo Brooks – Director Operations  
James Khan – Head of Street Scene  
Liz Knox – Environmental Services Manager  
Shona McKenzie – Community Safety Officer  
Angela Parmenter – Housing & Community Advice Manager  
Adrian Scaites-Stokes – Democratic Services Officer  
Craig Smith – Building Control Team Leader

### **OTHERS PRESENT**

Nigel Ankers – Finance Officer, East Cambs Street Scene (Item 7)  
John Hill – Managing Director, East Cambs Street Scene (Item 7)  
Paul Remington – Chairman, East Cambs Street Scene (Item 7)

Councillor Huffer revealed that Councillors David Ambrose Smith and Christine Ambrose Smith had not been able to attend today's meeting due to a sudden illness.

#### **69. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

#### **70. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Ambrose Smith and Christine Ambrose Smith. Councillor Dan Schumann attended as a Substitute.

Due to Councillor David Ambrose Smith's absence, Vice Chairman Julia Huffer chaired the meeting.

#### **71. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interests were made.

**72. MINUTES**

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

**73. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

**74. EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE BUSINESS PLAN 2021/22**

The Committee considered a report, V154 previously circulated, which detailed the Business Plan for 2021/22 for East Cambs Street Scene (ECSS). A revised Business Plan had been circulated after the agenda despatch and prior to the meeting.

The Managing Director advised the Committee that the purpose of the report was to present the Company's Business Plan looking forward to the next year. The Board wished to place on record its appreciation of the resilience of the team over the last year and commended the report.

The Director Operations advised the Committee that she was speaking to the committee in her capacity as Director of Operations for East Cambs Street Scene. Should she need to respond as Director for the Council she would advise the Committee accordingly.

The Business Plan obviously looked at the year ahead but also took the opportunity to briefly touch on the past year. Like most other services and businesses, ECSS has been affected by the pandemic. However, the Director personally thanked all of the workforce for maintaining a 'business as normal' approach. We were one of a few waste and recycling services who did not reduce services during the past 12 months and that was purely down to the commitment and diligence of our workforce. Their dedication and hard work was much appreciated and many of our residents wished to say thank you to them.

The Company managed to maintain its monthly performance target of 80% throughout the majority of the year apart from September. This was due to a combination of managing self-isolation, shielding and positive COVID cases amongst the crew, but the black bag roll out to residents had continued. This was a temporary blip and the Company was now continuing to exceed the 80% monthly target.

Managing staffing levels during the past year had, at times, been extremely challenging and saw us having to draft in higher numbers of agency staff to replace permanent members of staff, to ensure the service to our residents was maintained.



To help the Company manage this going forward, 4 of our officers had now received training on lateral flow testing. This had now been in place for a week and meant that our officers were tested twice a week, which helped plan for self-isolation cases alongside those that tested positive for COVID. The crews welcomed this and it was working well.

Finally, Members of this Committee were aware that The Council gave ECSS £91,000 from the money given to it by central Government to mitigate increased expenditure and costs caused by the pandemic. The £91k was purely to finance agency workers and overtime for existing staff, to ensure that services could be maintained. ECSS, as previously advised, was committed to repaying any of the £91k it did not use. As at end of February (month 11), ECSS had used £76,847. There may be some movement with this as March's (month 12) costs had not been included yet and some more of this fund may be drawn on, especially with the introduction of the lateral flow testing. However, with that caveat, currently ECSS would be repaying the council £14,153.

The Head of Street Scene then advised the Committee that the first portion of the Business Plan highlighted the success the Company had achieved. Last year the service had over-achieved its performance targets. Those targets had been reviewed and new Key Performance Indicators and targets had been agreed. Next year's goals had been set but already there were some uncertainties about the service, as the Government's new Waste Strategy was expected to change the services provided. The Key Performance Indicators were set annually and next years would include any necessary new Government targets.

The Company intended to expand on its experience during the pandemic and would focus on education and promotion as a priority. Although the Company had the highest recycling rates in Cambridgeshire, it would review its collection rounds. These were critical in stabilising demand, could possibly result in a carbon reduction and could reduce the amount spent on overtime. A holistic review should result in a more cost effective and profitable service that continued to meet customer expectations. The company would also continue to maximise commercial opportunities.

The Finance Officer, in considering the budget, had taken a cautious approach and anticipated the Company breaking even over the year. Income had increased, due to a 2% increase in the management fee from the District Council, and an additional estimated £75K to cover the increased costs associated with the Material Recycling Facility contract the Council held with Amey. Costs had increased by £65K, the main areas being the impacts of COVID and recycling. Other costs might be incurred should agency staff be required to cover for staff who had not used their holiday entitlements in the previous year and were carried over into the following year.

The Committee welcomed the review of the Key Performance Indicators and noted that the use of social media had become more important during the pandemic. A target for an increase of 5% of 'likes' and 'shares' had been agreed for the following year but that would only equate to 10 additions. The analytics of the website should be looked at, to try and gauge the engagement through

this platform. The Head of Street Scene explained that it was very difficult to increase the number of followers on the social media platform, so the targets looked at the number of 'posts' and 'shares' rather than the number of followers. So it was more about sharing information, as more would be gained if the information was shared by more people.

With regard to the vehicle fleet and the difficulties with Government consultation over the Waste Strategy, the consultation should take place during the spring. If there was no clarity from Government then the Council had to consider the action it could take, such as making representations to the Government. The Committee was informed that the Waste Strategy had been due before Easter, but had been delayed previously. Everyone wanted to hear the results so its effects could be considered. Every effort was being made to obtain those results.

In response to a query about the opportunities to become carbon-neutral, the Members were reminded that the Cambridgeshire local authorities were looking at electric and hydrogen powered vehicles, to ensure everything was covered. It was hoped that this would form part of the vehicle procurement framework to gain access to those types of vehicles. Lots of research was going on into carbon neutral alternatives and the Company was in the best position to take advantage.

On the development of employees, it was noted that performance management was used and that a lot of staff would reach the top of their pay scales by October. It was stated that the Company used the same PAYE scheme as the Council and therefore it was not eligible for specific Government COVID grants. It was revealed that there was currently nothing in place for pay incentives for those at the top of their scales but was something that would be looked into. To access relevant grants the Company would have to meet certain criteria, but as it was linked to the Council's pay scheme the Company's employees and Council employees were counted as one, making the Company ineligible due to the total number of staff.

Regarding education and communications for schools and the public, questions were asked about the Company's programmes, what engagement had taken place and about the timings of future communication schemes. The Committee were advised that the Company had attempted to engage with schools during the COVID pandemic, which had proved very difficult as schools had struggled. As additional pressure on schools had to be avoided, a different approach was being developed where information would be provided that could fit in with the schools' requirements. Information packs could be supplied so that the schools could dip into them as they needed to. Next year the aim was to maintain contact and provide some resources for them to use, including videos that they could use in the classroom.

The revision version of the Business Plan was duly proposed for approval, seconded, and agreed.

It was resolved:

That ECSS Business Plan 2021/22, in accordance with the revised version circulated, be approved.

## **75. SERVICE PRESENTATION – BUILDING CONTROL**

The Committee received a presentation by the Building Control Team Leader on the work of the Council's Building Control Service. The following information was given:

- The District Council set the standards for building design, including for Health and Safety, and Building Regulations followed this.
- The Building Control team consisted of seven staff, who dealt with statutory functions, such as checking plans, undertaking inspections, dealing with dangerous structures and demolitions.
- The team had managed to maintain its services despite being without a Team Leader for nine months.
- The team had received fantastic support from the Customer Services department and also liaised with other Council departments.
- A high level of workload had continued, although the number of applications had decreased slightly due to the pandemic. Usually the team dealt with an average of twelve jobs per day, but this had reduced by around 11% due to the pandemic, which was less than had been feared.
- Commercial activity had dropped off, affecting business, as had issues with obtaining materials and the furloughing of staff.
- Most of the jobs centred on domestic work and there had been an increase in house conversions.
- Inspection capacity had reduced, so work had been redeployed.
- Around 1500 projects had to get completed with an additional 400 already finished.
- Between 130-140 inspections had to be booked in and the market share of work secured was around 67-70%, which was very good and in the top 10% of all local authorities.
- However, competition was increasing so the team had to take steps to future-proof and possibly increase its market share by providing local expertise, technical responses and achieving a good rapport with architectural practices. This could realistically bring in an additional 10-15% extra work.
- The Government were reviewing changes to the Building Regulations, but it was not expected to affect the team too much, though its implications had to be understood and disseminated.
- Training and development was ongoing, with two staff members undertaking relevant qualification with two more to follow. This would build resilience within the department, as some staff members were approaching retirement.
- Fees were also being reviewed, to ensure that the charges made were fair and reflected the work being undertaken.

- Overall the team could be positive about its future and would continue to be held in high regard inside and outside the Council.

The Chairman commended the excellent work of the Building Control Officers, particularly throughout the COVID pandemic.

The Committee noted that the department worked well with the construction industry and the reason the team was so good was because its staff were sensible, knowledgeable, communicated well and were a credit to the Council. A question was raised about whether dangerous structures were an issue.

The Building Control Team Leader had been really impressed with the team. The department received Initial Notices, outlining work to be done and the organisations doing it. Although the department were not allowed to approach them initially, it could offer help once the work had started, although it was not always possible to compete. There were not a lot of dangerous structures in the district, due to the demographics of the area. However, the team would complete an inspection whenever notified and have discussions with surveyors as necessary, to ensure public safety.

## **76. DRAFT EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE YOUTH STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN**

The Committee considered a report, V155 previously circulated, which set out the Draft East Cambridgeshire Youth Strategy and Action Plan.

The Communities and Partnership Manager advised the Committee that the Strategy had been drawn up to ensure that youths were engaged, respected and were aware of the services available to them. It identified where building on previous work was possible to improve lives. Extensive engagement with young people had taken place through consultations, using a phased approach so responses could be clarified. Phase 1 included surveys of young people through relevant organisations, including schools. The responses showed a number of common themes, and further consultation was undertaken to clarify the feedback and to identify any gaps. The specific issues were outlined on page 6 of the Strategy document. Engagement with stakeholders was conducted to map services addressing the issues raised via the consultation. The engagement completed was a good start but continuing this was a key element.

The Committee noted that COVID had severely affected young people, so the Council should do as much as it could to help. Providing spaces and activities would tackle boredom and, although there were a variety of things available, some services were depleted and sketchy. In Iceland, the country had started a national programme for after-school activities and this had produced a dramatic change in young people's attitude. Other countries were taking note of that, as after-school programmes had a huge impact, so they were trying to find ways to support their youth. In this district how could people be supported as, although lots of people wanted to help, there were not enough locations to house the programmes? The Communities and Partnership Manager highlighted the mapping exercise under Appendix 1 to the Strategy, which detailed the work already being carried out by a range of organisations addressing issues identified by young people via the consultation.

Once the Strategy and Action Plan were in place, voluntary agencies could find out more information and could engage with more people to facilitate services at a local level and integrate these with the community. There was already an East Cambridgeshire Youth Advisory Board in operation, which had participation from schools. The enthusiasm of the youth involved had highlighted their key areas. Further consultation could add value to identifying and addressing issues. The issues of violence towards young people also needed to be assessed and more research geographically needed to be undertaken to understand the impacts on youth.

The Strategy was going in the right direction and it would be interesting to see how youth groups and clubs could expand, though many individuals needed help in knowing where to go. Parish Councils could help with grant applications and could facilitate forums to share information and best practice. Larger parishes should also reach out to smaller neighbours.

The lack of engagement with education providers could have been due to bad timing. It would be useful to know how many youth clubs or groups were in the district. Mental Health was an issue, with long waiting lists, so were there any plans to get that moving? The Housing & Community Advice Manager acknowledged the gaps in service and the need to remove waiting lists. Some districts were good and the forums would be instrumental in sharing their good practices.

The County Council had primary responsibility for youth services but had declined to act. Therefore, it fell to the parishes, though some small parishes would struggle to do so. This meant there was inconsistencies across the district which needed to be levelled up.

Councillor Inskip then proposed a number of amendments to the officers' recommendations: progress on the Action Plan be brought back to the Committee every six months; Key Performance Indicators be provided to measure progress against the areas of focus in the Action Plan, in advance of the first six monthly review; and over the next twelve months the consultation be revisited to assess the changes and the COVID impact on young people in East Cambridgeshire. These would ensure that the impact of COVID on youth services could be measured, that consultation after the COVID period, for example on mental health, would be revisited. These were duly seconded by Cllr Whelan and when the amended recommendations were put to the vote was declared carried.

It was resolved:

- (i) That the Draft East Cambridgeshire Youth Strategy be approved;
- (ii) That the East Cambridgeshire Youth Action Plan be approved;
- (iii) That the progress made against the Action Plan be reported to this Committee every six months;

- (iv) That Key Performance Indicators be provided to measure progress against the areas of focus in the Action Plan, in advance of the first six monthly review;
- (v) That over the next twelve months the consultation be revisited to assess the changes and the COVID impact on young people in East Cambridgeshire.

**77. EYES AND EARS PARISH COUNCIL TRAINING**

The Committee considered a report, V156 previously circulated, which provided an update on the engagement between the East Cambs Community Safety Partnership and parish councils.

The Community Safety Officer advised the Committee that to tackle crime and make people feel safe the Council wanted to use its partners to help. This led to the 'Eyes and Ears' initiative, which provided training about domestic abuse, scams, hate crimes, abuse and exploitation. The training was delivered through an online training package and all parish councils had been contacted about it. The response had been positive, so more links to further training had been provided with possible face-to-face training which would be more interactive. Eight parishes had received training and there would be an ongoing programme rolled out to others. The Community Safety Partnership would continue to engage with parish councils and was looking to hold parish events and would hold a county parish forum. The next steps would involve developing engagement with the parish councils in an online evaluation exercise.

It was resolved:

That the updates on engagement between the East Cambs Community Safety Partnership and parish councils be noted.

**78. FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

The Committee received its forward agenda plan. The Community Safety Accreditation Scheme had still to be programmed in, as work was still ongoing with the Police and this was a big piece of work. For the June meeting, Granville Hawkes would be invited to provide information on the voluntary organisation in the district.

The meeting concluded at 6:13pm.



EAST  
CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4(b)

Minutes of a remote meeting of the Operational Services Committee held at 9:08pm on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021, facilitated by the Zoom video conferencing system.

### **PRESENT**

Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith  
Cllr David Ambrose Smith  
Cllr Matthew Downey (substitute for Cllr Victoria Charlesworth)  
Cllr Lis Every  
Cllr Julia Huffer  
Cllr Mark Inskip  
Cllr Joshua Schumann  
Cllr John Trapp  
Cllr Paola Trimarco  
Cllr Jo Webber  
Cllr Christine Whelan

### **OFFICERS**

John Hill – Chief Executive  
Jo Brooks – Director Operations  
Emma Grima – Director Commercial  
Maggie Camp – Legal Services Manager and Monitoring Officer  
Tracy Couper – Democratic Services Manager  
Caroline Evans – Democratic Services Officer

#### **1. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE ENSUING MUNICIPAL YEAR**

Cllr David Ambrose Smith was duly nominated by Cllr Julia Huffer and seconded by Cllr Joshua Schumann.

There being no other nominations it was resolved:

That Cllr David Ambrose Smith be elected as Chairman of the Operational Services Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

#### **2. TO ELECT A VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE ENSUING MUNICIPAL YEAR**

Cllr Julia Huffer was duly nominated by Cllr David Ambrose Smith and seconded by Cllr Joshua Schumann.

Cllr Mark Inskip was duly nominated by Cllr Charlotte Cane and seconded by Cllr John Trapp.

On being put to the vote it was resolved:

That Cllr Julia Huffer be elected as Vice-Chairman of the Operational Services Committee for the ensuing municipal year.

*The meeting concluded at 9:13pm.*





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**TITLE: ECDC ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN (JUNE 2021 EDITION)**

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 14 June 2021

Author: Richard Kay, Strategic Planning Manager

[W28]

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1.0 ISSUE

1.1 On 17 October 2019, Full Council passed a 'climate change motion', which declared a climate emergency and agreed a number of actions to take place. One such action was to task this Committee with the preparation of an 'Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan' (*Environment Plan*). The first such Environment Plan was adopted in June 2020. The second, fully refreshed Environment Plan is brought to Committee today.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 That the Committee:

- (A) Approves the Council's second Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (as attached at Appendix A);
- (B) Endorses actions taken and proposed by management, as set out in the Agenda Report at paragraph 3.22, which will strengthen the resource available and the skills base of staff to help implement the Action Plan, specifically endorsing the addition of a new Climate Change and Natural Environment Senior Officer to the establishment on a part-time, temporary basis initially, but reviewable within a year to determine the longer-term basis of such a post; and
- (C) Welcomes the publication of the Interim Recommendations of the Cambridgeshire-Peterborough Climate Change Commission, and agrees to work with partners to help take forward those recommendations wherever practical and viable to do so.

3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

3.1 On 17 October 2019, Full Council approved a wide-ranging Motion relating to climate change matters and which, in short, had the effect of this Council declaring that there is a climate emergency.

3.2 The Motion agreed a number of specific actions which should take place, including a commitment to the preparation of an Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. In June 2020, this Committee adopted such an Environment Plan, and further committed to an annual update of it.

- 3.3 This report is intended to meet that commitment for an annual update.
- 3.4 The updated Environment Plan is broadly similar in structure to the 2020 version, but of particular note are the following additions or amendments:
- Section 2 has been updated to report on Carbon Dioxide (and equivalent) (CO<sub>2e</sub>) emissions for year 2019/20. As previously flagged to Committee in January 2021, those emissions are broadly flat from the baseline year of 2018/19, and highlight once again the dominance of our 'fleet vehicles' (i.e. our waste collection vehicles and open space maintenance vehicles) as our main source of CO<sub>2e</sub> emissions;
  - A new section 3, which establishes (as requested by this Committee on 18 January 2021 that it should) a series of interim targets towards reducing our emissions to net zero;
  - In section 6, a review of the 'top 20' actions committed to in June 2020, together with a new set of 'top 20' actions for June 2021-June 2022.
- 3.5 The document continues to both act as a strategy, to guide us in the early years of the journey to net-zero carbon and enhancement of our natural environment; as well as a short-term action plan, so we can continue to make progress towards the longer-term vision.
- 3.6 It is also two pronged: it seeks to mitigate climate change, doing our bit to address this global problem; and it seeks to boost the natural environment, here in East Cambridgeshire.
- 3.7 The Environment Plan is predominantly 'inward looking', in that it focuses on what we can do, as an organisation, to make a difference. But part of those commitments are about how we can show leadership and use our coordination skills to help others make a change, for the benefit of our climate and natural environment.

### **Interim Targets**

- 3.8 An important addition to this second edition Environment Plan is a new section on interim targets. In doing so, officers have also taken the opportunity to review our end date target for achieving net zero.
- 3.9 As a reminder, the original Motion of 2019 included the following to be investigated:
- “Measures required and feasibility of reaching net zero carbon emissions by the Council by 2050.”*
- 3.10 The first Environment Plan of June 2020 did not adjust such a headline position set only a few months previous. However, this Committee has subsequently already acknowledged the need to both set interim targets and to push our emissions down as soon as reasonably practicable.

3.11 Accordingly, and having carefully reviewed the evidence (namely, reviewing the sources of our emissions, the practical options to reduce those emissions and the options to offset emissions), a new set of interim targets are proposed in the updated Environment Plan, at Section 3. These are ambitious and not without challenges and risks (as noted at the end of Section 3). In particular, tackling our greatest source of emissions, namely our fleet vehicles, has considerable uncertainties beyond our control. But, the targets proposed are a plausible scenario that we could set ourselves the challenge of working towards, with the headline being that officers believe we can bring forward our truly net-zero ambitions from 2050 to 2040, and be getting close to net zero throughout the 2030s. Below that headline, are also a series of proposed interim targets, as follows:

- **A 20-33% reduction in our net CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions by year 2025/26.** That will be achieved via: reduced energy use in our buildings; a lower carbon conversion factor for the energy we do use, due to the broader national decarbonisation of the electricity grid; maximising the efficiency and performance of our existing fleet vehicles; investment in our own renewable energy infrastructure; and minimising the use of business miles of our staff.
- **A 66-80% reduction in our net CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions by year 2030/31.** That will be achieved via further investment in our own renewable energy infrastructure; some investment in electric based fleet vehicles; and (potentially) moving off the gas grid to heat our buildings.
- **A 100% net reduction (i.e. near or at net zero position) in our CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions by year 2034/35.** That will be achieved by moving to a vast majority, if not entirely, electric based vehicle fleet; zero gas use in our buildings; and further investment in renewable energy infrastructure.
- **A truly 'carbon net zero' organisation (and potentially negative carbon emission organisation) by 2040.** To achieve this will almost certainly require the national grid to be 100% decarbonised, and the organisation will use no fossil fuels for any of its operations. To be a negative carbon emission organisation, the organisation will generate more electricity than it consumes and, if technology exists, the excess electricity generated would be used to extract CO<sub>2</sub>e from the atmosphere ('carbon capture'), making the organisation a negative contributor to CO<sub>2</sub>e levels in the atmosphere.

3.12 It is acknowledged that other organisations, including other local authorities, have set their net zero target as being 2030. But, from the research undertaken, such local authorities either: (a) do not have a robust analysis of their emission or do not have a robust action plan to get to such a target (and therefore their 2030 target is somewhat aspirational rather than realistic); or (b) such local authorities are not as rural as we are, and consequently lack the same challenge we do of running a waste collection service covering such a large rural area (and taking account of the fact that electric waste collection

vehicles simply do not exist in the market place to cover rural areas such as ours).

### **New actions for 2021/22**

- 3.13 Section 6 of the Environment Plan sets out both a review of last year's 'top 20' actions (and our progress with them) as well as a new set of 'top 20' actions for 2021/22.
- 3.14 Of last year's actions, it is pleasing to report a great many successes, with the majority of the actions completed in full, and progress towards finalising any outstanding actions underway.
- 3.15 The new set of actions, some of which are informed by what we achieved over 2020/21, are intended to include more 'direct' action than last year, such as:
- More tree planting and meadow cutting.
  - Visible, educational and 'fun' tree planting, such as a new tree maze and a new 'East Cambridgeshire Create an Orchard Programme'.
  - Direct energy efficiency improvements on The Grange.
  - Cutting our miles travelled by our waste collection vehicles, by implementing more efficient routes.
- 3.16 The new set of actions also strengthen our engagement activities, especially with schools and the youth sector.
- 3.17 Finally, the new set of actions include undertaking the necessary research to establish how we can, in future years: (a) make significant carbon emission savings through, potentially, generating our own renewable energy at scale, and (b) undertake major improvements to our local natural environment through a Nature Recovery Strategy (prepared using national best practice).

### **Engagement**

- 3.18 Whilst the focus of both the first and this updated Environment Plan is, as stated, inward looking to what we will do as an organisation, we have continued to engage over the year with a wide range of partners to share ideas and best practice, and help them to meet their ambitions. For example:
- We have continued to operate the 'Ideas Forum', to generate ideas and suggestions from the public as to what actions we could take – Appendix B includes a summary report of such ideas;
  - We have worked with a small group of parish councils, and are delighted to see Burwell Parish Council adopt earlier this year its own Climate Action Plan;
  - We have set up a new Partnership Forum, to help share best practice amongst those people and organisations with a particular interest in the climate and natural environment. Whilst this Forum is at its very early stages, its potential and value is recognised.

3.19 As part of the refreshed actions for 2021/22, we have committed to further engagement, with a particular focus for the year on children and young people.

**Staffing resources and skills base**

3.20 Overseeing the preparation of the Environment Plan, and the monitoring of progress towards the actions, has primarily been via three means:

- First, myself, as the Strategic Planning Manager, has taken the ‘service lead’ role, combining duties with wider planning policy related duties;
- Second, a climate officer group comprising senior officers across the Council, with the role of such a group to share relevant activities, contribute ideas, and embed the principles of carbon reduction/environmental improvement within their service areas; and
- Third, strengthened our arrangements with Peterborough City Council to secure its expertise on an ‘as needed’ basis (such as, for example, for the ongoing monitoring and calculating of our carbon footprint, a skill which presently does not exist within the Council).

3.21 However, there is a realisation that, as the actions and activities grow, there is a need to strengthen the resources available and boost the underlying skills of staff to contribute to this agenda, no matter what their core duties are.

3.22 As such, management are putting in place arrangements to strengthen the staffing resource and skills base by the following new measures:

- A new Climate Change and Natural Environment Senior Officer. This post will assist in the coordination of actions, and will directly lead on some activities such as around engagement, communications and website. Seeking new forms of funding (grants, sponsorships, etc) will also be an important part of the role. Aim to have the Officer in place by around September 2021. The post will initially be part-time and fixed term for one year until September 2022 (with a mid-point review to determine whether any contract extension would be valuable, subject to budget constraints at that time);
- Strengthening our Home Energy Advisory service, acting as the Council’s main point of contact for home energy efficiency and fuel poverty issues throughout East Cambridgeshire;
- A recently launched compulsory training programme for all staff, including staff within both of the Council’s trading companies, ECTC and ECSS (and Members are requested to also undertake the programme). This ‘pick and mix’ programme involves a set of OU recognised training courses, for different skill levels, interests and course length, but will strengthen the skills base of the collective staff across the Council.

3.23 Committee is asked to endorse the above arrangements, and specifically approve, in principle, the new Climate Change and Natural Environment

Senior Officer post. The final approval of such a post will be subject to the normal sign off and approval process via our HR establishment procedures, though this will not require sign off from the Chair/Vice Chair of Finance and Assets Committee because no additional budget is required.

### **Cambridgeshire-Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate**

- 3.24 Launched by the Combined Authority for Cambridgeshire-Peterborough in 2020, the Independent Commission on Climate produced its *Initial Recommendations* report in March 2021. This report puts a spot light on four key areas of transport, buildings, energy and peat. It also provides overarching interim recommendations, including the need for more investment into mitigating and adapting to climate change. It gives some practical suggestions for how residents can take action themselves, and calls for Government to devolve more powers and funding to the Combined Authority and local authorities across Cambridgeshire to support the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. A final report is due later in 2021. The Initial Recommendations report can be found at:  
[https://f.hubspotusercontent40.net/hubfs/6985942/CLIMATE%20COMMISSION%20REPORT\\_Final.pdf](https://f.hubspotusercontent40.net/hubfs/6985942/CLIMATE%20COMMISSION%20REPORT_Final.pdf) .
- 3.25 It is without doubt a very challenging set of interim recommendations set by the Commission, and we are expecting these to be refined and added to in its final recommendations due in September.
- 3.26 At this stage, it is not possible for the Council to support unequivocally every recommendation, as some will require major financial and legislative changes to implement, beyond the control of this Council. Nevertheless, the broad intent and thrust of the recommendations are considered sound, and it is recommended that the Council continues to work with partners to help progress all those that it is able and feasible to do.
- 4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS
- 4.1 The updated Environment Plan recommended to Committee is deemed ambitious, yet realistic. It provides a clear set of updated short-term actions, medium term targets and long-term vision and ambitions.
- 4.2 The Environment Plan is founded on robust evidence base, an analysis of the realistic options available and a clear targeting of those areas which will deliver the greatest impact.
- 5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
- 5.1 There are no immediate direct financial implications arising from the recommendations. However, delivering the actions it proposes will require investment, most of which are available from existing resources. Where resources are not presently available (e.g. for significant capital expenditure), these will be a matter for a future decision.

- 5.2 Equality Impact Assessment has found no direct positive or negative impacts.
- 5.3 An Environmental Impact Assessment has found no direct benefits arising from approving the Environment Plan, but indirectly there will be considerable benefits, should the actions it proposes be taken forward.

6.0 APPENDICES

- 6.1 Appendix A: Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (June 2021)

Appendix B: Ideas Forum Summary of Issues Raised 2020/21

Appendix C: Equality impact assessment

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<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
	Room 12, The Grange, Ely	Richard Kay Strategic Planning Manager (01353) 616458 E-mail: <a href="mailto:richard.kay@eastcambs.gov.uk">richard.kay@eastcambs.gov.uk</a>

East Cambridgeshire District Council

# ENVIRONMENT PLAN (YEAR 2)

*A Strategy And Action Plan To Boost The Environment And Help Mitigate Climate Change*





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## Foreword

In recognition of our declaration of a climate emergency, East Cambridgeshire District Council published its first ever Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan in June 2020. I am very pleased to introduce this second edition, June 2021.

I am delighted that this Council, over its first action year, has achieved a huge amount despite, like you, having to deal with the devastating impact of the pandemic.



We've seen real progress on our environment ambitions these past 12 months. My personal highlights include:

- 100% of electricity used by the Council is now sourced from renewable energy;
- We've replaced all street lights that we are responsible for with low energy LED bulbs;
- Based on robust evidence we gathered over the past year, we have successfully been awarded over £1m for energy efficiency improvements. This is new money, to spent this year, partly on our own buildings (The Grange, Ely), but the vast majority allocated for low income households in the district; and
- New planning policies adopted, which will help make sure developers do their bit for the Natural Environment and Climate Change.

But we need to step up our activities, go further and achieve more. And we urge you to do the same. If 2020/21 was the year of the pandemic, let's make 2021/22 the year of the environment, globally and nationally, from cities to hamlets, and right down to our own homes.

I'm delighted that the UK will be the centre of global environment attention later this year, as we host the UN climate summit in Glasgow (November 2021), bringing leaders from around the globe to hopefully agree the next steps in tackling climate change and boosting our natural environment. And I congratulate the UK government for committing in April to set the world's most ambitious climate change target into law, in order to reduce carbon emissions by 78% by 2035 compared to 1990 levels. I am also thrilled to read of the Queen's Green Canopy, a national programme of tree planting launched in May to celebrate the upcoming Queen's platinum jubilee. Also, the Environment Bill going through parliament this year will bring significant natural environment benefits to our country.

But protecting our climate and our natural environment needs action by everyone, not just governments. It requires action by individuals, community groups, businesses and other organisations. And that includes this Council. This Council needs to demonstrate that it is doing all it can to make a difference, whether that is by reducing its own carbon footprint, or by using its own land to help boost the natural environment. And it needs to use its leadership role to help facilitate and encourage others to also act.

This updated Plan reports on what we achieved over the past 12 months, and what we plan to do over the next 12 months. We've created a new Top 20 set of actions we intend to deliver, which includes:

- planting more trees on our land (including a new hedge-based maze, designed by you!);
- putting in place energy efficiency measures in our own buildings;
- investigating whether we can install our own renewable energy infrastructure;
- doubling our efforts to work in schools to help educate the next generation of climate and environment leaders; and

- offering free fruit trees to schools, community groups and parish councils, to help create community orchards of the future.

And we've set some new targets in this Plan, including an ambitious target of reducing our carbon footprint by up to one-third by 2026, and by another third by 2030, with a view to being a truly net-zero carbon council by 2040, ten years earlier than our original commitment set in 2019. It will be tough, but we can do it: by reducing as much as possible the energy we use; by moving away from using fossil fuels to electricity; and by generating our own renewable energy.

I'm really excited about the future. Let's change the focus from tackling a pandemic crisis to tackling the climate and biodiversity crisis. I want this Council to be at the forefront of that 'green recovery' agenda, and I would urge all of you to join us and play your part.

Together we can make a real difference; we can achieve a clean, green, East Cambridgeshire; and we can do our bit to minimise global climate change.

**Anna Bailey**  
**Leader - East Cambridgeshire District Council**

#### Acknowledgements

*In preparing this Environment Plan, the Council wishes to acknowledge the help and support of the County Council. With its agreement, we have aligned our Plan with its similar environment strategy, and have included similar diagrams and statistical evidence.*

# 1 Introduction

## The overriding context

The current generation has a duty to protect and improve the health of our planet for those that follow.

The world is facing unprecedented challenges in population growth, climate change, pollution and ever increasing and competing demands on its land and natural resources. By 2050 the world population is expected to rise from its current level of 7.7 billion to 9.8 billion<sup>1</sup>. There is global consensus that climate change poses significant risk to the health of the planet and its ability to sustain life.

Local Authorities have a responsibility, both in their own activities and those undertaken with partners, as well as in the influence they can bring to bear, to reduce the adverse effects of their populations on the planet.

East Cambridgeshire, and Cambridgeshire as a whole, is a growing area. Increasing populations result in increasing need for businesses, houses, health, retail and leisure outlets, transport and other supporting infrastructure, all of which can lead to adverse impacts on the environment. With growth comes a responsibility to balance competing demands and mitigate the negative impacts of that growth as far as is reasonably possible.

We know, and fully support, that residents are calling for action. We acknowledge that this Council has a significant role to play in protecting and improving the environment for future generations.

## What have we declared?

In October 2019, East Cambridgeshire District Council declared a climate emergency and committed to the development of an annual Environment and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (our 'Environment Plan'). We published our first Environment Plan in June 2020, and, following a full refresh, we are pleased to publish this second Plan.

This Council acknowledges that our natural and built environment is the most precious inheritance for which we act as caretakers for the next generation.

We also accept that greater rigour is needed now, and hereafter, to protect our environment and mitigate the effects of climate change. We accept that every day action is delayed it becomes more likely we will pass irreversible environmental tipping points. Human driven climate change is one of the most complex issues facing us today. It poses significant risk to our health, our economy, our environment, and endangers the wellbeing of future generations.

Pollution, in all forms, is also another global environmental concern. It involves many dimensions – science, economics, society, politics and moral and ethical questions – and is a global problem, felt on local scales, that will be around for decades and centuries to come. People of all ages, all walks of life and all social and economic backgrounds are becoming increasingly concerned they will leave or inherit an environment that is irreparably damaged, forcing others to live with the consequences of the decisions we make today.

Carbon dioxide, the greenhouse gas that has driven recent global warming, lingers in the atmosphere for hundreds of years, and the planet (especially the oceans) takes a while to respond to warming. So even if we stopped emitting all greenhouse gases today, global warming and climate change will

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/world-population-prospects-2017.html>

continue to affect future generations. All Governments (national, regional and local) have a duty to limit the negative impacts of environmental change by cutting carbon emissions, protecting biodiversity and reducing pollution. The necessity of reaching net-zero was enshrined in UK law on 27th June 2019, requiring the UK to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050. More recently (in April 2021), Government has committed to amending the law to include a new interim target of a 78% cut in emissions by 2035.

Human activity contributes significantly to the increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising global average sea level. The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates that human activity has already caused 1°C warming above pre-industrial levels. If temperatures increase at the current rate, warming is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052, leading to regional scale changes to climate including dramatic increases in the frequency and intensity of flood or drought events across the world, including the UK. These risks are set to increase should warming reach 2°C, and the longer that temperatures remain high, the harder it becomes to reverse the damage.

## **Balancing growth and environmental protection**

As one of the fastest growing counties within the UK, Cambridgeshire experiences increased demand for things like housing, food, water resources and efficient public transport, all of which compete for land use and put pressure on our natural environment. Some land use changes bring negative effects to our environment, for example, damage to landscape from minerals extraction for building materials, loss of natural habitat, increased air pollution from power generation, unsustainable travel and the impact of agricultural pesticides on water quality and biodiversity.

Saying ‘no’ to growth is not an option. There is a pressing need for new homes and infrastructure, but we recognise the need for **sustainable growth** such as minimising the need to travel, providing sustainable transport options and reducing the carbon emissions from buildings, whilst enhancing natural assets through restoring local heritage, providing increased green spaces for people and nature and increasing tree planting to assist with shade and urban cooling.

## **Imperatives for Action**

There are three clear imperatives for action, as outlined by the Global Commission for Adaptation, which will directly impact our ability to serve our communities in the most effective way.

**The Human Imperative:** Climate change exacerbates existing challenges to our services and the communities we serve. Increasing frequencies of heatwaves, flooding and its contamination of water supplies pose a particular threat for our most vulnerable residents. Climate refugees, people displaced from their homes as a result of the impacts of climate change, are likely to bring increased pressure on our social care delivery by 2050. It also puts an unfair burden on future generations who will have to cope with the challenges we are leaving them.

**The Environmental Imperative:** The natural environment is our first line of defence against extreme environmental events such as floods, droughts and heatwaves. A thriving natural environment is fundamental to effective and lasting adaptation. Yet, one in four species is facing extinction, about a quarter of all ice-free land is now subject to degradation, and ocean temperatures and acidity are rising. Climate change will bring adverse effects on our natural environment everywhere. We must protect and work with nature to build resilience and reduce climate risks at all scales before the damage has gone too far. Humans are, after all, part of nature, not apart from nature.

**The Economic Imperative:** Mitigation and adaptation are now in our strong economic self-interest: the cost of doing nothing far outweighs the cost of taking positive action now. The Global Commission on Adaptation has demonstrated that the overall rate of return on investments in improved resilience

is high, with benefit-cost ratios ranging from 2:1 to 10:1, and in some cases even higher. Introducing climate adaptation considerations into our financial decision making will have commercial benefit to our economy in the long run.

## What have we done so far?

We know we can and must do more. But we should not dismiss the good work and action we have already completed. In our first Action Plan (June 2020) we set out what we had already achieved as a Council up to June 2020. In the last 12 months we have achieved further real progress to help protect the environment - see Chapter 6 for details.

We need to build on this positive work, to further embed positive environmental thinking, behaviours, and action throughout the Council, as an organisation, and to seek to influence partners and others to do the same. This updated Plan aims to further facilitate that process.

## Our Vision (updated for June 2021)

*Our vision for 2040 is to deliver net zero carbon emissions for the Council's operations and, in partnership with all stakeholders, for East Cambridgeshire as a whole, with clear and demonstrable progress towards that target year on year. At the same time, we will support our communities and East Cambridgeshire's biodiversity and environmental assets to adapt and flourish as our climate changes.*

Our vision also fully aligns with that of the County Council, as follows:



(Source of graphics: Cambridgeshire County Council Climate Change and Environment Strategy)

## Interim Targets

This Council recognises the need to act fast now to reduce our net emissions as quickly as possible, and as deeply as possible, on our journey to net zero emissions.

As such, and new for this second edition Plan (June 2021), the Council is bringing forward by 10 years, from 2050 to 2040, its own net zero carbon emissions target date, and for the first time has set the following interim targets:

- A 20-33% reduction in our net CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions by year 2025/26.
- A 66-80% reduction in our net CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions by year 2030/31.
- A near 100% reduction in our net CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by year 2034/35.
- A truly net zero carbon emission organisation by 2040, with no fossil fuel consumption.

For further information on how these interim targets have been established, and the assumptions and definitions used, please see section 3.

## **Purpose of the Environment Plan**

The purpose of the Environment Plan is to provide a clear statement of the Council's climate change and environmental objectives and to set out how the Council will continue to address environmental and climate change challenges.

It will describe how we will look to address our own impacts and how working together with our public sector partners and our communities we will support the transformation needed across East Cambridgeshire to tackle these challenges.

## **Objectives**

Our Objectives are to:

- Reduce our own, and the district's as a whole, greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate the impacts of human-made climate change;
- Support our communities and biodiversity to adapt to a changing climate;
- Improve East Cambridgeshire's natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations;
- Empower East Cambridgeshire communities and businesses to buy-into and support the delivery of the Plan;

## **Our Approach**

To deliver the vision and objectives of the Plan we will continue to step up our engagement with Officers, Members, partners, businesses and our communities to build a shared understanding of the challenges and grow our collective knowledge, capacity and skills to create the vision we have set ourselves.

This will include:

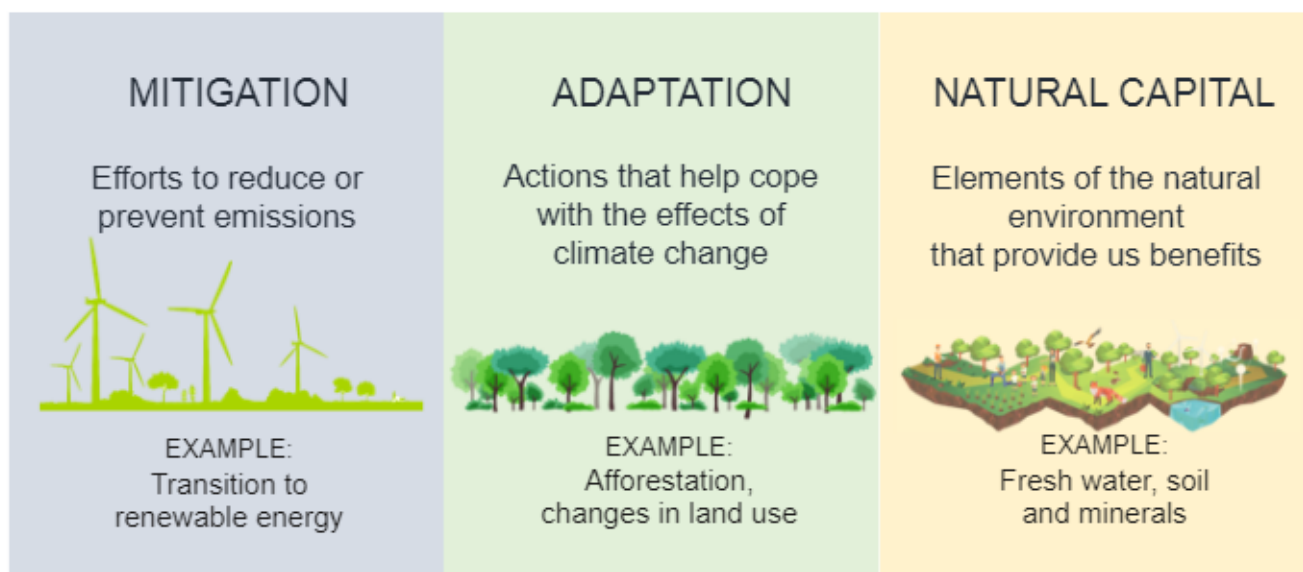
- Identifying, and keeping up to date (annually), the carbon footprint for the Council's operations and for the district as a whole;
- Monitoring and reviewing our carbon targets and tracking carbon emissions reductions for the Council's operational footprint and the broader impact of its activities and policies;
- Preparing and regularly updating an action plan with our staff, communities and partners that shows how we are going to deliver our Plan, where we will lead or where we must support or work with others to lead;
- Working closely with Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Cambridgeshire County Council to support the implementation of county wide measures;
- Demonstrating leadership and setting a good example, through using our numerous statutory responsibilities and duties to bring forward positive change; and
- Financing the delivery of the Plan and providing a framework for the Council to inform its budget setting and delivery of its corporate priorities for the people of East Cambridgeshire.

## **Identifying the Key themes to build our Environment Plan**

In preparing its own strategy, Cambridgeshire County Council identified, in 2020, three key themes covering technical, organisational and engagement aspects to provide the context and how we work with partners and our community. East Cambridgeshire District Council endorses these themes and, to assist with coordination of activities with the County Council, will use the same themes in this Plan.

They are:

- Quantifying our carbon footprints to inform and deliver climate change mitigation through efforts to reduce or prevent carbon emissions;
- Adaptation to cope with the existing and future impacts of climate change;
- Enhancing and conserving natural capital such as wildlife, plants, air, water and soils.



(Source: Cambridgeshire County Council Climate Change and Environment Strategy)

### What is mitigation?

Mitigation of carbon emissions addresses the causes of climate change. It describes those actions which reduce, prevent or capture greenhouse gas emissions. Alongside the views of our communities, the current carbon footprints of both this Council as an organisation, and that of the entire geographical area of East Cambridgeshire as a whole, informs our action planning.

### What is adaptation?

Adaptation consists of those actions that enable us to deal with the effects of climate change, such as flood risk management in response to heavier more frequent rainfall. We have commenced preparation of a separate document in relation to the adaptation actions the Council can take, though Appendix 3 has some preliminary views on how society can and will need to adapt.

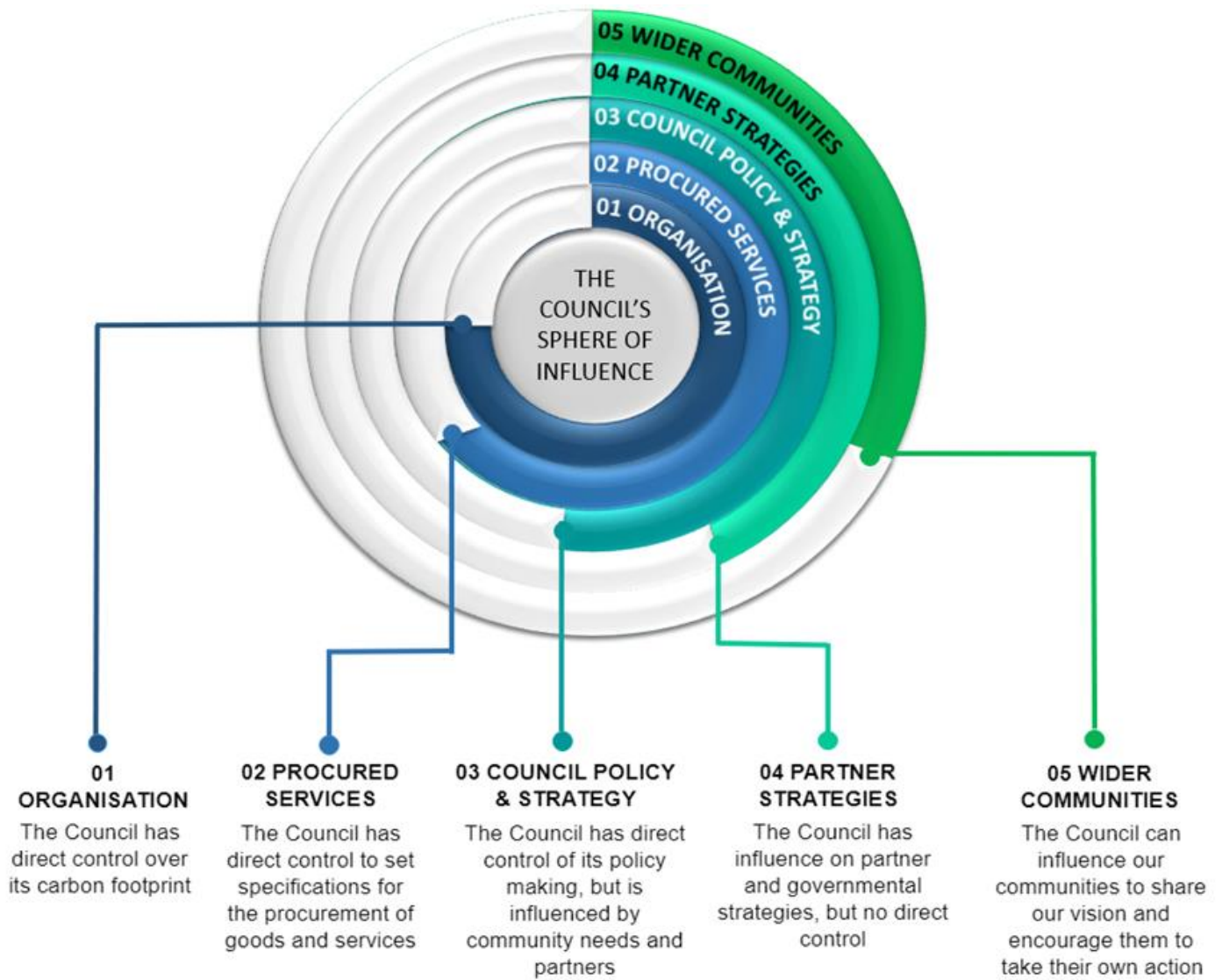
### What is natural capital?

Natural capital comprises our 'stock' of waters, land, air, species, minerals and oceans. This stock underpins our economy by producing value for people, both directly and indirectly. Goods provided by natural capital include clean air and water, food, energy, wildlife, recreation and protection from hazards. Improving our natural capital addresses how to enhance our existing nature reserves, improve biodiversity and tackle air, land and water pollution to keep our planet healthy for all species.

### Control and influence of the strategy

This is a Plan for the Council (rather than the district of East Cambridgeshire) and identifies how we must work with our public and private sector partners and communities across East Cambridgeshire and beyond. As part of its strategy, the Council recognises what is under its direct control and wider influence. The diagram below was developed by the County Council, but is equally applicable to East Cambridgeshire District Council:





## 2 Mitigating Climate Change

### Introduction

Mitigation can mean using new technologies and renewable energy, making older equipment more energy efficient, reducing consumption and waste, or changing management practices or consumer behaviour, to reduce or prevent emission of greenhouse gases and limit the magnitude or rate of long-term global warming due to human emissions of greenhouse gases.

It is important to understand that the sooner mitigation of carbon emissions occurs, the greater the overall reduction of carbon emissions generated by 2040. For example, if you reduce 20 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2020, this produces a cumulative impact of 400 tonnes reduction by 2040.

'Net Zero Carbon' means, first, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to the lowest possible level. Then, for any remaining emissions, offsetting them through carbon removal methods such as tree planting or carbon capture and storage, so we have 'net zero' emissions overall to the atmosphere.

However, offsetting should be seen as a last resort. Planting trees, even on a massive scale across East Cambridgeshire, will only go a tiny fraction of the way to balance out our current emissions.

For the UK as a whole, the net zero target legally must be reached by the end of 2050.

### Pathway to Net Zero Carbon



(Source: Cambridgeshire County Council Climate Change and Environment Strategy)

### Carbon Footprints

Before an individual, organisation or nation decides what it should do differently to reduce its emissions, it needs to properly understand what its current activities are emitting. This is sometimes known as working out a 'carbon footprint' which, in technical terms, is a measure of the greenhouse gases (GHGs)<sup>2</sup> emitted into the atmosphere from sources in a specified area or organisation. It usually includes all relevant greenhouse gases, the most common of which is carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). Emissions of other GHGs such as methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) or nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), are measured in 'carbon dioxide equivalent' (CO<sub>2</sub>e)<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> The main GHGs are: carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs), sulphur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>) and Nitrogen Trifluoride (NF<sub>3</sub>). The Kyoto Protocol – the international agreement addressing climate change - covers these seven main GHGs. The last four are fluorinated gases ("F-gases") which are a range of man-made compounds (including HFCs, PFCs, SF<sub>6</sub> and NF<sub>3</sub>) used in a variety of industries including refrigeration, air-conditioning and the manufacture of cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, electronics and aluminium. F-gases are extremely potent greenhouse gases with some having GWPs of several thousand or more (BEIS, 2019a). The greenhouse gases covered by the Kyoto Protocol account for over 99% of global greenhouse gas emissions.

<sup>3</sup> By using CO<sub>2</sub>e as a measuring tool means that the different global warming potential (GWP) of different gases are taken into account. Quantities of GHGs are multiplied by their GWP to give results in units of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e)

Nationwide, emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> make up 81% of GHG emissions, with the remainder from methane (11%), nitrous oxide (4%) and fluorinated gases (3%), when weighted by Global Warming Potential (GWP)<sup>4</sup>. The biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK is transport, closely followed by energy supply.

To help set the wider context, this Environment Plan reports the carbon footprint of the geographical area of Cambridgeshire-Peterborough as a whole, then East Cambridgeshire as a whole, and finally that of East Cambridgeshire District Council as an organisation.

Whilst not an exact science, you can also have a go at calculating your own (or your family's) carbon footprint using an online tool such as <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>. Calculating a carbon footprint can provide a useful indicator of how much impact you or a business is having, and pointers to where action could be taken to reduce the footprint (and hence reduce your impact on the environment).

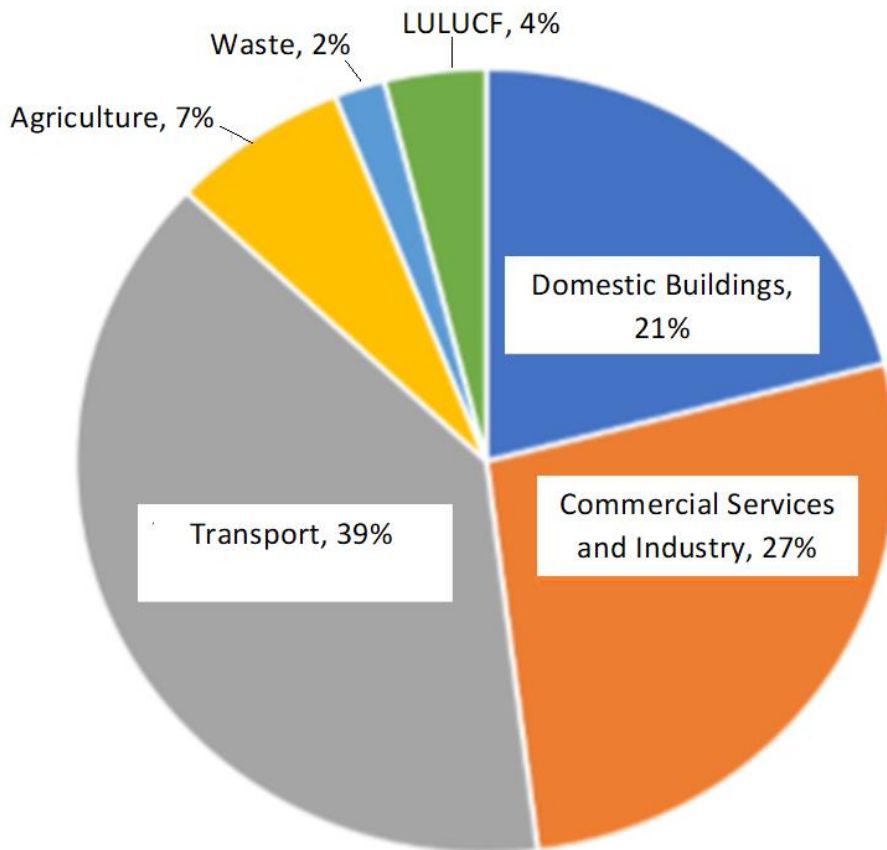
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<sup>4</sup> Global warming potential. A factor describing the radiative force impact (degree of harm to the atmosphere) of one unit of a given GHG relative to one unit of CO<sub>2</sub>.

## Cambridgeshire-Peterborough's Carbon Footprint

In 2019, Cambridgeshire County Council's annual collaboration with the Cambridge University Science and Policy Exchange (CUSPE) brought a team of researchers together to develop an evidence base of current carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough (improving on the 'CO<sub>2</sub>-only' data published by the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy), to provide a more accurate carbon footprint for the area.

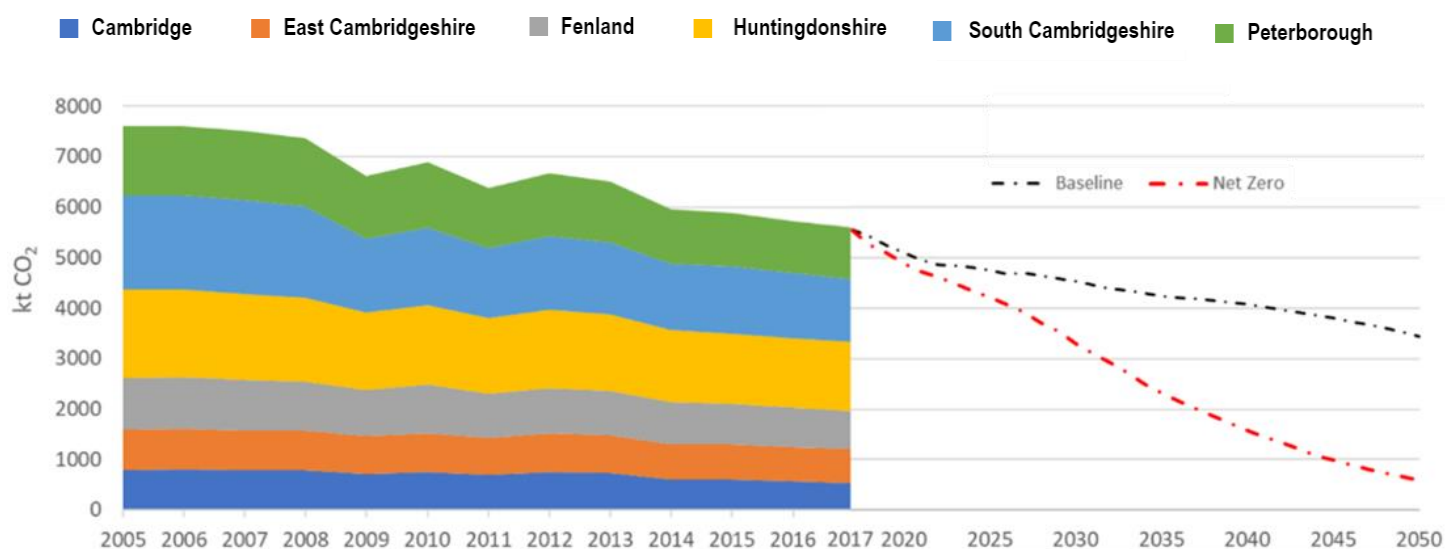
This report found that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough communities together produced 6.1 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) in 2017. The breakdown of this is shown below (source: CUSPE) (LULUCF = land use, land use change and forestry).



**Figure:** Breakdown of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough GHG emissions by source, 2017.

As well as looking at current emissions, the research team also modelled two scenarios projecting future emissions up to 2050; presented as: "business as usual" and "net zero emissions by 2050". The difference between the two scenarios highlights the policy gap to reach Government's ambition of net zero carbon by 2050.

This is illustrated on the following page.



**Figure:** GHG Emissions Pathways to 2050 (Source: Cambridgeshire County Council Climate Change and Environment Strategy)

To achieve the ambitious reduction scenario, the report highlighted the key areas that Councils across Cambridgeshire, and their partners, should consider incorporating into new policy, including:

- Decarbonisation of heat and improvements to the energy efficiency of the housing stock;
- Implementation of low carbon heating and carbon capture and storage in commercial and industrial buildings;
- All cars, vans, buses and motorcycles and most HGVs to be electric, as well as shifting more transport away from cars to walking, cycling and public transport;
- A significant reduction of food waste, reduction of demand for red meat and dairy by 20%, and increased fertiliser efficiency, breeding measures, and livestock food additives;
- Deployment of carbon capture and storage on waste sites, increasing capture of landfill and compost gas emissions and electrification of waste transport;
- Extensive afforestation;
- Further research on peatland emissions and to work with experts to find the best solution to ameliorate the current impact of our peatland areas.

The full report from the CUSPE team can be viewed online here: [CUPSE Report](#).

## Cambridgeshire-Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate

More recently, and launched by the Combined Authority for Cambridgeshire-Peterborough in 2020, the Independent Commission on Climate produced its Initial Recommendations report in March 2021. That report puts a spot light on four key areas of transport, buildings, energy and peat. It also provides overarching recommendations, including the need for more investment into mitigating and adapting to climate change.

It gives some practical suggestions for how residents can take action themselves, and calls for Government to devolve more powers and funding to the Combined Authority and local authorities across Cambridgeshire to support the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. A final report is due later in 2021. The Initial Recommendations report can be found at:

[https://f.hubspotusercontent40.net/hubfs/6985942/CLIMATE%20COMMISSION%20REPORT\\_Final.pdf](https://f.hubspotusercontent40.net/hubfs/6985942/CLIMATE%20COMMISSION%20REPORT_Final.pdf).

## East Cambridgeshire's Carbon Footprint

Ideally, the carbon footprint for the geographical area of East Cambridgeshire should comprise all GHG emissions that occur in the area – this includes commercial and industrial sources, domestic homes, transport, agriculture, waste and land use.

There is no simple 100% accurate way of calculating a carbon footprint, as it relies on a number of assumptions. The Government Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) annually publishes detailed local authority level CO<sub>2</sub> emissions data. However, this does not provide data on the other recognised Kyoto Protocol GHGs emissions, collectively known as CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions. As such, this data 'misses' 19% of all GHGs.

The data is published with a 2 year lag (year x-2), and therefore 2018 is the most recent data available. From this, it is evident the trend in East Cambridgeshire is reflective of the national trend: CO<sub>2</sub> emissions slowly and steadily declining over the last few years, due mainly to the decarbonisation<sup>5</sup> of the electricity grid. See figure below. Emissions from agriculture, waste and peatlands are not included in these figures because they primarily produce methane rather than CO<sub>2</sub>, therefore are missed from these calculations (BEIS, 2020). The drying (due to intensive agriculture) of peatlands is also not included, but if they were included could increase the carbon footprint of East Cambridgeshire (more research is underway on this, by the Combined Authority and other partners).

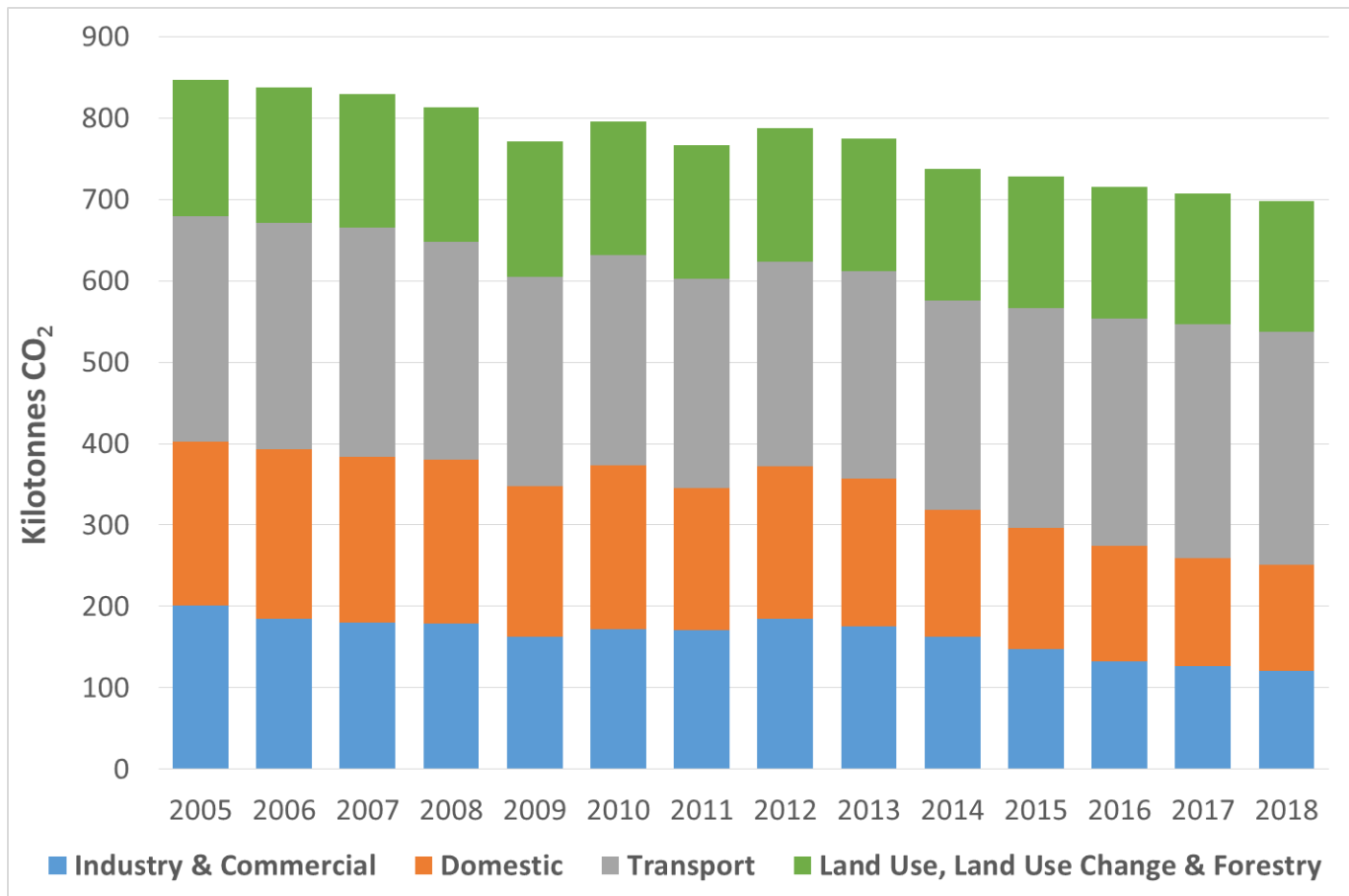


Figure: East Cambridgeshire's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by end-user sector, 2005 – 2018 (Error! Reference source not found.)

<sup>5</sup> Decarbonisation means reducing the carbon intensity of energy in the national grid, this is achieved by reducing the proportion of fossil fuels and increasing the proportion of renewable energy sources such as solar and wind.

It is also useful to look at this data on a per capita basis. This shows that each resident in East Cambridgeshire is currently responsible for emissions amounting to 7.81 tCO<sub>2</sub> annually, illustrated in the figure below, significantly higher than the national average at 5.19 tCO<sub>2</sub>. We are uncertain at this stage precisely why this is the case, though most of Cambridgeshire has a similar higher than national average.

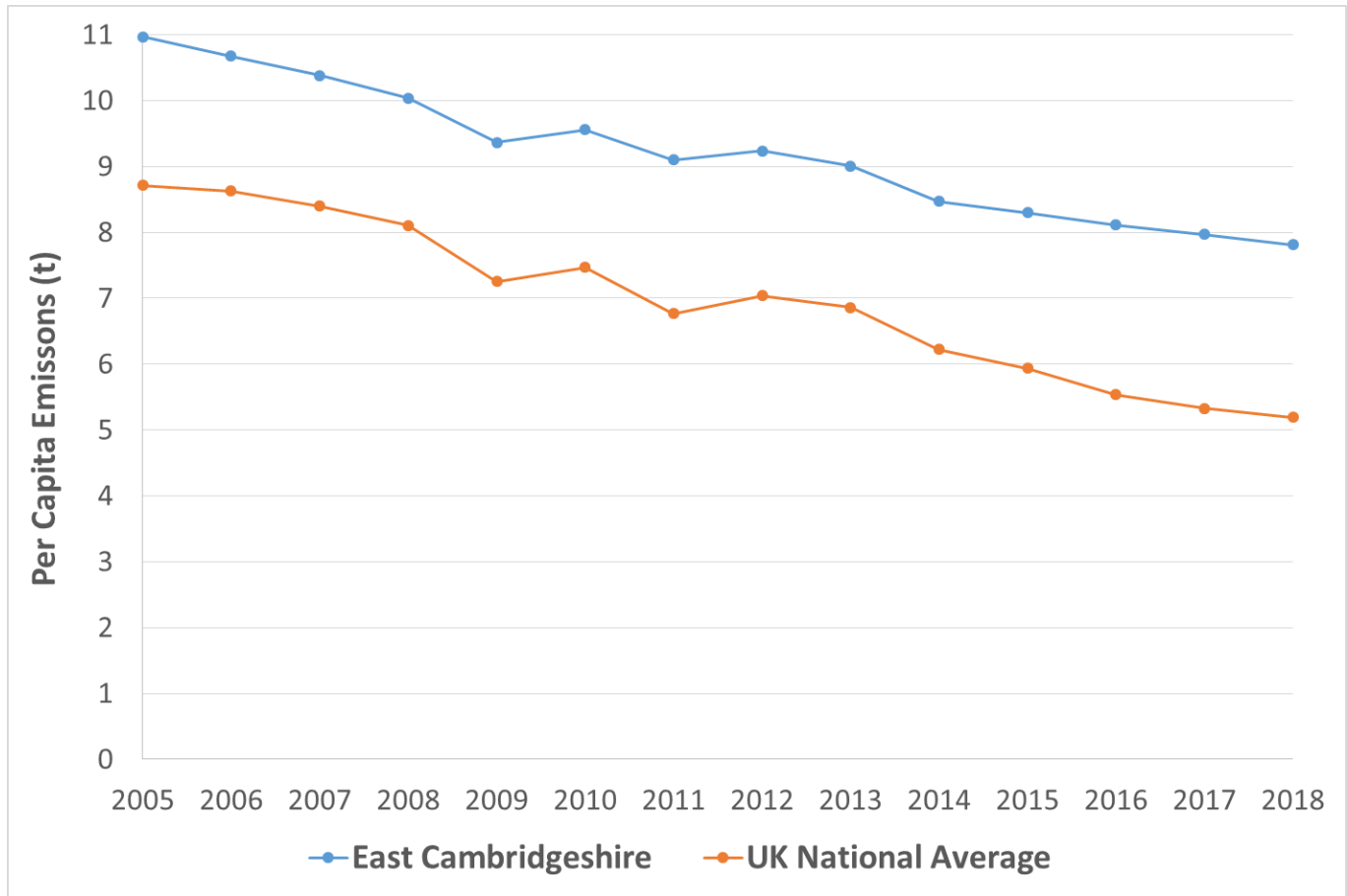


Figure: Per capita emissions for East Cambridgeshire and UK National Average, 2005 – 2018 (Error! Reference source not found.)

# East Cambridgeshire District Council's Carbon Footprint

## Defining the Scope

The previous section, looking at Cambridgeshire-Peterborough as a whole, and East Cambridgeshire as a whole, used data collected and published by other parties. However, to work out the carbon footprint of an individual company or organisation, like East Cambridgeshire District Council, then a lot more data collection and analysis is required to determine a robust carbon footprint.

The starting point for carbon management is to accurately establish the emissions baseline. The scope of the baseline includes the required types and sources of emissions over a defined timescale. The baseline is a fixed point against which a reduction target can be set and future performance monitored. Our baseline was set as emissions arising in 2018/19 (details below).

Emissions-releasing activities are classified into three groups known as scopes. Scope 1 and 2 are generally considered to be areas that an organisation has a high degree of control over and can therefore reduce the resultant emissions significantly, if not completely. Scope 3 are considered to be indirect emissions that an organisation cannot directly control and therefore the ability to reduce emissions to net-zero is less realistic.

These scopes, and their relevant associated activities, are defined in the GHG Protocol Corporate Standard as follows:

Scope	Definition / Activity
<b>1 (Direct)</b>	<b><i>Emissions from sources that are owned or controlled by the organisation</i></b>
Fuels	Fuel sources combusted at a site or in an asset owned or controlled by the organisation.
Refrigerants	Refrigerants that leak from air-conditioning equipment.
Passenger vehicles	Travel in cars and on motorcycles owned or controlled by the organisation.
Delivery vehicles	Travel in vans and heavy goods vehicles that are owned or controlled by the organisation.
<b>2 (Indirect)</b>	<b><i>Emissions that are a consequence of the organisation's operations, but occur from sources owned or controlled by another company</i></b>
Electricity (grid)	Electricity used by an organisation at sites owned or controlled by them.
<b>3 (Other Indirect)</b>	<b><i>Emissions that are a consequence of the organisation's operations, which occur at sources which they do not own or control</i></b>
Business travel	Travel for business purposes in assets not owned or directly operated by the organisation.
Hotel stays	Overnight hotel stays for work purposes.
Material use	Process emissions from purchased materials.
Waste disposal	Emissions from end-of-life disposal of different materials using a variety of different disposal methods.
Water supply	Emissions from water delivered through the mains supply network.



Water treatment	Emissions from water returned to the sewage system through mains drains.
Transmission & Distribution	Emissions associated with grid losses (the energy loss that occurs in getting the electricity from the power plant to the organisations that purchase it).
Well-to-Tank (WTT)	Upstream emissions of extraction, refining and transportation of a primary fuel source prior to its point of combustion.

**Table: GHG Emission scopes and associated emission releasing activities (BEIS,2020)**

In order to then produce our organisational carbon footprint it is essential to accurately establish the scope of the operations on which our organisation will report. This process is known as defining the 'organisational boundary'.

The organisational boundary means establishing what activities and functions are counted (or 'in scope') for the purpose of determining the Council's overall emissions, and by default what activities and functions are not counted ('out of scope'). This stage of the process involves reviewing the Council's operations to determine activities that give rise to carbon emissions.

We have determined that it is appropriate to include the following sources:

Scope	Activities typical to an office based organisation		Identified Council emission sources
1	<b>Stationary</b>	Production of electricity, heat or steam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gas used in Council Offices e.g. The Grange</li> <li>Gas used in buildings operated by the Council e.g. E-Space North</li> </ul>
	<b>Mobile</b>	Transportation of raw materials/waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel in cars, vans and heavy goods vehicles operated by the Council</li> </ul>
	<b>Fugitive</b>	Hydrofluorocarbons (HFC) emissions during use of refrigeration and air-conditioning equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Air conditioning used in Council Offices e.g. The Grange</li> </ul>
2	<b>Stationary</b>	Consumption of purchased electricity, heat or steam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electricity used in Council Offices e.g. The Grange, Portley Hill Depot</li> <li>Electricity used in street and car park lighting which also includes road signs and illuminated bollards</li> <li>Electricity used in business facilities operated by the Council e.g. E-space North, E-space South</li> <li>Electricity used in public facilities operated by the Council e.g. Ely Market Square, Jubilee Gardens</li> </ul>
3	<b>Stationary &amp; Process</b>	Production emissions from purchased materials	<b>Excluded (see below)</b>
	<b>Mobile</b>	Transportation of raw materials/ products/ waste, employee business travel, employee commuting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff business travel and accommodation</li> <li>Employee commuting – <b>Excluded (see below)</b></li> <li>Supply and treatment of water used in Council Offices e.g. The Grange</li> <li>Supply and treatment of water used in public facilities e.g. Public toilets</li> </ul>

**Table: Identified Council related emissions in relation to typical GHG emissions for service sector / office based organisations (WRI/WBCSD, 2004)**

## Excluded Emissions

In addition to those sources detailed above there are other areas which give rise to emissions that the Council feels should be included but for which, at this time, insufficient detail is held to enable them to be included. These all fall within the category of 'scope 3':

### Scope 3

- Waste production
- Purchased materials
- Employee commuting
- Third parties

It is not unusual for such matters to be categorised as 'out of scope'. However, over time, we intend to make as many of these areas as possible 'in scope', therefore taking even greater responsibility for emissions arising, even where we don't have direct control over those emissions.

## Data Collection

The energy data used to calculate the baseline was gathered from different sources, for example invoices received by the Council, annual energy statements from utility providers and property services. Work continues to ensure that this data is robust and systems are in place to ensure ongoing timely and accurate collection of such data.

Energy Type	Source	Data Quality/Estimation techniques
<b>Gas</b>	Energy invoices from different suppliers, meter readings.	Where estimations have been used records are held with source data.  Methods include:  Annualising consumption or average data calculated using bookended data.
<b>Passenger vehicles</b>	Staff mileage claims, fuel purchased and vehicle log books.	Annualising consumption where required
<b>Delivery vehicles</b>	Fuel purchased and vehicle log books.	Annualising consumption where required
<b>Electricity</b>	Energy invoices from different suppliers, meter readings.	Where estimations have been used records are held with source data.  Methods include:  Annualising consumption or average data calculated using bookended periods.
<b>Business travel</b>	Staff mileage claims	N/A
<b>Hotel Stays</b>	Staff claim forms	N/A
<b>Refrigerants</b>	Energy invoices	N/A
<b>Water supply</b>	Energy invoices from different suppliers.	Annualising consumption where required

**Table: Source of data by energy type**

## Calculating the Baseline

To calculate CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions arising, it is necessary to convert the 'raw' data (such as kWh of electricity used) into CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions. This process is relatively straight forward, using what are known as 'conversion factors'. The carbon conversion factors used for this Plan are the 2018 UK Government published carbon conversion factors (BEIS, 2020c).

The Council will use the most up to date conversion factors each time it updates this Plan or reports on its carbon footprint. The key conversion factors used (for this second Plan, June 2021) are as follows:

Energy Type	Conversion factor
<b>Fuels</b>	
Natural Gas	0.18385 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / kWh (Gross CV)
Diesel (average biofuel blend)	2.59411 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / litre
Petrol (average biofuel blend)	2.20904 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / litre
<b>Electricity</b>	
UK electricity	0.2556 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / kWh (Gross CV)
<b>Vehicles (passenger, delivery and business travel)</b>	
Small diesel car	0.22868 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / mile
Medium diesel car	0.27459 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / mile
Large diesel car	0.33713 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / mile
Small petrol car	0.24736 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / mile
Medium petrol car	0.30945 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / mile
Large petrol car	0.45536 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / mile
Small car (unknown fuel type)	0.24072 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / mile
Large car (unknown fuel type)	0.36785 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / mile
Average car (unknown fuel type)	0.28502 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / mile
<b>Water</b>	
Water supply	0.344 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / cubic metres
Water treatment	0.708 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / cubic metres
<b>Transmission &amp; Distribution</b>	
UK electricity	0.02413 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e / kWh
<b>Well-To-Tank</b>	
Various	Various (dependant on fuel type)

Table: Key GHG conversion factors (Error! Reference source not found.)

## Overall Summary

The carbon footprint of East Cambridgeshire District Council (as an organisation) comprises emissions that occur as a result of the Council's own operations. We have calculated the carbon footprint of the Council's own operations in line with the UK Government's Environmental Reporting Guidelines for Voluntary Greenhouse Gas Reporting<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> These reporting guidelines are based on internationally-recognised standards from the World Resources Institute and World Business Council for Sustainable Development: the GHG Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard, and the GHG Protocol Scope 3 standard. (BEIS, 2019a)

The first Plan, of June 2020, reported the baseline upon which future years progress will be monitored. That baseline carbon footprint (using data for the financial year 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019) resulted in a **baseline carbon footprint for the Council**, as an organisation, **for 2018/19 of 1,317 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e** (full breakdown in the June 2020 Plan).

This second Plan, of June 2021, reports the carbon footprint for the Council for 2019/20 (i.e. to April 2020). It therefore accounts for emissions which occurred prior to the first Plan being produced in June 2020. As such, actions taken since the first Plan was agreed in 2020 are not reflected in the calculations for the carbon footprint reported below, but should start to be reflected in the June 2022 Plan onwards.

The resultant carbon footprint is calculated as being **(for 2019-20) 1,315 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e**. This is summarised in the table below:

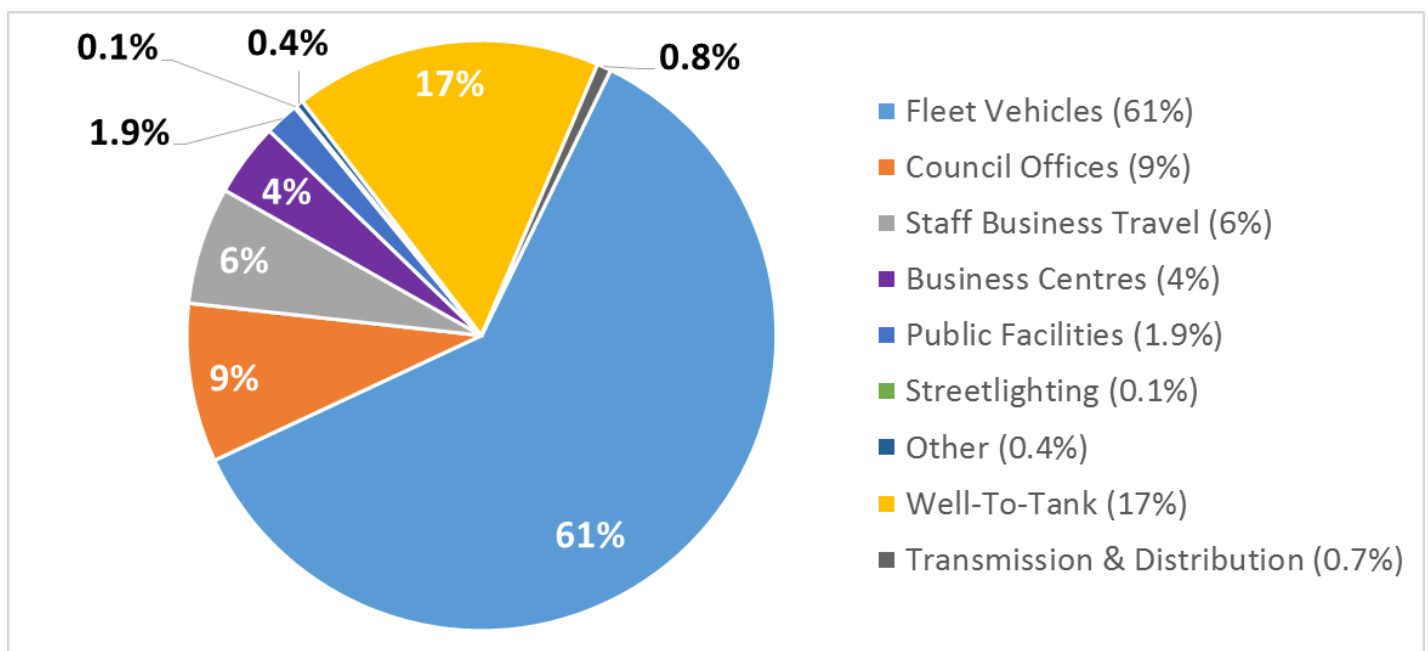
Total Gross Emissions 2019-20	Tonnes of CO <sub>2</sub> e	% contribution
for Scope 1 (Direct)	871	66%
for Scope 2 (Indirect)	120	9%
for Scope 3 (Other indirect)	325	25%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,315</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table: Emissions by scope, 2019-20**

Scope 1 (direct) and scope 2 (purchased electricity) emissions amounted to 991 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e. Scope 1 and 2 includes emissions from gas and oil for heating our buildings, electricity for our buildings and street lighting etc. and emissions from fleet vehicles.

Thus overall, in headline terms, the Council’s carbon footprint for 2019/20 (1,315 CO<sub>2</sub>e) showed little change from the baseline year of 2018/19 (1,317 CO<sub>2</sub>e) being only slightly down by 0.15%, but as the figures on the next two pages demonstrate, there was a fairly significant drop in emissions from its buildings but an opposite increase in its vehicle’s emissions, increasing the share of emissions via vehicles to over four-fifths of all the Council’s emissions.

Further details on the 2019/20 carbon footprint are provided on the following two pages, starting with a breakdown in more detail of where the Council’s emissions arise.



**Figure: Emissions by business area, 2019-20**

Understanding the Council's biggest emitters helps focus identification of projects, as set out in Section 6 of this Plan. The largest single contributing area is a consequence of the Council's 'fleet vehicles' (i.e. the vehicles it uses for waste collection, maintaining our parks and open spaces, general maintenance of our properties and land, and any lease vehicles; it also includes what is known as 'well to tank', that being the emissions arising from the production and distribution of fuel before it enters the vehicles). When the Council's fleet vehicles are combined with the relatively small (but still significant) staff business travel, the Council's 'transport' activities consequently result in 1,097 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2019/20 (baseline = 1,049tCO<sub>2</sub>e), which is 83.4% of the Council's entire volume of emissions. In comparison, the Council's buildings (such as The Grange and E-Space North) emitted 216 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e (baseline = 268tCO<sub>2</sub>e), or 16.6% of the Council's emissions.

Of the Council's 'fleet vehicles', the following table breaks the figures down further, and also factors in the 'well to tank' element for each row. As can be seen below, the Council's waste collection vehicles are responsible for two-thirds of the Council's entire emissions:

<b>Fleet Vehicle Activity</b>	<b>Fleet Vehicle Activity Distance or fuel consumed</b>	<b>Tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e (including well to tank element)</b>	<b>% of Council's entire emissions of 1,315 tonnes</b>
Waste Collection (ECSS)	265,169 litres diesel	851	64.7%
General Maintenance	15,803 litres diesel & 4,276 litres petrol	62	4.7%
Parks and Open Spaces	22,257 litres diesel	71	5.4%
Lease Vehicles	15,907 miles	5	0.4%
Total (fleet vehicles as a % of Council's total GHG emissions)			75.2%

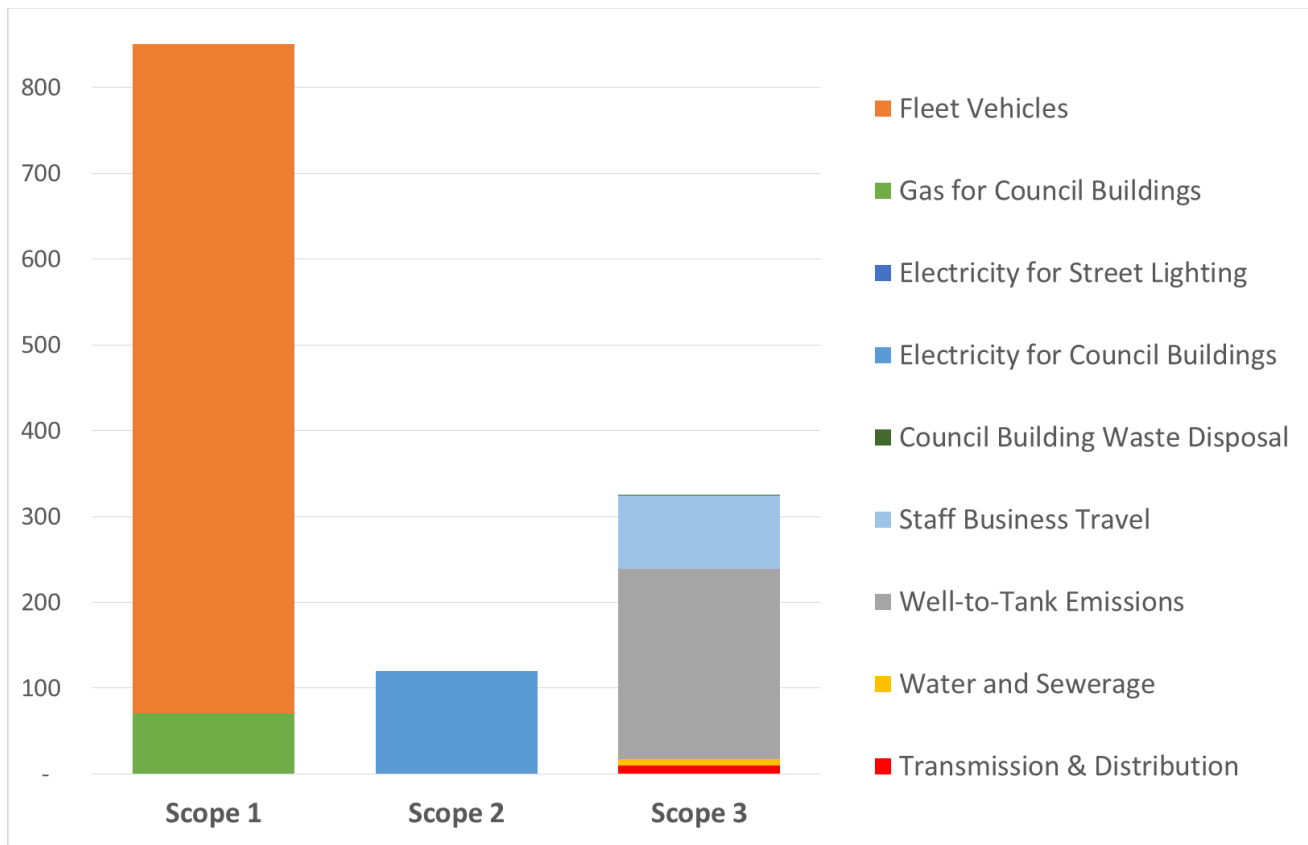
**Table: Fleet vehicle emissions by activity**

More detailed figures on all the Council's emissions are set out below (with 'well-to-tank' listed separately, rather than merged into the individual applicable rows):

<b>GHG Emissions (Tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e)</b>	<b>Scope 1</b>	<b>Scope 2</b>	<b>Scope 3</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
<b>Buildings &amp; utilities</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>216</b>
Electricity for Council Buildings	-	118	-	118
Electricity for Street Lighting	-	1	-	1
Gas Consumption	71	-	-	71
Water and sewerage	-	-	7	7
Transmission & Distribution	-	-	10	10
Well-to-tank emissions for fuels used	-	-	9	9
<b>Transport</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>1,097</b>
Staff Business travel	-	-	85	85
Fleet Vehicles	800	-	-	800
Well-to-tank emissions for fuels used	-	-	212	212

<b>Waste</b>	-	-	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Council Building Waste Disposal	-	-	1	1
<b>Grand Total</b>				<b>1,315</b>

**Table: Breakdown of emissions, tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e**



**Figure: Breakdown of emissions by scope and type, tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e**

### Intensity Ratios

Intensity ratios express the GHG impact per unit of physical activity or unit of economic value. It is common for organisations to report their intensity ratio, though this is only really of value when comparing one organisation with a very similar organisation, to see how a ‘peer’ organisation compares. The intensity ratio that is most relevant to the Council’s emissions is tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e per full time equivalents. The Council employed 183 FTE in 2019-20 which equates to an intensity measure of 5.41 tCO<sub>2</sub>e/FTE (scope 1 and 2 only).

### 3. Carbon Emission Overall Target and Interim Targets

#### Introduction

When declaring a climate emergency in October 2019, the Council agreed that it “*will explore and consider...measures required and feasibility of reaching net zero carbon emissions by the Council by 2050*”. The relevance of 2050 is important: it is the same year legally committed to by UK government, whereby UK greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 should be net zero emissions<sup>7</sup>.

However, even since October 2019, the urgency to reach net zero as soon as possible is ever increasing, and the importance of deep, early cuts to emissions is increasingly needed. For example, national Government itself has recently (April 2021) committed to a 78% cut by 2035, as a step towards net zero by 2050. And new analysis shows that, across Cambridgeshire, we are starting at a higher baseline than most other area - our emissions are approximately 25% higher per person than the UK average<sup>8</sup>. Put another way, we have only about 6 years remaining under ‘business as usual’ before Cambridgeshire, as a collective, will have exhausted all of our ‘allowed’ share of emissions to 2050<sup>9</sup>. We can’t, therefore, wait until 2050 to act. We have to act now.

As such, over the past 12 months, the Council has explored two matters: first, whether the 2050 date should be brought forward for the Council’s operations to become net zero; second, establishing a set of interim targets to monitor progress towards net zero.

As set out in the previous section, the Council’s ‘carbon footprint’ is 1,315 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e in the financial year 2019/20. That is the figure we need to drive down as quickly as possible.

Determining interim targets requires an analysis of what is causing our emissions. The previous section highlighted the following:

- The Council’s Fleet Vehicles (of which, waste collection vehicles are the primary source) are far and away the leading cause of the Council’s emissions: around 75%.
- Our two main buildings also cause a significant contribution, with The Grange (predominantly heating, electric use): 10%; and E Space North: 5%.
- Vehicle business mileage, from staff and Members undertaking site visits or meetings etc (but does not include staff commuting; but such mileage would form part of an individual’s carbon footprint) also makes a significant contribution: 7%.

To get to net zero emissions, then obviously each of the above contributors needs to reduce their fossil fuel consumption to zero (or close to zero) and do so by relying more on renewable sources of energy.

One option, especially in the interim stages towards net zero, is to produce more renewable energy than it consumes, to offset any remaining fossil fuel or other combustion fuel usage. However, this is not technically allowable under the true definition of ‘net zero carbon’ because it still involves the use of fossil fuels which are not offset by carbon capture. But, an argument can be made to use this as a basis for interim targets during the period when the national grid is still reliant on fossil fuels, because the renewable energy generated and exported to the grid should result in an equivalent reduction in

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<sup>7</sup> - see The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019

<sup>8</sup> - see Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate, Interim Report, March 2021

<sup>9</sup> - see Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate, Interim Report, March 2021

fossil fuels needed to be consumed by the grid (though this assumption will gradually become less reliable, as the grid on some days of the year (sunny and windy days) could be entirely renewable energy fed in any event, meaning any additional renewable energy fed into it by the Council's infrastructure would not be offsetting any fossil fuel use, unless such energy is stored in some way).

Overall, to get to net zero will require national measures (primarily, the 100% decarbonisation of the electricity grid, and the likely outlawing of fossil fuel direct combustion in vehicles). Ultimately, it will require society to be almost entirely run on electricity (rather than direct combustion of fossil fuels, such as gas, petrol and diesel), and that electricity created through renewable energy sources.

But, this Council does not want to simply 'wait for change to happen' and wait for measures to be mandated on organisations such as this Council. Indeed, many would argue we have a moral duty to make change happen, and quickly, in order for this Council to do its bit to help avert the worst of the emerging environmental crisis. As such, setting challenging organisational-targets towards net zero is a sensible and appropriate measure for all organisations, including this Council.

### **Establishing a set of Targets**

So, what could those interim targets be for the Council? The Council has considered a wide range of evidence to inform its position, including:

- Research emerging from the Tyndall Centre, a partnership of universities bringing together researchers from the social and natural sciences and engineering to develop sustainable responses to climate change, which often broadly recommends that CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions for an organisation should be reduced by an average of **13.5% per year, or 50% every 5 years**.
- The need for deep cuts in emissions to be made early, and the more difficult (smaller) cuts to be made later. One of the principles behind their approach is the idea that to meet Paris Agreement (2015) commitments and IPCC recommendations (2018) (i.e. limit global temperature to 1.5C increase), we have around 7 years of Business as Usual (BAU) carbon left to emit i.e. if we carry on as normal, within about 6-7 years from now, we would have used up our entire 'budget' of carbon that can be emitted if we are to stay within 1.5-2% rise in global temperatures. To stretch out those years beyond 7 years requires cuts to be made now, and the deeper the earlier cuts are, the longer you can stretch it out before you need to eliminate carbon emissions entirely (on a net basis).
- In December 2020, the UK Climate Change Committee published a 'world first' detailed route map for a fully decarbonised UK, and set a target of 78% cuts in emissions by 2035 (from a 1990 base – by 2019, UK emissions are already down 41% from 1990 base). Interestingly, such cuts by 2035 are not recommended to be evenly spread across all industries and uses, with some operations targeted as 100% net zero before 2035, and others (such as "trucks") being low carbon "by 2040". Turning the CCC 78% target by 2035 into an ECDC target is difficult, because of the 1990 baseline adopted by CCC, rather than our 2018/19 baseline. But, roughly speaking, and reflecting the 41% reduction already made nationally, it equates to a **65% emissions cut by 2035** as an ECDC organisational target.
- In April 2021, UK government backed the above target of a 78% cut in emissions by 2035, and committed to putting that target into law.
- Reviewing the targets being set by other Councils across the country, and their proposals to meet any such targets (though many Councils have set no target at all).
- Cambridgeshire-Peterborough Climate Commission work, as commissioned by the Combined Authority, which has published a set of interim recommendations including a recommendation



that “All...Council operations should be **net zero by 2030**, underpinned by a regional Science Based Targets (SBTi)-type action plan.”

- Consideration of targets and recommendations from a wide range of other organisations and lobby groups, such as, for example, that of Extinction Rebellion UK, which seeks the UK to become **net-zero by 2025**.

In determining an interim target, it has to be ambitious yet realistic. And, on that basis, it is a statement of fact that the biggest source of emissions by the Council is from its vehicle fleet, and of that (and by far), from its waste collection vehicles.

And therein lies a fundamental problem: reducing the emissions from our vehicle fleet is extremely challenging and not a straight forward problem to solve or plan for. First, it would require low carbon/electric waste collection vehicles to be available on the market, that can successfully undertake waste collection in a rural district such as East Cambridgeshire. Put simply, such vehicles are not presently available. Even if they were, or soon became available, they would require considerable capital cost to purchase (running into £m's). And, to complicate things further, Government has delayed consulting and finalising its waste strategy, with such a strategy presently expected to dictate significant changes to the way waste is collected and managed, which means any early purchase of new vehicles now could be incompatible with that new national strategy and requirements.

Even if these hurdles can be overcome in the next few years, it also has to be factored in that getting rid of perfectly useable vehicles 'early' (i.e. before end of life), in order to switch to a low carbon vehicle, could arguably be a counter-productive measure from an emissions point of view due to the huge embodied carbon<sup>10</sup> in a new vehicle. This is because the embodied carbon in a vehicle is often greater than the carbon emissions emitted in the entire operating life of a fossil fuel consuming vehicle (it is, for example, accepted internationally that most petrol or diesel cars produced in the world consume more energy (and hence emissions of CO<sub>2</sub>e) during the manufacturing of that car, than the car will ever emit through its entire life of petrol/diesel consuming use).

Thus, buying an electric waste collection vehicle or other low carbon vehicle may appear a good measure, and will actually reduce a council's headline annual carbon footprint (especially if the vehicle is charged via renewable energy), but the net consequence on the environment may be worse due to the hidden carbon footprint of embodied carbon – put more simply, you could be doing wrong, when you think you are doing right. Taking the right decision, therefore, is not always a simple calculation, irrespective of the amount of money involved.

On the basis of the evidence available, therefore, it is not feasible to set a significant reduction in carbon emission from our (waste collection dominated) fleet vehicles until probably around 2030, when it is hoped such low carbon / electric vehicles will be available on the market. In the meantime, as an alternative, we should focus on making the delivery rounds of such vehicles as efficient as possible (and hence reduce the miles travelled), investigate whether any lower emission fuels are available to service the existing fleet (such as biofuels) and put in place a target date of securing low carbon / electric fleet vehicles starting from around 2030, and ending by 2035. Any new purchase in the meantime (to replace any vehicles which reach end of life prior to 2030), should focus on aligning to a new end of life of around 2030 to 2035.

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<sup>10</sup> Embodied carbon includes any CO<sub>2</sub>e created during the manufacturing of a product (eg building materials require material extraction, transport to manufacturer, manufacturing etc) and the transport of those products to the final destination (eg building materials to the building site). Put simply, embodied carbon is the carbon footprint of a product or project before it becomes operational or is used.

Turning to our office and other buildings, there is greater scope to reduce their carbon footprint in the shorter term, through a combination of energy efficiency measures, behaviour change (of staff occupying and using such buildings) and through renewable energy generation. As part of that process, we should make the transition away from gas heating to electric based heating, but only when such gas heating systems reach, or are close to reaching, 'end of life', again for embodied carbon reasons. Again, we could target a 2030 date for such a transition to take place.

However, even if we implemented all of the above by, say, 2030 or 2035, for vehicles and for buildings, the Council would not be 'net zero' because of the carbon element of electricity. For example, an electric vehicle in use today is not 'carbon neutral' if it is charged up via the grid (the grid still being powered by gas and coal to a significant degree).

Thus, to align to the 'net zero' aspirations, the Council itself would need to generate the same amount of electricity from renewable sources as it consumed, at least until the national grid was truly decarbonised. To do this, the Council would need to explore direct investment in renewable energy generation, on its own land, on a commercial scale. For example, rather than the Council focussing only on reducing its energy use, it also focusses attention on generating renewable energy in the first place. And, in doing so, determines how, for each £1 spent, the greatest net CO<sub>2e</sub> savings can be achieved.

For example, once the easier and relatively inexpensive energy efficiency saving measures have been taken (on our buildings or vehicle routes), chasing further savings may cost a lot of money for very little CO<sub>2e</sub> saving. A more effective measure could be to generate renewable electricity ourselves, so that overall our emissions are reducing towards net zero on an interim basis. Of course, land will be needed to make this happen (and may have to be bought if not available). There will also be planning issue to consider, as well as local community views on installing renewable energy infrastructure. But, very approximately, and subject to those issues and constraints, an investment of around £2m in renewable infrastructure (e.g. for a relatively small solar PV farm (5-8ha), or 1-2 wind turbines) would likely generate enough electricity and CO<sub>2e</sub> savings equivalent of the entire CO<sub>2e</sub> that ECDC presently emits, per year. That investment would, of course, also deliver an annual financial return from the selling of such generated electricity.

This Council has agreed to investigate the potential of this option, and is presently securing preliminary advice on what its options are. The most promising appears to be PV solar panels on its own land, potentially acting as a 'roof' over one or more of its car parks.

If the investigations prove that a deliverable and viable option exists, then it is feasible for such measures to be in place by 2025, and the scale of which could steadily grow up to 2030 and beyond.

Bringing all of the above together, the evidence is pointing to the following **ambitious interim targets** as being realistically possible (though note the definition of what is a 'net reduction' in the third bullet, and also note the risks on the following page):

- **A 20-33% reduction in our net CO<sub>2e</sub> emissions by year 2025/26.** That will be achieved via: reduced energy use in our buildings; a lower carbon conversion factor for the energy we do use, due to the broader national decarbonisation of the electricity grid; maximising the efficiency and performance of our existing fleet vehicles; investment in our own renewable energy infrastructure; and minimising the use of business miles of our staff.
- **A 66-80% reduction in our net CO<sub>2e</sub> emissions by year 2030/31.** That will be achieved via further investment in our own renewable energy infrastructure; some investment in electric based fleet vehicles; and (potentially) moving off the gas grid to heat our buildings.

- **A 100% net reduction (i.e. near or at net zero position) in our CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions by year 2034/35.** That will be achieved by moving to a vast majority, if not entirely, electric based vehicle fleet; zero gas use in our buildings; and further investment in renewable energy infrastructure.

*(Note: This ‘100% net reduction’ target will not mean a truly ‘net zero carbon’ organisation at this stage, because greenhouse gas reporting accounting rules dictate that if an organisation sources any electricity from the national grid, and the national grid is not yet fully decarbonised, then that organisation still causes emissions. Put another way, an organisation cannot ‘net off’ any renewable energy it generates, unless such energy is directly consumed by the organisation (i.e. it would have to have no grid consumption to be truly net zero carbon). However, from a headline perspective, we believe it is reasonable to claim a ‘100% net reduction in our emissions’ if, on a net basis, we use no fossil fuels directly (petrol, gas, diesel) and produce at least as much renewable electricity as electricity we consume; or, if we still have some limited direct fossil fuel use at this stage, we produce more renewable electricity than (a) the electricity we consume and (b) enough renewable energy to offset the remaining fossil fuel use.)*

- **A truly ‘net zero carbon’ organisation (and potentially negative carbon emission organisation) by 2040.** To achieve this will almost certainly require the national grid to be 100% decarbonised, and the organisation will use no fossil fuels for any of its operations. To be a negative carbon emission organisation, the organisation will generate more electricity than it consumes and, if technology exists, the excess electricity generated would be used to extract CO<sub>2</sub>e from the atmosphere (‘carbon capture’), making the organisation a negative contributor to CO<sub>2</sub>e levels in the atmosphere.

There are, of course, a number of challenges and risks in reaching such targets. These include:

- The rate of decarbonisation of the national grid fails to materialise as expected.
- Electric HGV-style vehicles do not get developed in the market place, or are prohibitively expensive, in the next 5-10 years.
- No feasible (practical, deliverable, affordable) means of establishing our own renewable energy infrastructure arises in the next 3-10 years.
- Energy use in our buildings (and/or the carbon intensity of such energy) does not reduce as hoped for, despite investment and staff training.
- National policy or legislation changes results in a greater level of service requirements being deployed (such as increased waste collection and waste separation) which results in increased emissions.
- Growing populations and households, meaning the Council is serving more people over time and consequently (all things being equal) would result in a rise in Council emissions (for example, the housing stock of the district is rising by 1-2%pa, which means 1-2% more homes every year requiring their waste to be collected, which will cause an increase in emissions arising to collect such waste).
- Unforeseen events / emergencies (such as the covid pandemic), which disrupts efficiency savings and requires increased energy use.
- The interim targets of 2025/26, 2030/31 and 2034/35 are all on the basis that we calculate our net emissions by offsetting our fossil fuel use with renewable energy generated (accepting that this method is not truly in line with the definition of how ‘net zero carbon’ should be calculated). The 2040 target is, however, in line with the true definition of net zero, because it involves no fossil fuel use.

The targets set out, therefore, should be regarded as ambitious, working towards targets, rather than fixed guarantees. Indeed, the Council would like to exceed them, if at all possible, but is equally mindful that many events are beyond its control which could impair its ability to achieve them.

# 4. Biodiversity and the Natural Environment

## Introduction

Our environment provides numerous benefits to people and communities' humanity, many of which are fundamental to our lives. It enables the food we eat to grow, clean air to breathe and water to drink. This is referred to as the 'regulating' services or benefits we get from nature. We also, of course, derive huge cultural, mental health and wellbeing benefits from the natural environment all around us.

Put another way, damaging our natural environment, especially if beyond recovery and repair, will mean a diminished quality of life for us all and for future generations.

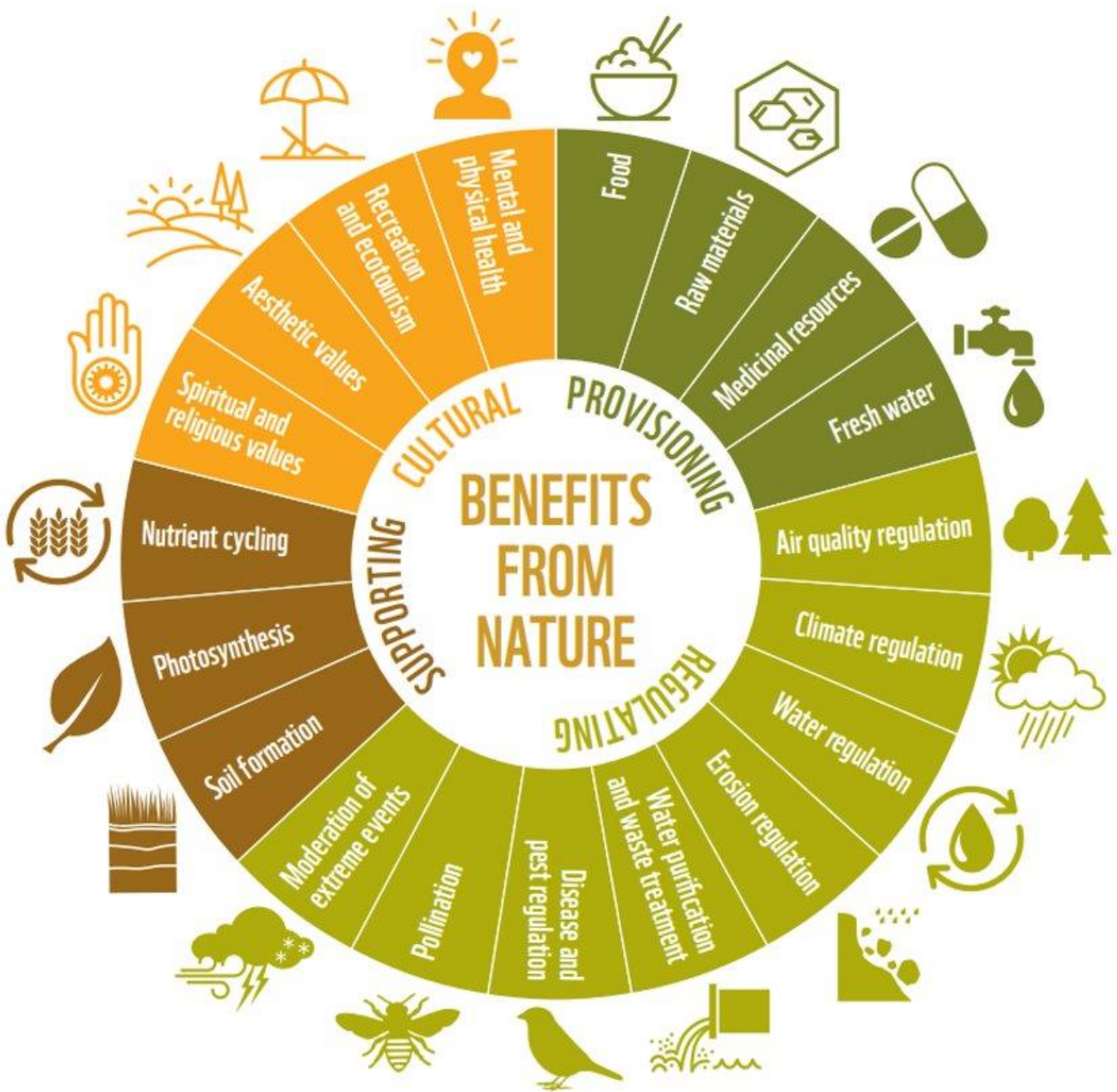


Figure: Benefits from nature, adapted from Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005

(Source: Cambridgeshire County Council Climate Change and Environment Strategy)

## **How can we ‘measure’ the benefits of (or harm to) our natural environment?**

It isn't easy, but there are ways to identify what benefits our natural environment provides, and consequently what harm arises if we neglect it. Scientists usually break down the natural environment into two main types to do this. First, the all-encompassing ‘natural capital’ and second, forming part of the first and the one we perhaps most think of, ‘biodiversity’. These are explained a little more below.

### **Natural Capital**

Natural capital is our ‘stock’ of water, land, air, species, minerals and oceans. From this stock goods and services are produced, including clean air and water, food and pollination, energy, wildlife, recreation and protection from hazards. These services provide economic, social, environmental, cultural, and well-being benefits.

### **Biodiversity**

Biodiversity, our flora and fauna, is an essential component of natural capital stocks and an indicator of the stocks’ condition and resilience. It provides benefits directly to people, for example, the pollination of plants to produce seeds. This benefits society primarily through food provision, and has a global economic value of approximately £120 billion and within the UK alone in the region of £690 million each year.

### **Methods to measure the benefits**

There are a range of established methodologies now available to value these benefits and quantify these financially to allow for easy incorporation into decision making. Such methods are not commonly used yet, but are highly likely to become more and more common, in the same way that it is becoming more common to measure the ‘carbon footprint’ of actions we take.

By providing a financial value to our natural environment, it can demonstrate to decision makers the full cost of exploiting our environment for short term gain, compared with the gains achievable through enhancing or protecting it. This is known as the ‘natural capital approach’.

As an example, currently, the UK consumes resources equivalent to three planet earths. This means that if every human on the planet consumed the same amount of resource as someone in the UK, there simply would not be enough resource to share around – we'd need three planets to do so, not just the one we have. The UK is not alone in consuming more than its fair share of what the earth can provide. Most ‘western’ developed countries are similarly around ‘three planets worth’.

This is not sustainable.

We must therefore become far more resource efficient, reduce consumption and reduce waste, especially as our environment takes time to replenish itself. The UK Government also recognises the need for change in its recent ‘A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment’.

### **Threats to our natural environment**

#### **Climate Change:**

Climate change impacts species and ecosystems, and therefore the services they provide, in many ways. Changes in prevailing weather conditions (temperature, precipitation, seasonality) directly affects ecosystem processes as well as species survival, encourages the spread of pathogens, and disrupts the timing of life cycle events. It decouples evolutionary relationships and undermines complex processes that underpin ecosystem function.

There are many lines of evidence that show that species are already being affected by climate change. With the damage to this natural capital comes impacts on the services they provide us, and the development of feedback loops which exacerbates both the cause and effects of this damage.

Risks include:

- Damage to crops from severe weather/lack of water;
- Loss of top soils due to floods;
- Changing temperatures impacting wildlife through changes to habitat and food chains;
- Damage to historic buildings from air pollution.

## **Pollution**

Clean air is one of our natural capital 'stocks' but air pollutants generated by a mixture of natural and human-made processes are creating health and environmental damage. The main challenge is the production of particulates and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) resulting from the combustion of fossil fuels, causing unacceptable impacts on health. Particulates, when inhaled can lodge in the lungs and exacerbate existing respiratory problems whilst NO<sub>2</sub> can increase asthma impacts in children. Our wildlife is also impacted by poor air quality reducing new growth and vulnerable species not thriving.

The Cambridgeshire Transport and Health Joint Needs Assessment identified the following:

- Levels of air pollution in Cambridgeshire impact health, as evidenced by respiratory and cardiovascular admissions to hospital;
- 257 deaths in 2010 were attributable to air pollution in Cambridgeshire;
- Over 5% of Cambridgeshire's population mortality is attributed to air pollution;
- Hot spots of pollution include urban areas and arterial and trunk roads such as the A14;
- New developments in Cambridgeshire are often sited near poor air quality areas;
- Small particulates from traffic also contribute to indoor air pollution, where people spend most of their time and receive most of their exposure to air pollutants.

Managing the impacts of air pollution from cars and power stations is possible and there are many synergies between approaches to manage air pollution and reduce carbon emissions.

Polluting our rivers and oceans from single-use plastics and agricultural run-off poses a significant threat to marine-life and reduces the ability of our oceans to nurture and restock itself. The Council is committed to making a difference on this issue.

- An estimated 79% of all plastic waste ever created is still in our environment and needing to be cleaned up;
- Waterways become clogged with plastic pollution, preventing natural functioning of the systems and harming wildlife when consumed;
- Agricultural run-off, for example use of fertilisers, cause oxygen levels in waterways to diminish such that flora and fauna cannot survive.

## **Population Growth and Development**

Cambridgeshire is one of the fastest growing counties in the UK. Growth necessitates the provision of more housing, food and water, which must be managed sustainably to minimise the environmental impact of our county's success. There are numerous examples globally of economic development taking place to the detriment of nature. Examples have included:

- Damage to landscape from minerals extraction for building materials;
- Loss of natural habitat to make way for new homes or road building programmes;

- Increasing air pollution from burning fossil fuels for travel;
- The impact of agricultural pesticides on water quality and biodiversity.

To achieve sustainable growth, it is important that everyone acts to conserve and enhance our natural capital. Using Cambridgeshire's growth as an opportunity, natural capital can be developed and enhanced through:

- Provision of increased green spaces for people and nature;
- Increasing tree planting to assist with shade/urban cooling, air quality and biodiversity;
- Switching from cars to more active travel choices such as walking, cycling and mass transport solutions.

## **What can East Cambridgeshire District Council do to help conserve and enhance the natural environment?**

The Council is not a major landowner (unlike, for example, the County Council which has a large farm estate portfolio), so is limited by what it can do directly. However, it has significant policy responsibilities, such as planning policy, which means it can require or influence others to act.

East Cambridgeshire is home to a number of nationally and internationally important wildlife and historic sites. It has a number of Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSI) including Devil's Dyke. It also hosts three internationally important Ramsar sites (the Nene Washes, Great Ouse Washes and Chippenham Fen), as well as a number of internationally important Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) including part of Fenland SAC. Through our partnerships we can help to maintain these valuable sites in positive conservation status.

We can also encourage and help facilitate new biodiverse rich sites within the district.

## **Planning Policy and Planning Decision Maker**

As a District Council, we are responsible for preparing planning policies for the district, as well as determining the vast majority of planning applications for development in the district (a limited number are determined by other bodies, such as minerals and waste development whereby both policy and decisions on applications are taken by Cambridgeshire County Council).

Our 2015 Local Plan contains many policies to help protect and enhance the natural environment, but over 2020 we recognised we could go further. Following public consultation, we therefore adopted a new Natural Environment Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which sets out much more detailed requirements for development proposals to follow. Examples of the sorts of things we can achieve through making decisions on planning applications are:

- Preventing harm to any designated nature site;
- Requiring a 'net gain' in biodiversity via development i.e. the quantity and/or quality of biodiversity must be better for a particular site after development has happened, than it was before; and
- Helping improve water quality.

Parish Councils can also set their own natural environment planning policies for their local parish, via a 'Neighbourhood Plan', and we encourage them to do so and offer support throughout the process.

## **Reducing plastic pollution**

The Council buys services and goods to deliver its statutory responsibilities. It will look to improve its procurements and work with its supply chain to find better, more sustainable options to replace single use plastics.



## Priority areas for natural capital through collaboration with partners and our communities

**Peatland:** In its natural (damp) state, peatland acts as a 'carbon sink', sucking carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere and 'locking' it in the ground. Wicken Fen is a good example of such wet peatland. However, the vast majority of our peatland is not in its natural state. The CUSPE carbon footprint work of 2019 highlighted that Cambridgeshire's peatland is probably producing 5.5 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e per annum, due to the intensive farming (and consequent drying of the peat, which releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere). This is almost the equivalent of all other emissions from all sectors (i.e. from homes, cars, businesses, manufacturing, waste etc combined) across Cambridgeshire. Thus, if we reduce all our emissions from all these other sources to zero, we would still only have cut our emissions by half because of the vast quantity of emissions arising from our drying peatlands.

Large parts of East Cambridgeshire are, of course, peat-based fenland, especially the northern half of the district.

To exacerbate matters, fen peatlands are among the UK's most diverse habitats for wildlife, but the vast majority have been lost to drainage and agricultural practices, with just small pockets like Wicken Fen remaining. These habitats rely on a delicate balance of water volume and quality to maintain their diverse range for flora and fauna, and what remains of them are often internationally recognised for their importance.

But there is some good news emerging on peatland. Already there are projects such as Wicken Fen Vision (the National Trust) and, in Huntingdonshire, the Greater Fen Project (Wildlife Trust) working to conserve and re-wet small additional areas of our peatlands.

And research is underway on how farmers and others in the agritech industry can work peatlands in a different way, preserving the peat, enhancing its biodiversity value and, at the same time, still deliver a viable return for the land and producing the crops that the country relies on. The NFU, for example, are fully behind such initiatives, not only for the sake of the natural environment, but to protect the assets the farmers own: if we continue to dry out our peatland, the rich peat soil literally disappears into the atmosphere (we lose 1-2cms of peat per year), to the point that in 50-100 years it is predicted that most of the fenland peat soil will have gone, leaving poorer quality soils (eg clay) behind.

East Cambridgeshire District Council fully supports the County Council bringing this issue to greater prominence, and welcomes its proposals to manage its own land in a different way. Whilst our ability to influence how peatlands are managed is limited, we will support all efforts to raise awareness and change land management practices, where we can, for the benefit of wildlife and for the benefit of our climate.

**Green Spaces and 'Doubling Land for Nature':** Cambridgeshire has one of the smallest percentages of land managed for nature in the country. Currently only 8.5% of the county is covered by natural or green spaces. Natural Cambridgeshire, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Partnership (LNP), is a partnership bringing together district councils (including East Cambridgeshire District Council), the County Council, Natural England, the Environment Agency, the National Farmers Union and more. Recently, it adopted its long term target of 'Doubling Land for Nature' across Cambridgeshire. This year, the LNP is working on proposals to commence delivery of that ambition, including funding to make it happen. East Cambridgeshire District Council fully supports this initiative.

## 5. Ideas Forum

On 16th December 2019 we launched the Climate Change Ideas Forum, where members of the public were encouraged to submit their ideas for our consideration.

Residents can submit their ideas on-line, by email, telephoning the Council or speaking to an advisor at the Council Offices during office hours. All ideas will be acknowledged, then recorded and shared with senior officers of the Council to be considered. Where we can, those ideas are translated into 'actions' within the next available Environment Plan.

Separate to this June 2021 Environment Plan, we have, like last year, published a report summarising all of the views we received, up to the second cut off point of end of February 2021. That report demonstrates both the huge interest the public has in environmental matters, and the wide and diverse ideas and suggestions people have.

These include:

- Lots of suggestions around improving cycling and walking facilities;
- Ideas of how to improve communication and education;
- Ideas around funding to help people and businesses cut their emissions;
- Suggestions regarding green spaces and creating land for nature;
- A desire for new development to be environmentally friendly and energy efficient;
- Suggestions relating to renewable energy, including what we should encourage (and some we should not) and what incentives we should offer;
- A large volume of suggestions relating to transport, including parking, buses and electric vehicles;
- A strong desire to plant more trees (and protect those we have);
- Ideas relating to recycling.

The above is just a flavour – there were lots of other great ideas.

The Council cannot thank you enough for the time and effort that you take in sending us your ideas. The Ideas Forum remains open for any new suggestions you may have. All those received by end of February 2022 will be considered for the next iteration of this Environment Plan, due by June 2022. For further details, please visit [www.eastcambs.gov.uk/climatechange](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/climatechange) .

Over the next 12 months, we will be looking at additional ways to communicate with everyone, both to offer advice and the ability to share ideas.

## 6. Actions and Projects

To boost our natural environment and to achieve our carbon emission targets as set out in section 3 will be a momentous task. There is an indefinite list of changes required, many of which are only realistically feasible on a regional or national scale.

However, there are realistic and practical actions that can be taken at a local level, and now.

The following section of this report provides a breakdown of actions that the Council will seek to take forward over June 2021 to June 2022, as well as a review of the actions we committed to in June 2020.

In order to make decisions on what projects to take forward, the Council has adopted the following key principles:

- Cost of the action proposed in relation to the CO<sub>2</sub>e saved (i.e. high CO<sub>2</sub>e saving per £ spent) or the degree of likely benefit to the natural environment;
- Ease of implementing (for example, easy / quick actions will make carbon savings sooner);
- Public demonstration (whilst of less importance than other principles, by undertaking highly visual or engaging actions we could stimulate others to also act themselves).

### Review of our Top 20 Actions for 2020/21

In June 2020, the Council set a long-term vision to deliver net zero carbon emissions for the Council's operations and, in partnership with all stakeholders, for East Cambridgeshire as a whole. At the same time, it committed to supporting its communities and East Cambridgeshire's biodiversity and environmental assets to adapt and flourish as our climate changes.

To help move one step towards that vision, the Council committed to a set of 'top 20 actions' over the period June 2020 to June 2021. Those actions are set out below (first column), and commentary on the degree of meeting those actions is also set out (second column).

<b>Our Target (set in June 2020)</b>	<b>Our Progress (by June 2021)</b>
1. Review its entire electricity and gas contracts, and, where practical to do so, will seek to amend to 100% renewable electricity tariffs and 100% carbon off-set gas tariffs as soon as possible.	<i>Electricity contract moved to 100% renewable energy from October 2020. No carbon off-set gas tariff practicably available. Continue to consider alternative off-set mechanisms, as well as future aim of moving off gas altogether.</i>
2. Appraise the impact of its streetlights and consider the options to move to LED lighting, if feasible, taking account of the carbon savings, financial savings and public opinion of doing so, including consideration as whether dimming of lights is practicable and safe during certain low-use hours (note: most street lights are not under the	<i>Moved entire ECDC responsible street and car parking lights to LED by end of 2020. Dimming of such lights to further reduce energy use not deemed practical at this stage.</i>

<p>control of East Cambridgeshire District Council).</p>	
<p>3. Embed a greater culture of home working (to reduce commuting) and less business travel (eg for site visits), taking advantage of lessons learnt during the Covid-19 lockdown, with the aim of encouraging staff to undertake less, and more coordinated, site visits and meeting attendance.</p>	<p><i>Staff and Councillor business miles have dropped by over half over the year (which should show up in the carbon footprint accounts we report for 2020/21).</i></p> <p><i>Whilst we have no mechanism to record staff commuting miles, these are likely to have been significantly reduced over 2020/21, as most staff, most of the time, have worked from home.</i></p> <p><i>Moving forward, the Council's significant investment in IT facilities for staff and Councillors over 2020/21 means that we expect considerably lower business and commuting miles to be undertaken than was the case pre-pandemic, as working from home and remote meetings become, in part, the 'new norm'. The Council will continue to embed this 'new norm', subject to the maintenance of high-quality services to our residents and other customers.</i></p>
<p>4. Undertake a thorough appraisal of the potential to expand electric car charge points.</p>	<p><i>The Council has engaged with two national electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure companies, looking to determine potential for additional EV charge points on our own land (eg car parks). Barton Rd and Newham Street car parks appear most viable, and investigations continue.</i></p> <p><i>The Council adopted a new Supplementary Planning Document in Feb 2021, relating to climate change, which expressly encourages developers to install new EV charging points as part of new development.</i></p> <p><i>The Council is fully committed to working with the Combined Authority (CA) on a more wide-ranging county strategy for boosting EV infrastructure. This was anticipated over 2020/21, but was delayed by the CA into 2021/22. A joint (rather than ECDC alone) strategy will give greater confidence to residents and businesses across Cambridgeshire to invest in EV, and will give the greatest scope for public bodies to fund such infrastructure.</i></p>
<p>5. Roll out further guidance and training for staff in relation to the recently introduced 'Carbon Impact Assessment' (CIA) procedure – a new assessment which requires all Council decisions to be assessed</p>	<p><i>CIAs have been duly completed for all relevant decisions taken by the Council, and recorded as part of the officer reports to Council meetings.</i></p> <p><i>Guidance and training have been given to those staff that have responsibility for preparing such reports.</i></p> <p><i>As an interim measure, the ECDC CIA process was further improved, with new guidance for staff, has just been launched. However, moving forward, the Council</i></p>

<p>for the carbon implications of the decision being made.</p>	<p><i>welcomes the recommendation of the CA Climate Commission (see Action 17) to establish a comprehensive, consistent approach to carbon assessment in decision making, and we will work proactively with other districts to establish such a framework.</i></p>
<p>6. Work with ECTC and ECSS, the Council's wholly owned companies responsible for matters such as waste collection, street cleansing and maintaining public open spaces, conclude a review into alternative options for its vehicle fleet, and set out a programme of how its vehicle fleet will become less carbon intensive, plus review our waste collection methods to determine whether more efficient route collections can be secured, thereby reducing vehicle fuel consumption (and consequently reduced CO2 emissions).</p>	<p><i>Based on the evidence, ECTC and ECSS acknowledge that the biggest contributor to the Council's overall emissions are due to its fleet vehicles, with that proportion increasing over the past 1-2 years.</i></p> <p><i>ECSS continues to be committed to review options, as and when fleet needs replacing. Currently there are no suitable low carbon vehicles on the market that can effectively deliver the standards required for the collection of waste across our rural district, though there is evidence that the industry is moving in the right direction and showing willingness to develop vehicles that meet all geographical requirements in the future (rather than just urban geographies).</i></p> <p><i>Where fleet needs replacing (and for some vehicles this is due soon), we are delaying such purchases as we continue to await the Government's Waste and Resource Strategy now set to be released later in 2021 (delayed from Autumn / Winter 2020; a further consultation was launched in May 2021). This will ensure the correct specifications are procured. It is very likely, however, that the next vehicles procured will be powered by diesel engines as there are no suitable carbon neutral / low carbon viable or practical alternatives available at this time. To minimise embodied carbon, and to increase flexibility in terms of switching to low carbon vehicles as soon as practical, ECSS are considering leasing (rather than outright purchase) of vehicles.</i></p> <p><i>A significant part of the fleet is due for renewal in 2025 at which time further advances in carbon neutral / low carbon vehicles may have been completed and further specifications on offer that meet our district's requirements.</i></p> <p><i>Our smaller vehicles, which electric versions are more widely available, are not due for replacement until 2027/28. Full consideration will be given to carbon neutral / low carbon alternatives for these vehicles, during the procurement process.</i></p> <p><i>Separately, ECSS are currently working through a large scale round reconfiguration project for all of its waste collection vehicles and schedules. The plan is</i></p>

	<p><i>scheduled for implementation in the second half of the financial year 2021/22. The main objective of this plan is to ensure that all vehicles are running as efficiently as possible, maximising their productivity across the working week and reducing any lost time.</i></p> <p><i>This would likely see vehicles working collectively in combined areas, reducing any unnecessary travel time. Additionally, the aim is to maximise the collection areas in the district, creating a natural flow through the week, rather than zig zagging across the district each day. This will assist in reducing additional travel time and resource required for collecting missed collections the following day.</i></p> <p><i>Secondary outcomes of this plan include possible but not guaranteed round reductions. Any reduction in rounds would result in less vehicles required, reducing the daily carbon output (and reduce embodied carbon, if a net lower number of vehicles).</i></p> <p><i>Overall, therefore, some limited short term CO<sub>2</sub>e savings may be possible, but bigger cuts on such emissions are not expected until at least 2025/26, and potentially not until the 2030s.</i></p>
<p>7. Complete an energy opportunity assessment for The Grange to identify measures that can be taken to reduce consumption and/or generate renewable energy and deliver at least one of the measures identified within a year.</p>	<p><i>An energy audit of both The Grange and E-Space North was completed by end of Dec 2020. This identified some ‘quick wins’ in terms of energy efficiency improvements to The Grange. Fortunately, the timing of the audit’s conclusions linked to a grant scheme run by Government. This meant a grant was able to be bid for, to undertake such quick win measures, which we were successful in receiving in Jan 2021. The works (insulation and double glazing) are due for completion by September 2021, with the hope that this should result in lower energy bills / lower CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions for The Grange, for winter 2021/22.</i></p>
<p>8. Complete an energy opportunity assessment for E-Space North to identify measures that can be taken to reduce consumption and/or generate renewable energy and deliver at least one of these.</p>	<p><i>The audit found limited cost-effective scope for other measures at the two sites, due to the relatively efficient and modern heating systems in place and the limited ability to install renewables. However, these will continue to be explored.</i></p> <p><i>More generally, as staff return in greater numbers to the office from summer 2021, a programme of behavioural change activities is intended to be set up, encouraging staff to reduce energy.</i></p>
<p>9. Develop a Customer Access Strategy, which at its heart will enable customers to undertake</p>	<p><i>Pre-COVID, approx. 1,500 customers per week accessed The Grange reception, but reception has been largely closed since March 2020. We are now</i></p>

<p>activities with the Council without the need for physical attendance at Council Offices.</p>	<p><i>trying to understand in more detail how those customers are accessing the services they want (whilst reception was closed) and what could be improved (eg website) so customers don't have to come to reception in the long term. Whilst this is unlikely to reduce the Council's own carbon footprint, it should reduce the carbon footprint of the customer, if they no longer have to travel to The Grange to conduct their business. The final Access Strategy will be completed shortly.</i></p>
<p>10. Finalise the Council's bus, cycling and walking review (which commenced over winter 2019/20), and work with a wide variety of partners to try to implement its findings, taking advantage of new Government funds, linked to Covid-19 recovery, to boost cycling and walking infrastructure.</p>	<p><i>Comprehensive public consultation took place in Spring 2020. A Member Working Party was established, resulting in a New Bus Proposals for East Cambridgeshire prospectus. This was submitted to the Combined Authority (Dec 2020), and will provide useful evidence for bidding against any other funding streams. A walking and cycling strategy is also being developed for East Cambridgeshire.</i></p>
<p>11. Undertake a thorough appraisal of the Council's land assets, and determine whether a programme of tree planting and/or meadow planting can take place on any of it. If so, commence that programme during the 2020/21 winter and spring planting season.</p>	<p><i>Working with the local Wildlife Trust, ten candidate sites were reviewed for their potential, which was then whittled down to three of the most promising sites for early delivery and effectiveness are: Victoria Green, Witchford; Gateway Gardens, Ely; West of Ely, St Johns Road to Downham Road. Measures include a mix of better cutting regimes (to encourage wild flowers and great biodiversity) being implemented from summer 2021, to some tree planting opportunities for winter 2021.</i></p>
<p>12. Prepare, consult and adopt two Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), one on the Natural Environment and the second on Climate Change.</p>	<p><i>Both SPDs were successfully consulted upon, comments considered, and final documents adopted by Feb 2021. Both documents are now used in the determination of planning applications, helping the Council achieve a greater degree of biodiversity and/or climate change mitigation measures via new development in the district.</i></p>
<p>13. Identify / develop a training course for all staff and Members on climate change issues, minimisation, mitigation, adaptive measures, and key environmental policies (possibly Open University's Environment: treading lightly on the Earth). Aim for all staff and Members to have completed training by 2021. All new starters from 2021 to</p>	<p><i>Following the trial of a number of potential training courses, the Council formally launched in April 2021 a comprehensive 'pick and mix' style training course for all staff and Councillors, making it mandatory for all staff to complete at least one of the courses on offer before the end of 2021. The courses range from biodiversity issues to climate change. A review of the success of the courses, following staff feedback, is scheduled for Sept 2021.</i></p>

<p>complete training within 2 months of start date.</p>	
<p>14. Put in place arrangements, by April 2021 (including a district wide partnership forum), to facilitate the preparation of a district wide Action Plan ('District-EnvPlan'). This Action Plan, which is prepared in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders, will set out how we can cut our carbon emissions and boost the natural environment collectively across the East Cambridgeshire area.</p>	<p><i>In March 2021, the first Partnership Forum took place, with a wide range of local bodies and organisations taking part. Whilst the Forum is still in its formative stages, some of the ideas and thoughts from it have already influenced the proposed new 'top 20' targets for 2021 (such as the focus on engaging with children / schools / youth sector; and the potential for improved communications and coordination between action takers across the district). The purpose, actions and outcomes of the Forum are for the Forum (not ECDC) to decide, and therefore it may not proceed with the district wide action plan as previously envisaged, but more targeted single issue programmes of action.</i></p>
<p>15. Work with a willing Parish Council (PC), to prepare a template parish-based Action Plan ('Parish-EnvPlan'), and subsequently encourage all Parish Councils to come up with their own targets and projects.</p>	<p><i>Over the past year we have engaged with three PCs, one of which (Burwell) is a clear 'front runner' in terms of preparing an Action Plan, and published its first version in Feb 2021. ECDC welcomes, in principle, the production of the Action Plan, and considers that it acts as a simple, yet effective, base upon which meaningful actions can be taken, and further ideas and actions proposed. ECDC encourages other PCs to follow the lead taken by Burwell, with Burwell's Action Plan being a useful starting point as a potential template for other PCs. Available here:</i></p> <p><a href="http://www.burwellparishcouncil.gov.uk/Policies_34601.aspx">http://www.burwellparishcouncil.gov.uk/Policies_34601.aspx</a></p>
<p>16. Prepare a second Council-EnvPlan by June 2021 (ie a review of this document), setting out progress over 2020/21, and proposals and targets for 2021/22.</p>	<p><i>This has been achieved, and forms this document.</i></p>
<p>17. Work proactively with the Combined Authority, as part of its recently launched Climate Change Independent Commission</p>	<p><i>The Council continues to actively engage with the Climate Commission (which was slightly delayed due to the pandemic), submitting evidence at the relevant stages. The Council welcomes, in principle, the interim report and recommendations (Feb 2021) and looks forward to the final report due around Sept 2021. The Council, with other partners, has already started to look at the interim findings, and is committed wherever practical and viable to implement such recommendations. Implementing the full package will, however, require considerable funding and legislative changes from Government.</i></p>



<p>18. Support Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) in its delivery of its recently adopted Action Plan.</p>	<p><i>We continue to engage with CCC, and wider districts and unitary councils, sharing best practices and ideas, and ECDC remains fully committed to supporting CCC with the implementation of its own Action Plan.</i></p>
<p>19. The Council also acknowledges that in recognising there is a climate emergency, the actions needed to be taken are not all about mitigating the impacts, but also adapting to the inevitable changes of climate change. As such, the Council also commits to commence preparation of a Climate Adaptation Plan over the next 12 months.</p>	<p><i>Preparation of a climate adaptation plan has, in accordance with the target, commenced. It is hoped to bring this to the appropriate Committee of the Council for approval in Autumn or Winter 2021.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, the Climate Change SPD (see Action 12) included policy measures relating to the adaptability of new buildings to meet the demands of a changing climate. This will help ensure that homes and other buildings built today, will be more resilient to extreme changes in the climate (such as increased heat or rain).</i></p>
<p>20. Work with Palace Green Homes (PGH), the Council's commercial property and development company, to establish a new sustainability policy for the company; this will then inform how it can progress its development schemes in the most sustainable, yet viable, way.</p>	<p><i>PGH adopted a new sustainability policy in Feb 2021, setting out its commitments in terms of its approach to building sustainably and respecting the local environment. It is published on its website at:</i></p> <p><a href="https://www.palacegreenhomes.co.uk/palace-green-homes-sustainability">https://www.palacegreenhomes.co.uk/palace-green-homes-sustainability</a></p>

## Our 20 Commitments for 2021/22

Building on the commitments and achievements of last year, the Council commits to the following set of 'top 20 actions' for the period June 2021 to June 2022:

1. Develop (including in partnership with East Cambridgeshire Street Scene (ECSS)) a **programme of engagement activities with schools**, helping to educate young people of the importance of climate change and the natural environment, and what they can do to help.
2. Actively participate, and encourage others to participate, in the '**Queen's Green Canopy**' initiative, which is a programme of tree planting in winter 2021 and winter 2022.
3. Create a new **Queen Elizabeth Jubilee Tree Maze**, via: running a competition with children to design the maze; plant out in a suitable location the winning maze design, using a native tree/hedging species (eg hornbeam); educate the benefits of the maze (biodiversity / carbon locking / active lifestyles).
4. Establish an **East Cambridgeshire Create an Orchard Programme** and target the creation of at least **26 Orchards (East Cambs COP26)**, whereby ECDC encourages and helps the creation of new (or renewed) orchards by community groups, Parish Councils or schools. ECDC to provide free fruit trees, stakes and other essential equipment to establish the orchard (land, planting and maintenance provided by the group/council/school).
5. Implement new **grass cutting and wildflower management** arrangements in suitable locations, to help support greater biodiversity.
6. Develop a **preliminary 'nature recovery strategy' for East Cambridgeshire**, to feed into Cambridgeshire wide nature recovery actions and frameworks.
7. Undertake a series of **energy efficiency improvements on The Grange** (such as window replacement, loft insulation and LED lighting). In addition, commence a programme of 'behavioural change' activities for staff, so as to encourage efficient use of energy with The Grange. Combined, this action should reduce energy use within The Grange.
8. Before the end of 2021, report findings of a preliminary investigation into whether **ECDC could operate its own renewable energy infrastructure**, such as solar panels (PV) over one of its car parks. If feasible, progress implementation, with the target in future years of generating enough renewable energy to match the energy used by ECDC in its buildings, street lights and storage depots.
9. Help improve the **energy efficiency of existing housing stock** in the district, in particular through: (a) direct delivery of over £1m in home energy efficiency improvements to at least 100 homes in the district, comprising of Sanctuary Properties (40 properties), low income private homes (10 properties) and park homes (50 properties) (*Note: these improvements are a partnership between ECDC, Sanctuary Properties and the Cambridgeshire Action on Energy Partnership*); (b) the recruitment of a new ECDC part time Home Energy Advisor to offer advice and support to all residents on home energy and fuel poverty issues; and (c) undertaking further research, including with Sanctuary Properties, to gain a deeper understanding of the scale of need and opportunities available to make further future energy efficiency improvements to existing homes in the district.
10. In respect of our fleet vehicles (eg waste and recycling lorries; parks and open space maintenance vehicles), work with ECTC and ECSS to, as first priority, **reconfigure routes and collection rounds** with a view to minimising miles travelled. Separately, respond to the new national waste strategy and continue to monitor the emerging electric/low-carbon vehicle market. Ensure any purchase (or lease) of new fleet vehicles, during 2021/22, considers the potential for electric/low-carbon vehicles to become more widely available from 2025 onwards.

11. Adopt a new **Cycling and Walking Strategy for East Cambridgeshire**, and use that strategy as the basis for influencing change, bidding for funds and for negotiation with developers.
12. To progress the **delivery of Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs)** across the district, through the direct delivery of new EVCPs in at least one of our public car parks during 2021/22, and through working with the Combined Authority on a county-wide strategy to support the mainstream roll out of EVCPs.
13. Improve the **'Carbon Impact Assessment'** procedure, developed in coordination with partners and in line with Combined Authority Climate Commission recommendations. This will help demonstrate the carbon implications of the decision being made.
14. Encourage and monitor the take up of the newly launched **'mix and match' training courses for staff and councillors**. The OU recognised and developed courses accommodate a wide range of staff interests and skills, helping to build a base of environment knowledge across the council, no matter what the core duties of that person are. All staff and Members are targeted to have completed at least one such course by end 2021.
15. Continue to embed a greater culture of **home working (to reduce commuting) and less business travel (e.g. for site visits)**, taking advantage of lessons learnt during the Covid-19 lockdown, with the aim of encouraging staff to undertake less, and more coordinated, site visits and meeting attendance. Target 20% reduction in business miles from pre-pandemic levels.
16. Active role in **encouraging / lobbying for the highest energy efficiency standards in new development**, as part of:
  - the new 'spatial strategy' for the Oxford-Cambridge Arc;
  - the proposed new national Building Regulations and 'Future Homes Standard';
  - the new planning system being introduced via the Planning White Paper;
  - any emerging Neighbourhood Plan that Parish Councils produce; and
  - any future development schemes by Palace Green Homes / Community Land Trusts (CLTs) in the district.
17. Work proactively with the Combined Authority, seeking to implement as many as reasonably practical of the **Climate Change Independent Commission recommendations** (due Sept 2021).
18. Further develop the recently established **East Cambridgeshire Partnership Forum**, with the aim of the Forum to help devise actions and targets to reduce carbon emissions and boost the natural environment collectively across the East Cambridgeshire area. Potentially establish a non-ECDC website as a base for information and actions.
19. Continue to prepare **an annual ECDC Environment Plan**, setting out the latest 'carbon footprint' of the Council, a series of annual actions, and a longer-term target to reduce ECDC's net emissions by 20-33% (by 2025); 66-80% (by 2030); 100% (by 2035); and achieve a truly net zero carbon organisation by 2040.
20. Work with Palace Green Homes (PGH), the Council's commercial property and development company, assisting it to implement its recently adopted **Sustainability Policy**; and, for all its future major development proposals (i.e. developments of 10 homes or more, which don't already have planning consent as at 1 June 2021), achieve the **Local Nature Partnership's 'Working with Nature Charter Mark'**.

## 7 Financing the Strategy and Action Plan

Like all councils, we have challenging financial and resource pressures. We are also a small Council, operating with a relatively small budget (around £10m per annum total spend), compared with other councils. County Councils, for example, have operating budgets of hundreds of £millions. However, we cannot use any of these challenges as an excuse for not finding new ways of living, and doing 'our bit' with the budgets we operate under. We can find realistic and genuine ways to make positive changes that limit our impact on and improve our environment, and we can also regulate others to do their fair share, through the policies we set and licenses we operate.

All potential projects referred to in this Plan will, where necessary, go through the Council's approval process and receive expenditure approval in accordance with the budget setting process. It must be noted that these corporate controls are required regardless of eventual funding streams as the Council needs to ensure Value for Money is achieved.

The Council has access to several potential funding streams and the choice of most appropriate funding will depend upon achievement of Value for Money. This will be assessed following the completion of relevant business cases for individual projects. External funding will always be considered before the use of internal Council funds.

Some of the ways the Council may decide to fund the projects associated with the Plan are:

- **Invest to Save:** For example, capital expenditure ('investment') to improve the energy efficiency of the buildings or vehicles we own can save money every year thereafter through lower energy costs. The money to fund the original expenditure could be from a council's own reserves or from a loan.
- **Grants and Loans:** These can be from Government or private sources.
- **Match-Funding:** Some grants might require the Council to contribute some (often half) the funding for a project.

More specifically, at the time of writing, the following budgets are available, or potentially available:

- **Council direct 'revenue' funding:** £100,000 per annum funding was agreed by the Council in 2020 to help deliver on the actions within each annual Environment Plan. We therefore have £100,000 for the financial year 2021/22 to help deliver the top 20 actions identified.
- **Government Grants:** we have been awarded nearly £100,000 by Government to improve the energy efficiency of The Grange.
- **Government Grants:** in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, City and District councils, we have been collectively awarded a total grant of just over £2 Million to improve the energy efficiency of 286 properties. It is planned that 100 properties in East Cambridgeshire will benefit from this grant funding, at a cost of around £1m.
- **Council direct 'capital' funding:** whilst no money has been set aside for capital projects at this stage, the Council will consider making such investments if it proves value for money and helps generate an annual income (as well as a carbon saving) for the investment made.

## 8 Further Reading

There is a host of information available on the internet, and we set out some links in the Appendices.

We also intend to improve information we post on our own website, via this page:

<https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/climatechange>

If you are particularly interested in learning more about climate change and environmental matters, and would like to reward yourself with a certificate, we recommend you have a go at completing any of the Open University courses available on the web. Most are free, and can take as little as 1 hour to complete

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/nature-environment>

## 9 Monitoring and Evaluation

Successful implementation and ongoing delivery require a robust, transparent governance procedure which will ensure strategic ownership of the Council's carbon reduction aims in line with the climate emergency declaration. This governance process will bring together the diverse range of projects undertaken throughout the Council which contribute to the organisation's overall environmental impact.

### Identifying Projects

The Council is committed to identifying opportunities to reduce carbon emissions across all areas of its operations. In order to achieve this the Council has introduced the following:

- A core team of officers, representing key service areas, have been identified. These officers will meet informally on a regular basis in order to discuss ideas and forthcoming projects.
- Decisions taken by the Council are now be subject to a Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA). This involves lead officers undertaking a review of their project/decision and considering what impact it will have on the Council's aim to achieve net-zero carbon emissions. A summary of the CIA will be included in the governing report to enable the relevant decision maker to make an informed decision. The introduction of this process, which we periodically update and improve upon, also helps raise awareness of the challenge amongst officers and will lead to officers considering the potential environmental impacts earlier in the decision making process, for example, at the contract specification stage.
- Steps to ensure that officers throughout the organisation have the opportunity to make suggestions for projects that could help to reduce carbon emissions.

### Initiating Projects

Before any project gets off the ground the relevant Council officer will ensure that all of the necessary procurement and governance steps are undertaken. Consideration will also be given, on a case by case basis, to any communication activity that may be required alongside any specific monitoring requirements.

### Monitoring

The impact of individual projects will primarily be monitored by collating data for all emissions sources that are within the organisational scope. This will be undertaken in line with the process set out earlier in this document. Where it is possible and feasible to do so individual projects will be monitored more frequently to ensure any deviation from projections are identified and addressed as soon as possible.

Separately, the Council will continue to monitor the Government's approach to UK carbon pricing and the implications of that new scheme on the Council and wider stakeholders.

### Reporting Progress

Each year the Council will produce an annual report no later than the 30<sup>th</sup> June each year.

### Baseline Year Recalculation Policy

There may be circumstances under which it becomes necessary to recalculate our baseline year emissions. If significant changes were to occur - either within the Council's organisation or to recognised methodologies - it could challenge the validity of existing data. To mitigate this, we have developed the following baseline year recalculation policy which will ensure that any significant changes are identified, measured for a recalculation threshold and processed accordingly:

<b>Change scenario</b>	<b>Baseline year recalculation?</b>
<b>Mergers, Acquisitions, Divestitures</b>	
Acquisition of (or insourcing) a facility that did not exist in the baseline year.	Potentially recalculate baseline year emissions depending on likely impact to be consistent with new approach, or correct errors
Disposal of (or outsourcing) a facility to another company.	Potentially recalculate baseline year emissions depending on likely impact to be consistent with new approach, or correct errors
Transfer of ownership/ control of emissions sources. This includes changes in lease status.	No base year recalculation required
<b>Organic Growth and Decline</b>	
Organic growth	No base year recalculation required
Organic decline	No base year recalculation required
<b>Changes in Quantification Methodologies / Errors</b>	
Changes in emission factors or methodologies (e.g. change in activity data) that reflect real changes in emissions (i.e. changes in fuel type or technology)	No base year recalculation required
Changes in measurement methodologies, improvements in the accuracy of emission factors/ activity data, or discovery of previous errors/ number of cumulative errors	Potentially recalculate baseline year emissions depending on likely impact to be consistent with new approach, or correct errors

**Table Baseline year recalculation policy**

The Council will review the scope on an annual or biennial basis to ensure that data is collected from all relevant sources.

## 10 Stakeholder engagement

It is clear that the Council, working alone, cannot achieve the target of net-zero carbon emissions across both the geographical area of East Cambridgeshire and throughout the Council's own operations. Yet, the Council is committed to working in partnership in order to make this ambition a reality. As such, in addition to Council Members and Officers, the Council plans to work with the following stakeholders:

- **Youth Council**
- **Citizen Engagement**
- **Schools**
- **Natural Cambridgeshire Local Nature Partnership (LNP)\***
- **Business Community**
- **Parish Councils**
- **Cambridgeshire County Council**
- **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (and its associated Climate Commission)**
- **Other Local Authorities**
- **Government**

*\*The LNP comprises a wide range of organisations committed to improving the natural environment of Cambridgeshire, including: Natural England; Defra; Environment Agency; NFU; RSPB; Wildlife Trust; Anglian Water and Cambridge University*



## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Impacts of Climate Change

Climate change has many impacts. These will be realised by the Council in a variety of different ways. The table below summarises some of these.






Impact	Description	Possible Impacts for the Council
Flood Risk	Projected increases in extreme rainfall will bring increased risk of flooding. The nature of surface water rainfall means that many areas will be affected by increased flooding. Runoff from compacted or impermeable areas will increase and water will accumulate in low spots. As temperatures increase and sea levels rise areas like the Fens will become under greater threat.	<b>Infrastructure:</b> Disruption to transport links could affect staff travel to work and access to parts of the district and wider county for meetings. Disruption to travel could disrupt Council response processes by restricting access to some parts of the district. There may be increased risk of power outages associated with flooding and thunderstorms, which could cause disruptions to transport, logistics and processes.
		<b>Finance:</b> Increased costs of flood related damage and flood investigations. Increased costs for providing flood resilient infrastructure to existing buildings. Increased social costs associated with providing support for people suffering from emotional issues associated with flooding and uncertainty.
		<b>People and health:</b> Council employees may suffer from increased stress or mental health problems associated with flooding of their homes or the uncertainty associated with increased flood risk.
		<b>Property:</b> Council buildings and property may be damaged by flooding if located within flood risk areas.
Heat Waves	Climate change is projected to bring an increase in warm temperature extremes and it is very likely that heat waves will occur more frequently and last longer. Cambridgeshire is one of the warmer parts of the country, so could be significantly impacted by these changes. Cities will be impacted more than rural areas	<b>Infrastructure:</b> Disruption to transport links could affect staff travel to work and meetings. Disruption to travel could also disrupt Council response processes by restricting access to some parts of the district.
		<b>Finance:</b> Increased costs associated with summer cooling in Council buildings. Increased costs associated with installation of air conditioning and heat resilient infrastructure.
		<b>People and health:</b> Working conditions may become unsuitable for staff which could impact employee concentration and performance.
		<b>Property:</b> Office spaces may become unsuitable to work in during heat wave conditions. This will have implications on the design, construction and maintenance of existing and new office space.
Drought	With increased temperatures extremes and more frequent and longer lasting heat waves will mean increased water restrictions in Europe. Cambridgeshire is already one of the driest counties in	<b>Infrastructure:</b> Roads can be affected under drought conditions and subject to cracking (a matter of concern for Cambridgeshire County Council with knock effects for East Cambridgeshire District Council residents).
		<b>Finance:</b> Increased water costs for office buildings. Increased social costs as more people fall below the poverty line as a result of increased food and water costs.





Impact	Description	Possible Impacts for the Council
	<p>England so could be significantly impacted by this. The frequency of drought is likely to increase in presently dry regions by the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century</p>	<p><b>People and health:</b> Employees may be emotionally or physically impacted by reduced food and water availability and increased costs associated with this.</p>
<p>Sea Level Rise (SLR)</p>	<p>Rising global temperatures are causing polar ice to melt and oceans to expand, resulting in global sea level rise. Global sea levels rose by circa 0.19 metres between 1901 and 2010. Cambridgeshire is one of the most low-lying counties in England so could be significantly impacted by sea level rise in tidal and fen areas.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the East of England could experience a dramatic sea level rise of up to 0.54 metres by 2100 under a high greenhouse gas emission scenario.</p>	<p><b>Infrastructure:</b> Transport links may be impacted by SLR in low-lying parts of the district. SLR could restrict or prevent access to low-lying parts of the district, disrupting access for social needs, emergency planning and other service provision.</p> <p><b>Finance:</b> Costs of re-locating Council buildings, infrastructure and Council operated housing away from high risk areas and provision of SLR resilient infrastructure.</p> <p><b>People and health:</b> Council staff and communities in low- lying regions may be emotionally affected by the uncertainty surrounding sea level rise and re-location. Increased pressure on social needs to provide increased support.</p>
<p>Air pollution</p>	<p>Transport is a major source of short-lived greenhouse gas pollutants, which can result in direct damage to human health. Road transport (particularly diesel traffic) is a significant contributor to air pollution such as particulate matter (PM) and ground-level ozone (O<sub>3</sub>). Rising temperatures are also projected to increase levels of ozone, as are other greenhouse gases such as carbon monoxide, methane and nitrogen oxides. Short-lived greenhouse pollution can also cause acid rain. Air pollutants have been linked to health conditions such as asthma and eczema.</p>	<p><b>Infrastructure:</b> Ground level ozone could create a risk of damage to infrastructure, ecosystem services and functions. This could in turn influence agricultural productivity and water supply.</p> <p><b>Finance:</b> Increased social costs associated with providing support to people impacted by pollution related health impacts. Increased costs associated with repair of Council buildings impacted by acid rain.</p> <p><b>People and health:</b> Poor air quality can pose a risk to employee health which could lead to more sick days. Air pollution has been associated with the development and worsening of asthma and can also make people who already have asthma more sensitive to asthma triggers. Air pollutants have also been associated with health implications such as eczema. Urban air pollution can increase risk of cardiovascular, respiratory diseases and cancer. Council staff travelling for or to work may be particularly impacted by air pollution from vehicles.</p> <p><b>Property:</b> Ozone pollution can cause acid rain which could cause damage to Council buildings. Indoor air pollution could increase mould and damp in office space.</p>


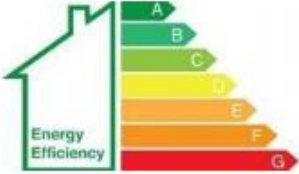




## Appendix 2: Climate Change Mitigation Measures




Climate change mitigation measures can be incorporated into both existing and new infrastructure to reduce carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency. There are a number of ways to do this, and the following table describes some of these measures.

Table: Methods to mitigate carbon emissions

	Mitigation measure	How does this mitigate carbon emissions?	Description
Renewable Energy and Storage	<p>Solar Panels</p>  <p>Photo</p>	Reduces fossil fuel usage for electricity and heating (if electric).	Sunlight is absorbed by the photovoltaic panels and is used to generate electricity.
	<p>Solar Thermal</p>  <p>Photo ©Greentech</p>	Reduces fossil fuel usage for water heating.	Heat from the sun is used to warm water running in pipes through the panel. Depending on the temperature the water reaches, the temperature can be “topped up” using conventional methods.
	<p>Battery Energy Storage</p>  <p>Photo ©Greentech Media</p>	Enables intermittent renewable energy sources to become viable alternatives to fossil fuels.	Stores electricity for use at times when generation is low.
	<p>Air Source Heat Pump</p>  <p>Photo ©burtonwright</p>	Reduces or removes fossil fuel usage for heating.	Air is used to heat liquid refrigerant. The pump uses electricity to compress the refrigerant to increase its temperature then condenses it back to release stored heat. This heat is sent to radiators and stored as hot water.
	<p>Ground Source Heat Pump</p>  <p>Photo ©Homebuilding &amp; Renovation</p>	Reduces or removes fossil fuel usage for heating.	Coils or pipes containing refrigerant are buried in the ground. Heat from the ground is used to warm the refrigerant and an electric heat pump is used to raise this temperature further. This heat is transferred from the refrigerant via a heat exchanger in the building to providing hot water and heating.

	Mitigation measure	How does this mitigate carbon emissions?	Description
	<p>Hydrogen</p>  <p>Photo ©National Planning</p>	<p>Reduces or removes fossil fuel usage for heating.</p>	<p>Hydrogen, produced through electrolysis of water using solar or renewable energy, or, produced using natural gas but using carbon capture and storage, is being considered heating homes.</p>
	 <p><b>National Planning Policy Framework</b></p> <p>Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government by Command of Her Majesty February 2019</p>	<p>Enables standard requirements for mitigation actions within developments.</p>	<p>The Planning System in England is 'plan-led.' The Local Plan contains policies that set out what development is needed where – either by identifying specific sites or general types of site. When a planning application is submitted, it is tested against those policies to see whether or not it should be approved.</p>
	<p>Building Regulations</p> 	<p>Can be set to reduce energy demand of homes (e.g. through energy efficiency measures).</p>	<p>These are statutory minimum standards for design, construction and alterations to virtually every building.</p>
Energy Efficiency	<p>Passive House</p>  <p>Photo ©Magnetite</p>	<p>Little to no domestic heating requirements.</p>	<p>Homes designed to combine ultra-low energy consumption with consistently good air quality. They are built with superinsulation, low-volume heat recovery ventilation systems and tightly controlled rates of air infiltration, which combine to make sure the building's carbon footprint is as small as possible. These types of buildings do not require conventional heating systems.</p>





	Mitigation measure	How does this mitigate carbon emissions?	Description
	Fabric First/Insulation  Photo ©MyBuilder.com	Reduces heat loss from buildings, reducing heating requirements.	Materials used to reduce heat loss from buildings – these can be built into new builds or retrofitted. It can come in many forms specific to the area being insulated including: Pipe insulation Roof insulation Wall insulation
	Other energy efficiency measures  Image ©Base Energy	Reduce energy consumption, thereby reducing emissions from generation.	Various methods to reduce energy consumption. e.g. LED Lighting and double glazing.
	District Heating/Heat Networks  Image ©Energy Saving Trust	Facilitates low carbon heating.	Groups of co-located (e.g. a village or town) buildings sharing the same heating source. They are directly connected via insulated pipes to a local renewable heating source, such as a ground source heat pump. This enables faster transition to renewables.
Transportation	Active transport eg. Cycling, walking  Photo ©The Independent	Zero carbon.	Avoids travel by vehicles.
	Car Sharing/Car Clubs  Photo ©Pacific Rent-A-Car	Reduces the number of vehicles on the road.	Car sharing is the sharing of car journeys so that more than one person travels in a car, and prevents the need for others to have to drive to a location themselves. Car clubs are a model of car rental where people rent cars for short periods of time, often by the hour.
	Public Transport  Photo ©intelligenttransport.com	Reduces the number of vehicles on the road.	Public Transport reduces the number of vehicles on the road, but provides far greater benefits than car sharing as more people can use the same vehicle.

	<b>Mitigation measure</b>	<b>How does this mitigate carbon emissions?</b>	<b>Description</b>
	<p>Electric Vehicles (private and public) and charge points</p>  <p>Photo ©Rolec</p>  <p>Photo ©Electrek</p>	<p>Removes combustion of fossil fuels as the direct source of energy.</p>	<p>Electric vehicles (EVs) do not rely on the internal combustion engine (ICE) burning petrol or diesel to function. Instead they contain batteries which charge on electricity, removing their carbon emissions as well as reducing air quality impacts. If the electricity comes from renewable sources, use of these vehicles is carbon free.</p>
	<p>Hydrogen Vehicles</p>  <p>Photo ©intelligenttransport.com</p>	<p>Removes combustion of fossil fuels as the direct source of energy.</p>	<p>For larger vehicles, Hydrogen could be used as a fuel source. This is where Hydrogen is electrolysed to produce electricity. Water vapour is the only by-product emitted from the exhaust.</p>

## Appendix 3: Adaptation measures

Climate change adaptation measures can be incorporated into both existing and new infrastructure to reduce the effects of climate change. This is done by improving our resilience to the changes that are anticipated to come forward over the coming years. There are a number of ways to do this, and the following table describes some of these measures.

*Table Methods to adapt to climate change impacts*

Adaptive measure	What change does this adapt to?	Description
<p>Rainwater harvesting/ water butts</p>  <p>©SusDrain 2019</p>	<p>Flood and drought.</p>	<p>Rainwater is collected in water butts and used as a non-portable water resource such as toilet flushing. Harvested water can also be used for gardening and small-scale infrastructure.</p>
<p>Grey water harvesting</p>  <p>© The Green Age</p>	<p>Flood and drought.</p>	<p>Wastewater from baths, showers, washing machines, dishwashers and sinks can be re-used for portable water sources.</p>
<p>Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)</p>  <p>©SusDrain 2012</p>	<p>Flood, heat waves and drought.</p>	<p>SuDS mimic nature and manage rainfall at the source. They slow the flow of surface water and treat it before it enters watercourses. They provide areas to store water at the surface and allow green and blue infrastructure to be incorporated into urban spaces.</p>
<p>Property Level Resilience (PLR)</p>  <p>©Flood Protection Solutions</p>	<p>Flood, SLR.</p>	<p>Protective measures installed in existing homes and buildings to offer protection from flooding. This is best suited for existing buildings located in high flood risk areas which are expected to be impacted most by high intensity flooding and sea level rise associated with climate change.</p>

Adaptive measure	What change does this adapt to?	Description
<p>Green space and low level vegetation</p>  <p>©Cambridge Independent</p>	<p>Flood, drought, heat waves.</p>	<p>Can be incorporated into both new and existing developments. Areas of green space can be used as flood storage providing adaptation to flooding. They also allow water to be absorbed into the ground, recharging drinking water supplies to provide adaptation to drought.</p>
<p>Tree planting</p>  <p>©Cambridge City Council</p>	<p>Air pollution, flood, heat waves and drought.</p>	<p>Trees provide shading and urban cooling to allow adaptation to increased temperatures and heat waves. They provide adaptation to increased rainfall and flooding by intercepting rainfall. The interception of rainfall allows more water to be absorbed into the ground providing groundwater recharge and thus adaptation to drought. Trees can improve air quality by removing particles and gases from the air (14).</p>
<p>Resilient building design</p>  <p>©Building Green</p>	<p>Heat waves, flooding, sea level rise, air pollution, drought.</p>	<p>Buildings designed better to adapt to changing temperatures through installation of energy efficient air conditioning, window shading and tinting. Buildings can also be designed with air pollution filters, and ventilation to reduce indoor air pollution. Green walls can be a successful air pollution adaptation measure in city areas, as planting of large trees along narrow streets can obstruct wind flow, limiting their ability to absorb pollutants. Buildings can be designed with floor levels above the projected flood or sea level to adapt to flooding and sea level rise. Buildings can also be adapted to include water re-use/ recycle measures and water saving features such as automatic taps to adapt to drought.</p>
<p>Locating services</p>  <p>©The Independent</p>	<p>Flooding, sea level rise.</p>	<p>Infrastructure services such as power supplies, property and transport links should be located in areas at less risk of flooding and sea level rise.</p>



## Climate Change and Natural Environment – Ideas Forum

Summary of Ideas Received March 2020 - March 2021



June 2021

East Cambridgeshire District Council

## Introduction

East Cambridgeshire District Council acknowledges that it has a significant role to play in protecting and improving the environment for future generations and wants to encourage residents to be part of its progress to achieving net zero carbon emissions and boosting the local natural environment.

As part of this, a Climate Change Ideas Forum was launched on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2019 for residents to submit their ideas for consideration on how the Council can tackle climate change and boost the natural environment. This enabled the Council to engage with residents and hear their thoughts on what we can do as their local Council. Ideas submitted up to Feb 2020 were considered for the new Environment Plan adopted in June 2020. Further ideas submitted since Feb 2020 and up to March 2021 are summarised in this report, and have contributed to the updated Environment Plan of June 2021. The summary of the ideas received have been grouped into common themes, where possible.

The Council is extremely grateful for all your contributions. If your ideas are outside of the Council's remit (e.g other external agencies including, the County Council) we will work closely with them to further explore your ideas.



## Education / Communication

### Summary of Comments / Issues

- Invite guest speakers, such as Professor Michael Kelly, based at University of Cambridge, to give a lecture to the Council on the logic and nuts and bolts of carbon reduction.
- Replace 10% of the school curriculum with environment protection studies.
- Establish and run public consultations, citizens assemblies.

### ECDC Response

- We agree that ECDC can do more to help educate on the issues relating to the environment and climate change, and have included new actions for 2021/22 to do this, including working with schools.
- We are considering the setting up of a new website, to help disseminate information, ideas, consultations and actions
- Guest speakers could be one option for us to explore, as part of the package of measures.

## Trees

### Summary of Comments / Issues

- Prohibit the removal of trees.
- Plant more trees.
- Encourage farmers to introduce hedgerows back into their fields to maintain wildlife and stop the constant cutting down of trees which reduce carbon in the atmosphere.
- Cutting down trees thoughtlessly has largely contributed to where Mankind finds itself now and this must change.

### ECDC Response

- The Council agrees that trees play a hugely important role, for a large number of reasons such as: biodiversity; carbon capture; flood prevention. Our new actions for 2021/22 include a number of tree related initiatives; a tree maze, orchard planting and supporting the Queen's Green Canopy.
- In 2020, we adopted new planning policies on the natural environment, including tree protection / planting requirements.
- What is crucial is not just planting trees, but the right trees in the right place. Some environment-rich land can be harmed by tree planting.

## Pollution / emissions

### Summary of Comments / Issues

- Require that each local business > 100 employees participates in a local scheme to reduce emissions either by working directly on a collaborative project or by donating technology (or technology rights).
- Establish a levy on business >100 employees which is paid into a trust to be used to pay for reduction in emissions. You can use the local % of global employees to determine what % of their international profit should be contributed to the fund.

### ECDC Response

- This idea has merit, but the council does not have the powers or resources to introduce such a scheme. If set up, participation could only be voluntary. Without legislation change, we can't compel businesses to take part.
- Although schemes like this could operate locally, the organisation and funding required to provide the framework and set them would likely need central government funding.

## Transport – Public Transport

### Summary of Comments / Issues

- Replace licences for private “public” transport with public transport, in order to manage emissions directly.
- Provide vouchers for travel by train/bus to anyone who can show they have not flown in the last 12 months.
- If we are serious about reducing emissions we need to make public transport a better option than private motorised transport. This cannot happen until we have an affordable, reliable and comprehensive public transport system. This cannot happen under the privatised model as it is profit-driven, which means high fares and no incentive to promote little-used routes until e.g. taking the bus becomes habit-forming (currently, in practice the opposite happens: services used infrequently are reduced until no one can rely on them, then ditched). Trains, buses, trams all need to come under public ownership. At the same time we need good, safe, segregated cycling infrastructure and similar safeguards for pedestrians.
- Improve bus travel introducing smaller vehicles if necessary (double decker buses seem to be under used).

### ECDC Response

- The Council agrees with the principle of high quality public transport. The Council undertook comprehensive public consultation in Spring 2020 on buses, walking and cycling. A Member Working Party was established, resulting in a New Bus Proposals for East Cambridgeshire prospectus. This was submitted to the Combined Authority (Dec 2020), and will provide useful evidence for bidding against any other funding streams
- Public transport related suggestions will be forwarded to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority who are the local transport authority for the area. As part of the Combined Authority's delivery of bus reform, they have commissioned a Bus Reform Task Force whose role is to consider and recommend appropriate reforms to bus services, strategies and public information.

## Cycling / Walking / Cycle Ways / Paths

### Summary of Comments / Issues

- Improve and create new cycling and walking routes to reduce car travel.
- All new housing to be built with safe, secure, covered cycle storage. One cycle space to be provided for each bedroom. Storage space to have charging point for eBike or mobility scooter.
- Create a cycle path between Littleport and Ely. It is only a few miles but the only safe way to travel between the two at present is by car.
- Allow less cars in Ely town centre, provide more zebra crossings giving pedestrians priority in key walking/cycling routes.
- Ensure the cycle routes don't stop/start constantly.
- Put in drop kerbs in obvious places e.g. the end of Ely Market Street.
- Widen Market Street pavements, especially by the bus shelters, by removing some parking bays (e.g. outside the CAB and the Mayor's office) and reducing the driving to one lane (no bypassing buses).
- Ensure good infrastructure for cycle parking as well as good cycle paths. Fewer broken pavements and roads, start policing double yellow parking. Less experienced people will not leave their car when its painful and dangerous.
- Some 15 years after the Cathedral View estate was built it is still not linked to Henley Way – a really easy job that would improve connectivity.
- Over a year since new residents moved in, the only way out of Monarch Way estate is via the Prickwillow Road roundabout – the foot/cycle links south to Longchamp Drive are nowhere near opening.
- The new cycle path built under the A10 bypass fails to link up with the Hive. With cafes promised on the west side and on the east side its not clear how you're supposed to get across Downham Road and the roundabout safely.
- Changes at the A10/A142 "BP" roundabout have severed the Ely-Sutton cycle route which the council has slowly been improving.

- Provide a safe crossing of the A10 at Witchford Road to make the cycle/pedestrian route to Witchford possible.
- Getting councillors and officers to walk/cycle to and from/across the schemes that they are approving may be a bit gimmicky but might help the issues become more prominent.
- Narrow the Snippets junction to two lanes (not four) and slow car movements by making tighter turning radii to make it safe for people crossing, put in bollards to prevent parking on the pavement and blocking the crossing there. Improve the cycle lane on Snippets junction.
- Make the Lamb Hotel junction a single lane pinch point signalled junction for cars to allow for wider pavements.
- Install segregated cycle lanes on Lynn Road, Ely by removing the parking lanes.
- Provide safe segregated walking/cycle routes to/from Littleport, Chettisham, Stuntney, Soham, Stretham, Little Thetford etc.
- Enable safe crossings (by bike and by foot) on the fast roundabouts on Cam Drive/Downham Road.
- Install segregated cycle lanes and more crossings on Downham Road to allow safe independent access to school for local students.
- Install the promised cycle lanes in the Leisure Village and the Hive.
- Allow cycling “the wrong way” on the Gallery (ideally with a segregated lane).
- Resurface Springhead Lane for use as a footpath/cycle lane between Lisle Lane and Prickwillow Road.
- Make Fore Hill and Back Hill one way apart from cycles, to allow for wider pavements/cycle lanes.
- Install a safe crossing on the A142 to access A10.
- The Lamb junction, Chapel Street and Egremont Street should be access only to provide a quieter route into town on foot or bike.
- Install a bridge over the A10 between Witchford and Ely to facilitate safe walking or cycling to Lancaster Way – failing this a regular bus service to Lancaster Way.
- The findings from last year’s Bus, Cycle, Walk consultations must include useful material. ECDC ought to include findings in the environmental strategy and action plan.
- The Department of Transport (DfT) recently announced a target of half of all journeys into towns and cities be walked or cycled by 2030. The climate change strategy must align with this and other central government environmental targets. The ECDC plan needs to describe how the targets can be achieved.
- One actions must be a review of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). Developments must address access to all key services, taking into account the increased range (>5km) of modern mobility aids for the disabled, electronically power assisted cycles and micromobility devices.
- The Cambridgeshire County Council is about to put out its Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for consultation. When ECDC reviews this plan, please take into account the Widen my Path and the off road suggestions in your response.

- Representations from the Ely Cycling Campaign:

1. Last year's Bus, Cycle, Walk consultation findings must include useful material. East Cambridgeshire District Council ought to include findings in the environmental strategy and action plan.
2. The Department for Transport (DfT) recently announced a target of half of all journeys in towns and cities be walked or cycled by 2030. The climate change strategy must align with this and other (eg COP 21 Paris Accord) central government environmental targets. The East Cambridgeshire Environment Plan needs to describe how the target can be achieved. One action must be a review of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). For instance, developments must address access to all key services, taking into account the increased range (>5 km) of modern mobility aids for the disabled, Electronically Power Assisted Cycles and micromobility devices.

The Cambridgeshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan Update April 2016 states that the County Council will work with planning authorities to secure improvements to the Rights of Way network. We note that between 2010 and 2020 in Cambridgeshire 2010-20, no bridleway and no byway was improved never mind created. East Cambridgeshire District Council needs to elaborate its active travel needs and represent these needs strongly to the Local Authority.

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan seeks financial support from East Cambridgeshire District and parish councils to maintain and extend the Rights of Way network. Payments for access to and engagement with the countryside is included as a funding item in the Agriculture Act. East Cambridgeshire District Council must access this all sources of funding and this may require priming by East Cambridgeshire District Council. The Environment Plan needs to identify sources of funding available for projects that are needed.

3. Improvement to and creation of Rights of Way provide public access not just for leisure but also for utility. For example, there is no suitable route to cycle between Stretham and Ely; a 'simple' upgrade of the Burying Way footpath (PRoW 220/2) would allow better access for villagers to Ely resources. The Widen my Path website logs the public's suggestions for improvements. See <https://www.widenmypath.com/suggest/#14/52.3998/0.2631>. In addition, there are options for cycling and walking on routes that are Off Road. We recommend that East Cambridgeshire District Council evaluate the Off Road proposals in the District. See <https://action.cyclinguk.org/page/68755/action/1?ea.tracking.id=LP>. The paperwork for upgrading is currently considerable but the Environment Bill should make the process less cumbersome. The Cambridgeshire County Council is about to put out its Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for consultation. When East Cambridgeshire District Council reviews this Plan, please take into account the Widen my Path and the Off Road suggestions in your response.

4. Planning needs to prioritise existing planning regulations that protect environmental issues over other issues. The Paradise Pool redevelopment was approved by East Cambridgeshire District Council despite it including motor vehicle access across a footpath to Paradise Playground that is clearly hazardous. This approved application conflicts with planning policy ELY3 of the 2015 Local Plan. We recommend an empowered officer be appointed to review planning applications for environmental considerations.

5. The Environment Plan must consider other means to achieve the DfT-orientated target of half of all journeys in towns and cities be walked or cycled by 2030. The council must charge for all car parking in town centres and must act on roadside and particularly pavement car parking.

6. East Cambridgeshire District Council needs to make representations to the County Council on environmental issues caused by highways developments. For instance, the so-called improvements associated with the BP Garage and the Lancaster Way roundabouts have sacrificed active travel to work at Lancaster Way to increased use of motor vehicle commuting, consequently causing more rather than less pollution and congestion

### ECDC Response

- Thank you for the large volume of suggestions under this theme of cycling and walking. Alongside responses to other consultations on this theme, the ideas submitted will be considered by the Council's Bus, Cycle, Walk Working Party as part of their work developing an East Cambridgeshire Cycling and Walking Routes Strategy.
- Footpath, road and highway related suggestions will be forwarded to Cambridgeshire County Council, the local highways authority and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority who are the local transport authority for the area.
- Policy COM8 of Local Plan sets out minimum cycle parking provision for planning proposals. It does not specify that a charging point has to be provided, but we do encourage developers to consider charging points as set out in the Climate Change SPD.
- Planning can't control the number of cars in Ely town centre. Zebra crossings fall within the remit of the Highways Authority and can be secured as part of planning applications if required to make the proposal acceptable from a highway safety/connectivity perspective.

### Parks and Open Spaces

#### Summary of Comments / Issues

- It would be great if land around Cambridge could be bought up to rewild. This could create pockets of woodland and other spaces for animals around the city. This would also improve air quality and biodiversity.
- Keep our open areas green instead of constantly building on them.

### ECDC Response

- The Council is fully in support of the Local Nature Partnership ambition to 'double land for nature'. This means creating double the amount of nature rich land we now have, across Cambridgeshire, from around 8.5% of all land to around 17%. To achieve this will require land to be secured, as well as landowners encouraged or incentivised to create nature rich land.
- All planning applications received are consulted on with consultees and the public, and assessed in accordance with both local and national policies, contained within the National Planning Policy Framework, East Cambs Local Plan, East Cambs Supplementary Planning Documents and any relevant Neighbourhood Plans. The Council has to assess all applications received and determine in accordance with policies.



## Planning and Development

### Summary of Comments / Issues

- Release only brownfield land to developers.
- Provide local community residences for essential workers so that they can live within 10km of their place of work within the means of their minimal wage.
- All new homes and workplaces in Cambridgeshire to be built with solar panels as standard.
- All new homes in Cambridgeshire to be built with safe, secure space for winter clothing and boots, pram, cycle or wheelchair with electricity for charging ebike or electric wheelchair.
- All new residential roads in Cambridgeshire to be designed for a 20mph self-enforcing layout.
- All new residential roads in Cambridgeshire to have a Residents Parking Permit Scheme.
- Planning needs to prioritise existing planning regulations that protect environmental issues over other issues.
- An empowered officer be appointed to review planning applications for environmental considerations.

### ECDC Response

- The Council does not release land. Any application submitted has to be assessed in accordance with both national and local policy and the Council cannot refuse something just because it is not built on brownfield land. In ECDC we have limited amounts of brownfield land and not enough to sustain the number of new homes we are required to deliver, therefore greenfield sites need to be developed as well as brownfield. The Council does have a brownfield register for public access.
- The Council's planning department receives planning applications from applicants, which are then assessed in accordance with policy. The Council has a policy on affordable housing exception sites which allows small affordable housing schemes to be developed as exception sites where open market housing would not normally be permitted, this is typically on small sites on the edge of villages and towns. The needs of the local community are carefully considered when such applications are received and priority is given to those people in local housing need.
- Applications need to consider their energy and sustainability in accordance with policy ENV4 of the Local Plan and the Climate Change SPD and are assessed on this basis, which can include the provision of solar panels. However, we cannot insist on this as there is no policy that specifies all new homes have to be built with solar panels.
- Policy COM8 of the Local Plan sets out the cycle parking provision required for new developments. Whilst applicants can be encouraged to provide safe and secure space as part of a proposal for the items listed above, the Council cannot insist that this is provided, as there are no planning policies which insist on such provision. All applications have to be assessed and determined in accordance with policy.
- Cambridgeshire County Council highways are consulted on applications for new residential development and provide comments and the proposals are assessed in accordance with policy COM7 of the Local Plan to ensure they are built to acceptable standards in relation to highway safety. Cambridgeshire County Council is also responsible for setting the speed limits on non trunk roads, so while a road may be designed to a lower speed limit, it may not be designated as such.
- This falls outside of the remit of ECDC and falls to Cambridgeshire County Council. From a planning perspective we cannot insist on this or are responsible for this.
- Planning has to consider and assess proposals in accordance with both national and local policies, environmental issues is one of the material considerations when assessing applications and the Council has recently adopted a Climate Change and Natural Environment SPD, which applications are assessed against.

- All officers assess proposals in accordance with both national and local policies, including our recently adopted SPD's on the Natural Environment and Climate Change. Officers assesses proposals and then their Team Leaders or the Planning Manager reviews to ensure they have met the requirements of policy

## Renewable Energy

### Summary of Comments / Issues

- Solar panels/photovoltaic roof files and turbines on every new build house.
- Renewable energy suppliers in place at all buildings leased out to retailers and other companies by the council.
- Say no to massive solar farms, small solar farms are fine and not damaging to the landscape.
- Prevent companies building solar farms who then sell abroad or to the highest bidder rather than it benefit the local community who have to live with it.
- Place solar panels on all new housing and on the roof of all industrial buildings that are south facing to prevent the loss of farm land.
- Encourage whole communities to install solar panels so that they are more attractive to the national grid rather than small pockets they can ignore over solar farms.
- Move away from solar to wind and sea power.
- Introduce a minimum safe distance away from housing for solar panels and their storage batteries. Not allow large solar storage batteries within a mile of homes and roads due to their volatile nature.
- Put solar panels on the roof of Ely Cathedral.
- LED auto lights installed at council and council-owned premises, driving down the waste of energy and precious resources.

### ECDC Response

- The Council believes that solar power has a very important role to play as we try to decarbonise the national grid (i.e. move the grid away from gas and coal based, to renewable sources such as solar and wind). However, we agree it has to be located in the right locations, and needs to respect issues such as the landscape, the historic environment and, of course, community views.
- The Council is considering installing its own renewable energy infrastructure, most likely solar. We will of course seek to minimise any harm in doing so, and choose land which is not productive for other reasons.
- We agree we need to minimise our own energy use, and one Action for this year coming is to replace all our remaining office lights to LED. Most are already auto-lights, which go off when not in use. We also recently moved to a 100% renewable energy tariff across our estate, including our main head office, The Grange.
- Applications need to consider their energy and sustainability in accordance with policy ENV4 of the Local Plan and the Climate Change SPD and are assessed on this basis, which can include the provision of solar panels. However, we cannot insist on this as there is no policy that specifies all new homes have to be built with solar panels.

## Waste & Recycling

### Summary of Comments / Issues

- Consider upgrading all public street waste bins in line with its many other authorities provision, modern installs allow users to segregate waste at the point of disposal ready for recycling.
- Install integral ashtrays into the tops of the bins so that smokers can safely dispose of cigarette ends without a fire risk.
- If councils are to continue supplying black bin bags each year then these should be biodegradable.
- More recycling bins, or just more bins as they tend to be overflowing at the weekends (whether in Ely itself or around the cinema)
- Set up a refurb station – not everyone needs a brand new washing machine and it's not always possible to trust people selling second hand goods online.
- Reducing electrical waste by providing tools and advice for people to repair their devices or white goods.
- Liaising with businesses to cut down on single use or frivolous plastic when shipping goods.
- Use of recyclable and recycled paper on all physical correspondence sent out by the council, making this paperless as much as feasibly possible.

### ECDC Response

- The implementation of segregated recycling litter bins has been looked into previously with information received from many other authorities that more frequent than not, the waste disposed of in dedicated recycling bins is contaminated with household waste and therefore has to be disposed of in the same manner as waste collected within standard litter bins. Due to this fact, it would be uneconomical for the Authority to invest in separate recycling litter bins.
- When existing litter bins come to the end of their life, they are replaced with newer more robust bins with added extras such as stubber plates for cigarette ends.
- Due to the substantial capital investment required (£Ms) to implement wheeled bins, the Council will continue to use plastic sacks for the collection of household waste at the present time. The use of biodegradable sacks has been investigated in previous years. However, evidence shows that the material does not fully breakdown through the treatment and disposal process and particles of the bags still remain in landfill.
- The Council is dedicated to ensuring there is sufficient waste disposal options across the district. The provision of additional litter bins and their location is reviewed frequently and action taken where necessary. The Council is also committed to working with private land owners and management firms, like those present at Ely Leisure Village, to ensure areas are clean, presentable and well maintained.
- Thankfully, East Cambs has a number of local charity and second-hand shops where residents are able to responsibly dispose of unwanted items and buy second-hand items. Additionally, residents are able to donate items to many reuse and upcycling groups across the district, where items will be refurbished or repaired and sold on again. If items are still in good working order, residents can also sell or give them away through the use of national second-hand sites on the internet. The household recycling centre in Witchford will also accept bulky unwanted items.
- Advice provided to residents covering repairs of electrical equipment would have to come from a trained and profession source. Unfortunately, the Council does not have access to this. There are many online groups and videos where residents are able to access this information and make repairs themselves if they wish. Additionally, there are many local traders that offer reliable, cost effective solutions.

- The Council is keen to reduce the use of single use plastic wherever it can and has already committed to doing this throughout its own operations and services, including working with the market team and its traders.
- We are currently investigating options for securing recycled paper for all our correspondence and printing.

## Transport

### Summary of Comments / Issues

- Exclude private vehicles from areas with moderate to high population densities.
- Empower local (parish) councils to tax vehicles access according to their wishes and needs.
- Ban on pavement parking.
- Pedestrianise the High Street, Ely.
- Roads to be made safer by enforced speed restrictions, to encourage safe travel.
- 20mph zones by default to make roads safer for people to walk, pram, wheelchair or cycle.
- Ely is clogged up with motor traffic, a major contributor to the climate emergency. This is encouraged by the council's stance with signs positively encouraging motorists to drive into the centre of Ely and park in the car parks for free. This policy needs a major rethink. You need to make more effort to remove through cars from the city centre – for example, block off Brays Lane at the Market Square, close the High Street during the day. Survey people shopping/working in the city centre to find out where they have come from. Improve walking/cycling/bus links with the outskirts of the city and surrounding villages. Introduce car parking charges. Improve conditions for walking which are currently hostile – lots of side roads, with large corner radii and poor and inconvenient crossing points, damaged pavements, pavement parking with no enforcement.
- End free parking on all sites, except for electric cars.
- Introduce charging for car parking, introducing residents parking schemes, enforcing double yellows. Use any revenue from this to subsidise local shuttle bus services, install electric charging in some bays in some car parks.
- Residents parking scheme to discourage multiple car ownership.
- Close the railway bridge to cars. Could combine with a few drop off bays on the Stuntney side for railway users.
- Set up school streets.
- Make Silver Street a single lane exit so there is room for people to queue on the pavements, and put in a bollard on Cromwell Road to make it access only for cars to make the pavement route safer on Cambridge Road.
- Ban left turns into Waitrose car park to reduce High Street/Fore Hill rat running.
- I would like to suggest that hybrid or electric vehicles be used for business journeys made by ECDC employees, we had these as a pool car arrangement at a previous employer. The scheme was run by an enterprise who serviced and maintained the vehicles at the client's premises.
- Increase the number of electric car charging facilities in the villages via the use of roadside charge points/ lamp posts etc. I would love to replace my fossil fuel burner with an electric vehicle but I do not have off road parking available to me. Commuters travelling from villages without public transport and without off road parking are stuck with petrol engines.

### ECDC Response

- Thank you for the large volume of suggestions under this theme of transport. Where relevant, and alongside responses to other consultations on this theme, the ideas submitted will be considered by the Council's Bus, Cycle, Walk Working Party.
- Footpath, road and highway related suggestions will be forwarded to Cambridgeshire County Council, the local highways authority and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority who are the local transport authority for the area.
- More generally, the ideas submitted will be considered on an ongoing basis, as and when relevant projects and funding is available.

## Transport

### Summary of Comments / Issues

- Cancel/refuse to pay back any local authority debt that is dependent on the subsidies that come from new build, and reset council budgets so that the new build payments are no longer necessary in the equation.
- Introduce a cap on the amount of food that can be imported from more than 100km.
- Join other groups campaigning for international laws on ecocide and make civil ecocide a local law.
- For every change in policy to prioritise environmental merit over any alternative consideration. I hear you say, crazy, ridiculous, completely affordable, beyond what is permitted legally, but it is a step in the right direction towards a very modest 2050 goal (which I'd call out as stupid ridiculous and so meaningless it will result in complete disaster for 9 billion people).
- To consider establishing a Carbon Offset fund similar to that put in place by Milton Keynes Council. The Milton Keynes Carbon Offset Fund is a fund of money resulting from taxes imposed by Milton Keynes Council on developers who construct new buildings in the borough that aren't carbon neutral.
- It would be really good to approach the need to make changes to our behaviour as well as policy changes etc from that point – get people talking and understanding themselves and realising that they have power, starting from themselves, their values in life, their purpose, their emotions, their own power of choice, their influences on family and friends and community – just by doing #babysteps #towardszerowaste #towardsustainablelife – and finding and growing their tribe as people find support from friends and community. Seeing their own choices making a difference to their own lives, which in turn, will make a difference to the community, to the people and our world and to the climate.
- An area of the country where agriculture is of such high quality and is prevalent should mean that land used for food production is reserved exclusively for this. All applications for meat farms should be rejected, reducing carbon emissions as well as methane which is destroying the climate.
- Sustainable materials used at all sites occupied by the council and their contractors (for example FSC certified/Mango/Bamboo wood in place of Oak or Pine etc)
- Banning fur in Ely, making it the first ~British city to explicitly do so, following in the path of San Francisco in the US.
- Removing or at least reducing all products containing unsustainable palm oil on council premises.
- Increase food farming in the area to help reduce carbon footprint of food rather than the continuous building on rich farmland.
- Carbon dioxide emissions from drained peat in East Anglia is the largest land use related source in the UK. This peat area also the most productive of food produce in the UK, and arable at that. The Agriculture Act establishes the principle of public money for public good and there is no greater good to be had than protecting the environment. Whilst the Environmental Land Management schemes and other Act activities are not administered at the District level, your Environment Plan can include strategies and plans that support Central Government's intentions and encourage use of its powers.

## ECDC Response

- Thank you for these wide ranging other ideas and suggestions.
- A number of suggestions relate to the purchasing of more sustainable / ethical goods, the principle of which is agreed. We are in the process of widescale training for all staff, and, in time, we aim to ensure our procurement and purchasing policies are fully compatible with our ambition to mitigate climate change and boost the natural environment.
- A number of suggestions are beyond the control of the Council, though we note and broadly support the intent of them, in principle. We are working with the combined authority, with potentially an option to seek greater regulatory powers being passed from Central to Local Government. In doing so, some of these sorts of ideas could be progressed.
- The Council has a 'Carbon Impact Assessment' procedure for all its decision it takes, in order that decision takers can be better informed of the climate consequences of that decision. We are continually looking to improve that procedure.
- The principle of moving towards sustainable (low carbon) materials is agreed.
- A carbon offset fund has been trialled in a few locations across the country, with mixed success. To implement in East Cambs it will require a new Local Plan. Arguably, an offset fund is also not a good long term solution – it would be far better to cut emissions at source (eg the build fabric of a development) rather than allow developers to 'buy' their way out of the problem, by building less than efficient homes together with a payment into an offset fund. Any offset fund would likely only be suitable for those developments that could not achieve near carbon net zero for technical reasons (eg heritage constraints). Generally speaking, any offsetting mechanism should be progressed with extreme caution, to avoid unintended consequences.
- In respect of peat land, and farming in general, we acknowledge the vital role agriculture can play to reduce emissions and boost the natural environment, but at the same time maintain a viable business and provide food for the nation. It is a challenging balancing act, but are working with partners (such as the LNP and NFU) on these very issues.

## Appendix C - Completed INRA

### EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – INITIAL SCREENING

Initial screening needs to take place for all new/revised Council policies. The word ‘policy’, in this context, includes the different things that the Council does. It includes any policy, procedure or practice - both in employment and service delivery. It also includes proposals for restructuring, redundancies and changes to service provision. This stage must be completed at the earliest opportunity to determine whether it is necessary to undertake an EIA for this activity.

<b>Name of Policy:</b>	Environment Plan (year 2)
<b>Lead Officer (responsible for assessment):</b>	Richard Kay
<b>Department:</b>	Strategic Planning
<b>Others Involved in the Assessment (i.e. peer review, external challenge):</b>	None
<b>Date Initial Screening Completed:</b>	June 2021

- (a) **What is the policy trying to achieve?** i.e. What is the aim/purpose of the policy? Is it affected by external drivers for change? What outcomes do we want to achieve from the policy? How will the policy be put into practice?

The Environment Plan sets the Council’s actions and targets in respect of climate change and the natural environment. This first such Plan was adopted in June 2020. This is a ‘year 2’ refresh of the Plan, with a new set of proposed actions for 2021/22.

- (b) **Who are its main beneficiaries?** i.e. who will be affected by the policy?

It is primarily aimed at the Council itself, and what actions it will take to reduce its emissions and help boost the natural environment. However, in fulfilling those actions, especially in relation to the natural environment, all residents and visitors should benefit from a high quality natural environment.

- (c) **Is this assessment informed by any information or background data?** i.e. consultations, complaints, applications received, allocations/take-up, satisfaction rates, performance indicators, access audits, census data, benchmarking, workforce profile etc.

The Plan is informed by both statistical data as well as wide ranging community engagement (eg ‘Ideas Forum’ on our website)

- (d) Does this policy have the potential to cause a positive or negative impact on different groups in the community, on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics (please tick all that apply):

**Ethnicity**  
**Gender**  
**Disability**

No  
 No  
 No

**Age**  
**Religion or Belief**  
**Sexual Orientation**

No  
 No  
 No

**Gender Reassignment**

No
No

  
**Pregnancy & Maternity**

**Marriage & Civil Partnership**

No
No

  
**Caring Responsibilities**

**Please explain any impact identified:** i.e. What do you already know about equality impact or need? Is there any evidence that there is a higher or lower take-up by particular groups? Have there been any demographic changes or trends locally? Are there any barriers to accessing the policy or service?

There is no apparent reason why any of the different groups as listed above will be particularly affected, negatively or positively, as a result of the Plan

- |   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>(e) Does the policy affect service users or the wider community?</b>   | <b>NO</b> |
| <b>(f) Does the policy have a significant effect on how services are delivered?</b>   | <b>NO</b> |
| <b>(g) Will it have a significant effect on how other organisations operate?</b>  | <b>NO</b> |
| <b>(h) Does it involve a significant commitment of resources?</b>   | <b>NO</b> |
| <b>(i) Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities, e.g. disabled people's access to public transport etc?</b> | <b>NO</b> |

If you have answered **YES** to any of the questions above, then it is necessary to proceed with a full equality impact assessment (EIA). If the answer is **NO**, then this judgement and your response to the above questions will need to be countersigned by your Head of Service and then referred to the Council's Equal Opportunities Working Group (EOWG) for scrutiny and verification. Please forward completed and signed forms to the Principal HR Officer.

**Signatures:**

<b>Completing Officer:</b>	<b>RK</b> _____	<b>Date:</b>	<b>June 2021</b> _____
<b>Head of Service:</b>	<b>RK</b> _____	<b>Date:</b>	<b>June 2021</b> _____



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**Sub Regional Lettings Policy Review**

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Author: Housing & Community Advice Manager

[W29]

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1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To receive consultation feed back and subsequent revisions to the letting policy.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 Members are requested to note the outcome of the allocations review, including the consultation feedback and agree the subsequent revisions to the letting policy.

3.0 UPDATE

3.1 The Council is part of the Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Home-link partnership, a partnership of six local authorities and 34 Registered Providers with a shared framework for prioritising and allocating social housing across the area.

3.2 The 2020 review involved a detailed, line by line review of the policy but resulted in recommendation for minor amendments only. A public consultation ran for eight weeks from 23<sup>rd</sup> October – 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and demonstrated broad agreement with the proposals.

3.3 The Home-Link Management Board (including representatives across the partnership) agreed a final draft of the policy at an Extra Ordinary Meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Although agreed by the board each local authority must need seek formal approval for the updated Lettings Policy via committee. Once all local authorities have received formal approval the updated policy will be implemented (estimated June 2021).

3.4 As at the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 there were 10,115\* households with live applications Waiting for social housing in the Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Sub-Region. 967\* of these applications were registered with this council. (\*please note these figures are fluid as applicants join and leave the register daily).

- 3.5 The Lettings Policy sets out the process for allocating social housing and explains who can apply, the criteria used to prioritise and assess applications and how properties are nominated.
- 3.6 The Lettings Policy must comply with the requirements outlined in Part 6 of the 1996 Housing Act. This includes offering 'reasonable preference' to certain categories of people when allocating properties and these legal requirements therefore cannot be changed.
- 3.7 The majority of amendments to the policy relate to wording changes and were introduced to aid clarity and to help partners interpret and apply the policy consistently. However, more significant changes include the following:
- i) Ensuring ex partners/spouses of armed forces personnel have the same priority given to their partner's where they move out of a Ministry of Defence property due to a relationship breakdown. This change is to ensure the partnership is compliant with the requirements of the Military Covenant.
  - ii) Changes to the work element of the local connection criteria, to clarify the work requirement including the type and nature of qualifying work. (detailed in Section 3.4.2)
  - iii) Greater clarity in circumstances where an applicant has sufficient financial capital or other means to find a housing solution outside of the register.
- 3.8 In the writing of this report, considering financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

## Legal

Prior to the start of formal consultation, legal advice was sought from Bevan Brittain (in conjunction 3C legal services who procured the advice on behalf of the partnership). Several small recommendations were made which have been incorporated into the final draft of the policy. These changes all involved tweaks to wording to ensure partners had not inadvertently fettered their discretion.

However, of particular note is the headline feedback from the lead solicitor which was communicated by email on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020 and which read *'in my view this is a good and detailed allocation policy. It is clear and comprehensive, and in my view will enable applications to understand how their application has been assessed.'*

## Consultation responses

A public consultation ran from 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020 – 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020. In total 623 responses were received from across the partnership area. The majority of responses (305) were from existing applicants, although a range of people replied including Home-Link partners and representatives from interested organisations such as probation service and domestic abuse support services.

Respondents were asked whether they agreed with each of the stated policy objectives. 79.9% of respondents agreed with the objectives and so no further changes were made in this respect.

74.8% of respondents indicated that they either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the policy changes relating to local connection and working hours. Based on this, Home-Link Management Board decided that the proposed changes to this aspect of the policy should be confirmed.

60.5% of respondents either somewhat agreed or agreed strongly that those with sufficient financial resources should be awarded a lower priority band. 20.5% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed and Home-Link Management Board agreed that this represented strong enough levels of agreement to retain the principle of awarding people with significant financial resources a lower priority. However, additional feedback received in relation to people experiencing domestic abuse and the impact this could have on a person's finance. Consequently, some minor wording changes were agreed to ensure that those who experience abuse, harassment and coercive control were not negatively impacted.

### 4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this update.

4.2 A detailed EIA has been completed.

### 5.0 APPENDICES

5.1 Appendix 1 – Consultation Feedback – Report to Home-Link Management Board on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021.  
Appendix 2 – Lettings Policy

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#### Background Documents

None

#### Location

The Grange,  
Ely

#### Contact Officer

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Report to the Home-Link Management Board on  
**Allocations Policy - Consultation Feedback**

**Date of meeting**14<sup>th</sup> January 2021**From**

Author(s):	Heather Wood	<a href="mailto:Heather.Wood@scambs.gov.uk">Heather.Wood@scambs.gov.uk</a>
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**Why is the report coming to Home-Link Management Board?**

To update Board on the outcome of the Allocations Policy consultation.

To allow Board to discuss and agree any final amendments to the policy.

**Decision(s) required from Home-Link Management Board (HLMB)**

1. To note the consultation outcomes, including the detailed feedback in Appendix Two.
2. To decide whether to include an additional policy objective referencing the Crime and Disorder Act as well as acknowledging the multi-agency protocol work.
3. To decide whether to accept the current policy draft or whether to incorporate any of the further (minor) wording suggestions set out in Appendix Two (page 4)
4. To decide whether any additional minor amendments are required arising out of the feedback in Appendix Three (page 7) and to agree what these should consist of.

**Introduction**

The Home-Link consultation ran from 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020 – 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020. In total 623 responses were received from across the sub region. The majority of the responses (305) were from existing applicants, although a range of people replied including Home-Link partners and representatives from interested organisations such as the Probation Service and Domestic Abuse support services. A full list of respondents by category is contained in Appendix One.

Overall, there were high levels of agreement for the proposed amendments. It is recommended that the draft of the policy consulted on remains largely unchanged with the exception of some further, minor wording changes. These additional tweaks arise from detailed feedback setting out improvements that can be made to better support offenders and those experiencing domestic abuse.

The general responses to each aspect of the consultation can be summarised below with additional information contained in the appendices.

**Feedback on the overall policy objectives**

Respondents were asked whether they agreed with each of the stated policy objectives. In all at least 79.9% of respondents agreed with each stated objective, suggesting that there should be no change to those objectives already in place. A breakdown of these percentages against each objective is included in Appendix One.

In addition, a further objective was suggested in relation to the duties set out in the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as follows:

**Additional Suggestion:** *Could requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 also be considered in terms of prioritisation. This gives statutory duties to local authorities as well as other partners to reduce crime and disorder in their communities by having regard to the impact of their various functions on, and the need to do all it can to prevent, crime and disorder in their area. The government's Farmer Review on the needs of female offenders recommended that the allocation of accommodation guidance should recognise the prospective housing needs of women leaving prison who are otherwise able to be reunited with their children so local authorities can make these needs the basis for assessment. Perhaps the various protocols including MAPPA, criminal justice could be highlighted to demonstrate commitment and the message to RPs?*

Based on this suggestion, HLMB members could agree to include an additional policy objective 'to work with partner agencies to support the aims of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998'. If HLMB members want to incorporate the suggestion to make reference to the multi agencies protocols then objective f could be expanded.

### **Proposal to allow a person to be listed on one application only as the main applicant**

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84.1% of respondents either agreed, or strongly agreed with this proposal. In terms of additional feedback, on area of concern was ensuring that a person experiencing Domestic Abuse was not coerced into being a joint applicant and therefore unable to make an application in their own name. This concern could be addressed by adding additional wording to explain that, in exceptional cases, such as those involving violence or abuse, a council can decide to permit a second application. It is recommended that HLMB agree to this wording amendment.

### **Local connection and working hours**

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74.8% of respondents indicated that they either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the policy changes relating to local connection and working hours suggesting that these amendments should remain. The comments provided indicate strong opinions both for and against the changes and so it is recommended that the majority view is accepted.

### **Financial resources and the clarification that those with sufficient financial resources will be awarded a lower banding**

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60.5% of respondents either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with that those with sufficient financial resources should be awarded a lower banding. 20.5% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, suggesting that these amendments should remain. It should be noted that there was specific feedback in relation to financial resources and people experiencing domestic abuse. These recommendations are detailed in Appendix Two and involve slight wording clarifications to the policy.

### **Banding clarification in relation to people placed in Temporary Accommodation**

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65.25 of respondents either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the banding procedures relating to temporary accommodation. A further 22.8% neither agreed or disagreed. It is recommended that the majority view is accepted and that no further changes will be made to this aspect of the policy other than those identified already as part of the consultation.

## Summary

Overall there are high levels of agreement indicated with the proposed changes and it is recommended that no further substantial amendments are made to the policy. However, several pertinent suggestions have been raised via the consultation comments and it is important that these are noted (detailed further in Appendices Two and Three). In particular, the analysis set out in Appendix Two recommends minor wording changes/clarifications that would be of benefit to applicants. HLMB are asked to decide whether these amendments should be incorporated into the final draft of the policy.

## APPENDIX ONE – INFORMATION TABLES

### 1) Breakdown of responses by group

Tenant (council or RSL)	192
Tenant (private landlord)	71
Resident	26
Existing Home-Link Applicant	305
Representative of a Registered Provider	3
Home-Link partner organisation	4
Other	22 (includes feedback from Probation Service, domestic abuse advice services and hostels)

### 2) Policy Objectives – % of agreement

	Policy Objective	% of respondents in agreement
a)	To meet the legal requirements for the allocation of social housing as set out in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended);	80.7%
b)	To assist applicants in the highest assessed need;	82.7
c)	To let properties in a fair and transparent way and provide a consistent lettings process;	87.5
d)	To make best use of housing stock;	85.7
e)	To ensure that applicants are not unlawfully discriminated against, whether directly or indirectly;	89.1

f)	To support vulnerable applicants	88.9
g)	To provide increased choice and information to applicants;	88.3
h)	To provide information and feedback on homes that are let through the Home-Link scheme;	89.4
l)	To improve mobility across the Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk; and	81.5
j)	To promote social inclusion and help achieve sustainable communities.	79.9

## **APPENDIX TWO - Detailed Feedback from Professional Agencies with suggested response/follow-up**

### **Comments received in relation to housing for offenders and for improving services for people experiencing domestic abuse**

The following comments were received from professionals working in probation and domestic abuse services. A suggested response has been listed by each question for discussion/agreement with Home-Link Management Board

#### **Comment 1**

Could requirements of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 also be considered in terms of prioritisation. This gives statutory duties to local authorities as well as other partners to reduce crime and disorder in their communities by having regard to the impact of their various functions on, and the need to do all it can to prevent, crime and disorder in their area. We understand that professionals need to work across agencies to gather evidence of behaviour change and support in place but there is a risk that the behaviour restrictions at 3.5 work against those with an offending history - offenders without housing aren't going to be less likely to offend. At the very least an example RP policy in Scotland highlights how they provide support across various cohorts via protocol and agreements (3.2). At (6.1) it specifically reflects these commitments - "it BHA is committed to working in partnership with other agencies and Registered Social Landlords to address local housing issues and needs. Protocols are established and adhered to with formal working arrangements to ensure applicants with particular needs or vulnerabilities avoid housing crisis. Protocols include rehousing for care leavers, sex offenders, people experiencing homelessness, victims of domestic abuse and persons leaving prison. Such protocols are held centrally within the organisation" <https://www.berwickshirehousing.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Allocation-Policy.pdf>. Perhaps the various protocols including MAPPA, criminal justice could be highlighted to demonstrate commitment and the message to RPs? The government's Farmer Review on the needs of female offenders recommended that the allocation of accommodation guidance should recognise the prospective housing needs of women leaving prison who are otherwise able to be reunited with their children so local authorities can make these needs the basis for assessment.

**Response:** Home-Link Management Board can consider widening the policy objectives to make reference to the Crime and Disorder Act and specific reference to the protocol work can also be added to the existing objectives.

## Comment 2

4.11 intentionally worsening housing circumstances. Through discussion we have been informed that intentionality is not a test in the allocations policy but in homelessness legislation.

However, this section could also work against offenders if it is deemed their offending intentionally worsened their housing circumstances. It remains important that professionals work closely across agencies to ensure that the needs of vulnerable applicants are fully communicated and considered.

### Response:

To clarify, this is about circumstances where someone's actions worsen their housing situation ie allowing additional family members to move in and placing the household into an over crowding situation. It is not directly linked to the intentionality test applied in the homeless legislation as not all Home-Link applicants will have made a homeless application.

In terms of the specific comments about offenders, these points are noted and – as a matter of reassurance – council officers across all of the local authority teams already work proactively and across multi agencies to house offenders. This includes attending the CCJB Offenders Board, attendance at MAPPA Senior Management Board and MAPPA case meetings as well as working with individuals in relation to statutory homeless prevention duties.

## Comment 3 (excluding people from the register)

3.5 - victims of DA who have been coerced into criminality, where there has been retaliatory violence, or tenancy related debt due to economic abuse may be excluded unintentionally

**Response:** we take into account the full circumstances before excluding someone from the register. We can consider whether this is stated more explicitly in the policy ie by adding some additional wording so that the section reads as follows:

5.2 When considering whether an applicant with a history of unacceptable behaviour qualifies to be accepted on the housing register, the council will consider the nature of the behaviour, when it took place, the length of time that has elapsed since and whether there has been any change in circumstances which would show that the applicant or member of the applicant's household had amended their behaviour so that they are considered suitable to become a tenant. *In addition, any extenuating circumstances, such as coercion or harassment, will be taken into account as well as any possible risks to others arising from a register exclusion.*

## Comment 4



Perpetrators of DA may not be able to get accommodation and therefore target other vulnerable people OR increase pressure to the victim for reconciliation due to homelessness, making long term safety more difficult.

**Response** Council Officers will consider all information before making a decision to exclude someone from the register, this includes wider implications such as the possibility and severity of the risk to others. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis and will be covered by the wording suggested above.

#### Comment 5

4.7 - we are concerned with the word "investigated" in relation to DA, as opposed to identified.

**Response:** We can change the wording to 'identified'.

#### Comment 6

4.10 - it would be helpful to have examples of where rent arrears would NOT prevent being housed, as it is well established that there is a significant link between domestic abuse and rent arrears.

**Response:** We can re-word the relevant section of the policy as follows:

In most circumstances an applicant with outstanding recoverable rent arrears, former rent arrears or other housing-related debts will not be considered for an offer of a tenancy or eligible to bid for housing until they have shown a regular repayment record. [In reaching this decision any extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration including coercion, harassment and abuse.](#)

#### Comment 7

4.12.1 - Does domestic abuse count as an "exceptional circumstance" in relation to home ownership, which is well documented as a significant issue for victims in their ability to remain in safe housing.

**Response:** Yes it would, although decisions would be made on a case by case basis and regularly reviewed. For example, whether the sale of the property is straight forward or whether it is blocked by a perpetrator.

#### Comment 8

5.5 - What would happen in the case where custody is 50:50

**Response:** A child, or children, living between parents at separate addresses will only be considered as having one main home unless there are exceptional circumstances that mean that both parents should provide a home. An assessment will be made by the council as to which parent's property is considered as the child's main home.

If there are any factors such as domestic abuse, this can also be taken into consideration.

**Comment 9**

5.7 - Could we encourage all homelessness departments to be accredited by DAHA, and therefore able to meet this commitment meaningfully.

**Response** – The Home-Link partnership is made up of 6 local authorities as well as Registered Providers across the sub region. Some of the councils and partners are already DAHA accredited (Cambridge City and Cambridge Housing Society) and others are working towards accreditation (ie South Cambs, BPHA). It is not possible to mandate local authorities or RPs to obtain accreditation but the partnership is happy to look at any actions it can take to promote the DAHA framework and also promote domestic abuse awareness and training. This is something that South Cambs can incorporate into it's DAHA action plan on behalf of the partnership.

**Comment 10**

6.1.2 - Could domestic abuse be a specific category here?

**Response** - This section relates to the *type* of decision that can be reviewed ie whether someone is in the correct band. The list is about the type of decisions, not the reasons or circumstances behind them. On this basis we would not look to add domestic abuse as a specific category here.

**Comment 11**

7.9.1 - Could this include managed reciprocals?

**Response** – yes, it could. This can be added to the existing list of matters not covered by the Lettings Policy.

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**Appendix Three – Other comments for note/consideration**

Other policy matters raised for Home-Link Management Board to consider:

- Does the policy give enough recognition to non familial support networks? This was raised by several other households, including those where a person with a disability wanted to move to be closer to support networks as well as by people who were reliant for support on friends rather than family.
- Further work is underway to agree the wording in relation to Local Lettings Plans.
- Is the policy flexible enough to support people who require additional bedrooms for the purpose of becoming a foster carer?

Operational matters for further consideration

- Can adapted properties be advertised separately from other forms of housing as the current process is misleading to applicants (properties that are suitable for adaptation are advertised along side those already adapted).
- Request for applicants to have greater information on where they are in the bidding (ie not just 1-5 but 1,2,3,4,5 etc
- Request for more property information to be included to allow for a more informed choice to be made.

# Lettings Policy

This document sets out how the Council, in partnership with Registered Providers with properties in the district, will allocate their properties through the “Home-Link scheme”

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## Chapter 1

### 1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This is the letting policy for the Council, which is a member of the Home-Link choice based lettings scheme, which covers the Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk area. The partner organisations to the Home-Link scheme are:

- a) Cambridge City Council
- b) East Cambridgeshire District Council
- c) Fenland District Council
- d) Huntingdonshire District Council
- e) South Cambridgeshire District Council
- f) West Suffolk Council

1.1.2 The Home-Link scheme and this lettings policy were designed through collaboration between the partner organisations listed above, with the aim of having as much consistency in the letting of social housing as is possible in a very diverse area. The lettings policy aims to ensure that all people seeking social housing in the Council area can exercise choice in deciding where they wish to live and in the type of property they would prefer.

1.1.3 The policy enables the Council to consider the individual needs of its applicants whilst making best use of the scarce resource of housing stock. The policy sets out:

- a) How to apply for housing.
- b) Who will qualify to be accepted onto the housing register.
- c) How priority for housing applicants will be given.
- d) What the decision-making processes are.
- e) How homes will be let.

1.1.4 You may view this lettings policy, at the Council's website, or request a copy from any of the partner organisation's offices. (See Appendix 1 on p.34)

### 1.2 Objectives of the lettings policy

- a) To meet the legal requirements for the allocation of social housing as set out in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended)
- b) To assist applicants in the highest assessed need
- c) To let properties in a fair and transparent way and provide a consistent lettings process
- d) To make best use of housing stock
- e) To ensure that applicants are not unlawfully discriminated against, whether directly or indirectly
- f) To support vulnerable applicants
- g) To provide increased choice and information to applicants
- h) To provide information and feedback on homes that are let through the Home-Link scheme
- i) To improve mobility across the Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk
- j) To promote social inclusion and help achieve sustainable communities



### **1.3 Statement on choice**

- 1.3.1 The Council is fully committed to enabling applicants to play a more active role in choosing where they live, whilst continuing to house those in the greatest need in the Council.
- 1.3.2 The Home-Link scheme enables applicants from the Council's area to have access to a percentage of available homes from all the partner organisations across Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk.

### **1.4 Legal context**

- 1.4.1 All applicants for housing will be assessed to determine their eligibility to be placed on the housing register. This is to ensure homes are let to those in the highest assessed need and ensures that the council meets its legal obligations as set out in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended).

This policy has also had regard to:

- a) Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England, and
  - b) The Public Sector Equalities Duty, and
  - c) Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act, and
  - d) The Council's Homelessness Strategy, and
  - e) The Council's Tenancy Strategy (containing details of the types of social rented tenancies that may be offered by housing association landlords).
- 1.4.2 The law states that there are five groups of applicants where reasonable preference must be considered:
    - a) People who are homeless (within the meaning of Part VII (7) of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended))
    - b) People who are owed a duty by any local housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2), or 195(2) of the 1996 Act (or under section 65(2) or 68(2) of the Housing Act 1985) or who are occupying accommodation secured by any such authority under section 192(3)
    - c) People occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions
    - d) People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to a disability); and
    - e) People who need to move to a particular locality in the district of the authority, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship (to themselves or to others)
  - 1.4.3 The lettings policy has been designed to ensure applicants who fall into the above reasonable preference categories will be awarded reasonable preference.
  - 1.4.4 Every application received by the Council will be considered according to the facts unique to that application as the Council recognises that every applicant's situation is different. Applications will be considered on an

individual basis and individual circumstances will be taken into account. However, all lettings will be made in accordance with this lettings policy. Where individual circumstances are not covered by the on-line application form, applicants should contact the partner to whom they are applying to discuss their application so that all relevant facts can be considered fully.

## **1.5 Equal opportunities and diversity**

- 1.5.1 The lettings policy will be responsive, accessible and sensitive to the needs of all by having regard to the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.

The Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and will ensure that all applicants are treated fairly and without unlawful discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

In addition, the Council is committed to the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (2011):

- a) Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- b) Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people
- c) Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The Council also has due regard to the commitments made in Article 14 of the Human Rights Act (1998) as it relates to the service provided.

## **1.6 The welfare of children**

- 1.6.1 The Council will ensure that decisions made under this lettings policy have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children taking into account Section 11 of The Children's Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- 1.6.2 The Council will also have regard to the Children & Social Work Act 2017 as relates to the local arrangements for safeguarding and promoting welfare of children.

## **1.7 The welfare of adults**

- 1.7.1 The Council will also have regard to the Care Act 2014, which includes provisions for adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

## **1.8 Monitoring and reviewing the lettings policy**

- 1.8.1 The Council will monitor the operation of the lettings policy by regularly reviewing the policy to ensure that the policy meets its stated objectives and complies with legislative changes.

## Chapter 2

### 2.1 How to apply for housing

- 2.1.1 The on-line form can be completed at [www.home-link.org.uk](http://www.home-link.org.uk). A paper form, if required, can be requested from the Council and they can also offer assistance to complete the form if needed.
- 2.1.2 An applicant may include anyone on their application who may reasonably be expected to live with them as part of their household. The Council reserves the right to decide who can reasonably be expected to reside in an applicant's household.
- 2.1.3 Where two applicants wish to have a shared application they will be known as joint applicants. Although adults who are not partners and need more than one bedroom may jointly apply to the register, due to the level of demand for family sized accommodation from family households (by "family" we mean households that have children (under 18) who are dependent on the adult(s)) they will not normally be prioritised for an offer of this size of accommodation ahead of families.
- 2.1.4 On receipt of the application the Council will assess this and will request additional information and supporting evidence so that the applicant's eligibility and housing need can be confirmed. The Council will verify the information provided which may include inviting the applicant for an interview or visiting them at home.
- 2.1.5 Applications will only be accepted onto the register where:
- a) The applicant is eligible for an allocation of social housing (see Chapter 3); and
  - b) The applicant qualifies for an allocation of social housing. (See sections 3.2 to 3.4).
- 2.1.6 After assessment the Council will write to applicants to inform them whether they have been accepted onto the housing register, or give reasons if they have not. Where accepted they will be informed of:
- a) Their unique reference number, which allows them to bid for homes through the Home-Link Scheme
  - b) The housing needs band in which the application has been placed
  - c) The date that the application was placed in the band (the "date in band")
  - d) The size of property for which the applicant is likely to be able to bid

If they have not been accepted onto the housing register the council will set out the reasons for this decision and will provide information about the review process (see Chapter 6).

## 2.2 Date of registration

2.2.1 The registration date of an application will be the date the on-line housing application form is received electronically, or if a paper application is submitted, the date it is received at the office of the Council, or any of the partner organisations.

## 2.3 Date in band

2.3.1 The principle of the policy is that normally no applicant should overtake existing applicants in a band. Therefore, applicants will be placed within a band in date order.

- a) **New applications:** the date in band will be the same as the applicant's date of registration.
- b) **Change of circumstances which results in a higher band assessment:** the date in band will be the date the applicant provides evidence of the change of circumstances leading to the award of a higher priority band.

2.3.2 When applicants move down bands due to a change in their circumstances the following applies:

- a) **Returning to a band that they were previously placed in:** the date in band reverts to the date that applied when the applicant was previously in that band.
- b) **Moving into a lower band they have not previously been placed in:** the date in band will be the date that the application was first placed into a higher band. In most circumstances, this is likely to be their date of registration.

## 2.4 Armed Forces personnel – date in band

2.4.1 Additional priority will be awarded to the following categories of people:

- a) serving members of the regular forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service
- b) former members of the regular forces
- c) bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service
- d) existing or former members of the reserve forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness, or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service.

2.4.2 Additional priority will be awarded to the above categories of people by awarding their application the appropriate priority band, as set out in this

lettings policy, and backdating their date in band by the total cumulative period of their length of military service (including where they have made a homeless application). This will have the effect of raising their priority above applicants in similar circumstances who have not undertaken military service.

This additional priority is awarded to meet the expectations set out in the Armed Forces Covenant and national guidance.

- 2.4.3 Current members of the Armed Forces may also request that this additional priority be applied to their housing application six months prior to the date when they are due to leave military service. Appropriate evidence of the end to military service will be required.

## **2.5 Multiple applications**

- 2.5.1 An applicant can have only one active application on the housing register at any time where they are either the applicant or joint applicant. They may however be considered on other applications where they are eligible to be considered as part of another applicant's household, for example where living with a parent and included as part of their application.

## **2.6 Change of circumstances**

- 2.6.1 Where an applicant registered with the Council has a change in their circumstances they must promptly inform the Council. Applicants can complete a change of circumstances on-line at [www.home-link.org.uk](http://www.home-link.org.uk) or obtain a change of circumstances form from any partner organisation, but this must then be sent to the partner organisation who is managing their application. Change of circumstances received by the Council will be assessed based on the new circumstances. Examples of change of circumstances where a form must be completed are detailed below, although this list is not exhaustive:

- a) Change of address
- b) People joining or leaving the household
- c) Relationship breakdown
- d) Change to the medical circumstances of anyone included on the application

For the examples detailed below, applicants may not need to complete a change of circumstances form, but must contact the Council, who will advise what documentation/evidence is required:

- a) Pregnancy/birth of a child
- b) Death of a household member
- c) Death of a joint applicant
- d) Change of income and/or capital

## **2.7 Applicant's consent and declaration**

- 2.7.1 When an applicant applies for housing, they will be required to confirm their understanding of, or sign a declaration to confirm that:
- a) The information they have provided is true, accurate and complete.
  - b) They will promptly inform the Council of any change in circumstances.

- c) They understand that information will be shared with all the partner organisations.
- d) They consent to the Council making enquiries of any relevant persons to confirm the information on the application form is correct.
- e) They consent to the release of any relevant information either to the Council held by third parties, or by the Council to third parties.
- f) The information provided may be used to help in the detection and prevention of fraud.

2.7.2 The Council may take legal action against applicants who withhold or provide false information regarding their housing application. Where an applicant has been let a property as a result of providing false information, their landlord may take court action to obtain possession of the property.

## **2.8 Data protection**

2.8.1 The Council's policy on General Data Protection Regulations is available on request and can also be found online at the Council's website.

## **2.9 Application review**

2.9.1 Every year on the anniversary of an application being received, we will write to the applicant to see if they still wish to be on the housing register and ask them to update their application if there have been any changes to their circumstances. If there is no response within the required time limit, (28 days from the letter/email being sent) the application will be cancelled. We will write to the applicant to notify them of this. If an applicant contacts the Council within 28 days of their application being cancelled and indicates that they still want to be considered for housing, the application will be reinstated from their last applicable date in band (see s.2.3 above).

## **2.10 Cancelling an application**

2.10.1 An application will be cancelled from the housing register in the following circumstances:

- a) At the applicant's request.
- b) If the applicant becomes ineligible for housing (see s.3.2).
- c) If the applicant no longer falls within a qualifying class of applicant (see s.3.3).
- d) When the applicant has been housed through the lettings policy.
- e) When a tenant completes a mutual exchange.
- f) Where an applicant does not maintain their application through the review process, or where they move and do not provide a contact address.
- g) Where the applicant has died.

2.10.2 When an application is cancelled, we will write to the applicant or their representative to notify them. Where an applicant has been highlighted as vulnerable, the Council will contact the applicant to check their circumstances before cancelling the application. Any applicant whose application has been cancelled has the right to ask for a review of the decision, (see Chapter 6).

2.10.3 Where an applicant wishes to re-join the housing register at a later date their new date of registration will be the date they re-apply.

## Chapter 3

### 3.1 Who can be accepted onto the housing register?

- 3.1.1 The Council can allocate housing to anyone who qualifies for an allocation if they are not ineligible under the Housing Act 1996 section 160ZA.
- 3.1.2 The Council cannot allocate housing to two or more persons jointly if one of them is ineligible.

### 3.2 Eligible applicants

- 3.2.1 The Council is required, by law, to decide that certain applicants are ineligible for an allocation of social housing. Eligibility can change with a change of immigration status and therefore the Council will keep an applicant's eligibility for housing under review. Applicants are responsible for informing the Council of any change in their immigration status.
- 3.2.2 Applicants whose immigration status makes them ineligible to be considered on the register will be notified in writing of the decision and the reason for the decision. If an applicant is accepted onto the register, but subsequently becomes ineligible, their housing application will be cancelled and the applicant notified. Applicants found to be ineligible have a right to ask for a review of the decision (see Chapter 6).
- 3.2.3 Where an eligible applicant includes people who are ineligible as part of his or her household the council can, in deciding who forms part of the applicant's household for the purposes of housing allocation:
- a) Have regard to the fact that members of a person's household would not be eligible for accommodation in their own right.
  - b) Have regard to the fact that an ineligible person is not permitted to have recourse to public funds.
  - c) Conclude that an ineligible person does not form part of the household when assessing priority.

### 3.3 Qualifying categories of applicants

- 3.3.1 Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk are areas where the demand for social housing far exceeds the supply. For this reason only those applicants who meet the local connection criteria will qualify to join the housing register (see s.3.4).
- 3.3.2 Applicants will not qualify to join the housing register if they are considered to be unsuitable to be a tenant because of unacceptable behaviour (see s.3.5).

### 3.4 Connection to the local area criteria

- 3.4.1 An applicant will be considered to have a connection with the Council area and accepted onto the housing register if they meet one of the following criteria:

- a. The applicant is in full time or part time employment in the Council district for sixteen hours or more per week. See Section 3.4.2 below for further details; or
- b. The applicant has lived in the local authority area for at least 6 of the last 12 months, or 3 of the last 5 years; or
- c. The applicant has family members who have been resident in the local authority area for a period of 5 years or longer and are currently resident in the local authority area. Family members are defined as parents, adult sons and adult daughters or brothers or sisters. Other family associations will be considered on a case by case basis; or
- d. The applicant is owed a main housing duty under the s.193 (2) or 193C (4) of the relevant homelessness legislation by the Council; or
- e. The applicant is serving in the regular forces or who has served in the regular forces within five years of the date of their application for an allocation of housing under Part 6 of the 1996 Act; or
- f. The applicant will cease to be entitled to reside in accommodation provided by the Ministry of Defence following:
  - i. the death of that person's spouse or civil partner where the spouse or civil partner has served in the regular forces; and their death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service; or
  - ii. divorce or separation from a spouse or civil partner where the spouse or civil partner is a member of the regular forces; or
- g. The applicant is serving or has served in the reserve forces and who is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to that service; or
- h. The applicant is a "relevant person" as defined by Regulation 4 of the Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Right to Move) (England) Regulations 2015; or
- i. The applicant or a member of the applicant's household needs to move away from another area to escape violence or harm; or
- j. The applicant is a care leaver from the County who has been placed (by Children's Services) outside the Council area; or
- k. There are special circumstances that the Council considers give rise to a local connection.

3.4.2 Applicants will be considered to have employment in the Council district and therefore may meet the local connection criteria if:

- a) They are in paid full or part time permanent employment for 16 hours or more per week and their actual working location is within the district; or
- b) They are working within the district on a temporary or zero-hour employment contract that has been in place for at least 6 months and can demonstrate they have worked at least 16 hours per week since starting the employment contract; or



- c) Self-employed applicants are required to demonstrate that their permanent base of operations is within the District, even if their work requires them from time to time to work outside of the district; or
- d) The employment must be the actual place of work in the district and not employment based on a head office or regional office situated in the district but from which they do not work.

The Council reserves the right to waive the 16 hour requirement if necessary to avoid discrimination.

- 3.4.3 Applicants who are in one of the reasonable preference groups, but with none of the connection to the local area criteria above, may be eligible to join the register. Anyone who believes this applies to them should contact the Council directly to discuss their circumstances.

### **3.5 Applicants with a history of unacceptable behaviour**

- 3.5.1 Where an applicant or a member of their household has a history of behaviour which in the opinion of the Council is unacceptable and makes the applicant unsuitable to be a tenant the council may decide that the applicant does not qualify to be accepted onto the housing register. Unacceptable behaviour can include (but is not limited to) domestic or other abuse, harassment, anti-social behaviour, drug dealing or other criminal activity, failing to maintain or repair their home or associated garden or garage, noise nuisance or tenancy related debt.
- 3.5.2 When considering whether an applicant with a history of unacceptable behaviour qualifies to be accepted on the housing register, the council will consider the nature of the behaviour, when it took place, the length of time that has elapsed since and whether there has been any change in circumstances which would show that the applicant or member of the applicant's household had amended their behaviour so that they are considered suitable to become a tenant.
- 3.5.3 If the council decides that an applicant does not qualify to be accepted on the housing register because the applicant or a member of their household has a history of unacceptable behaviour that makes them unsuitable to be a tenant, the applicant will be informed in writing of this decision and the reasons for the decision. They will also be informed how they can become a qualifying person, for example, by agreeing an arrangement to make payments towards rent arrears and adhering to this, or by the applicant showing that the circumstances or behaviour that made them unsuitable to be a tenant, has changed.
- 3.5.4 If an applicant is accepted onto the register but a change in their behaviour means that they are no longer a qualifying person, their housing application will be removed and the applicant will be notified in writing of this decision and the reasons for the decision.
- 3.5.5 Applicants considered as not qualifying due to unacceptable behaviour have a right to ask for a review of the decision (see Chapter 6).

### **3.6 16 and 17 year olds**

- 3.6.1 Anyone aged 16 or over can apply for housing. However until the applicant reaches 18 years old any offer of accommodation will be subject to appropriate guarantor or trustee arrangements being in place. The guarantor could be a family member, adult friend, or a professional body. Applicants under 18 years old will be referred to a housing officer for advice regarding their housing rights and options.

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## **Chapter 4**

### **Assessment of housing need**

#### **4.1 Legal background**

- 4.1.1 All eligible and qualifying applicants will be placed in a housing needs band following an assessment of their household's needs. This is to ensure that the Council meet their legal obligations as set out in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended).

#### **4.2 Advice and information**

- 4.2.1 The Council will ensure that advice and information on how to apply for housing in the Council area is available free of charge to everyone. If applicants are likely to have difficulty in making an application without assistance, then the council will make any necessary assistance they require available.

#### **4.3 Assessment of housing need**

- 4.3.1 Assessments of housing needs are based on an applicant's current housing circumstances. Assessments will be completed by housing officers of the Council. Medical assessments will be made by a medical professional or appropriately trained officer.

Where an adverse decision about an application is made by any of the Home-Link partners, any duplicate applications to another partner's housing register will have due regard to that original decision. Because the Home-Link partners use the same assessment criteria for housing applications, original decisions will only be overturned in exceptional circumstances following an assessment. The original partner applied to will be contacted to discuss the decision and the decision will generally apply to any new application when sufficient information has been received.

Any new or additional information not available for the original decision will be considered by the Home-Link partner to assess any impact on the decision.

#### **4.4 Local lettings criteria**

- 4.4.1 To ensure local housing needs are met, 90% of properties advertised through the Home-Link scheme will be labelled as available to applicants with a connection to the Council. 10% of advertised properties will be open to bidding from applicants with a connection to any of the Home-Link partner organisations. 25% of new growth homes will be made available for cross boundary moves. The relevant local area connection requirement will be clearly labelled on the property advert.
- 4.4.2 Where a property has local area connection criteria attached to it through a local lettings plan or s.106 agreement, then these properties will be let in line with the criteria within the lettings plan or the s.106 agreement. This

may differ from the connection to the local area criteria contained within this lettings policy and will be mentioned in the property advert.

#### **4.5 Housing needs bands**

4.5.1 Eligible and qualifying applicants will be placed in one of the following four bands in date order. Applicants placed in Band A will have the highest assessed need, Band D the lowest. When an applicant is placed in a housing needs band the same level of priority will apply with all partner organisations in the Home-Link scheme.

4.5.2 Any applicants accepted on to the housing register under section 3.4.3 of this policy (in a reasonable preference group but not meeting the connection to the local area criteria), will be placed in band C. However, they will only be considered for a property after any applicants in that band who have a proven connection with the local area.

#### **4.6 Band A: Urgent need**

Applicants with the following circumstances will be placed into Band A:

##### **a) Urgent transfer**

Where an existing council or housing association tenant needs to move urgently because of circumstances that could include:

- a) Major repairs are required on the property in which they live and which cannot be undertaken with the tenant living in the property.
- b) The property is being demolished.
- c) Urgent social need to move.

##### **b) Current supported housing resident**

Applicants leaving Social Services care or other supported accommodation, and are ready to move to a permanent home of their own. This will be subject to the council, Social Services (where applicable) and the landlord of the supported accommodation agreeing that the applicant is ready to move to their own home. If the applicant needs an on-going support package to allow them to live independently, confirmation that this will be put in place will also be required from the proposed support provider. The date that this priority is awarded (date in Band A) will be the date that the resident is ready to move to independent living, as recommended by their support worker.

The decision to apply this priority will be made by the relevant decision-making process in the district where the supported housing is based.

##### **c) Urgent health and safety risk**

The condition of the applicants current accommodation has been assessed by the Council or a partner organisation as posing an urgent health and safety risk. This will apply where the assessment has classified the accommodation as unsafe, or where there is a risk of imminent harm as identified in the assessment, which cannot be remedied in a reasonable time and where the health and safety risk has not been caused intentionally by the

applicant or a member of the applicant's household who will continue to live with them.

**d) Urgent medical need**

An urgent medical priority will be awarded where the assessment concludes that the applicant or household member has a severe medical condition or disability that is made substantially worse by their current housing. This would include people whose life is at risk due to their current housing conditions or who are completely housebound because of the type of accommodation they live in.

Priority will be given depending on how unsuitable the current accommodation is in relation to their medical or disability needs. The assessment is not purely based on the applicant's health conditions.

The following are only examples of circumstances that **may** qualify (but not in all circumstances) for an urgent medical need award:

- Those who, on leaving hospital, either have nowhere to live or have somewhere to live but it is unsuitable for their medical needs and cannot be made suitable through adaptations
- Those who have somewhere to live but it is unsuitable for their medical needs and cannot be made suitable through adaptations because of cost effectiveness, structural difficulties or the property cannot be adapted within a reasonable amount of time. Applicants will be individually assessed
- Where an applicant's condition is life threatening and the existing accommodation is a major contributory factor
- Where an applicant's health is so severely affected by the accommodation that it is likely to become life threatening
- Disabled persons (as defined under the Equality Act 2010) who have restricted or limited mobility and are limited by their accommodation and unable to carry out day to day activities or have difficulties accessing facilities e.g. bathroom, kitchen, toilet, inside and outside of their accommodation safely and the current accommodation cannot be reasonably adapted

**d) Lacking two or more bedrooms**

The household is assessed as lacking two or more bedrooms (see s.5.4).

**f) Under-occupancy by two or more bedrooms or release of adapted property**

Where an existing council or housing association tenant:

- a) Is assessed as having two or more bedrooms that are not required by the household (see s.5.4).
- b) Where a property has been adapted and the adaptations are no longer required. For example, if the person requiring the adaptations has moved or died.

**g) Homeless households (Main homelessness duty owed under s.193 (2) of the Housing Act 1996 as amended)**

Where the Council has accepted a duty under s193 (2) of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) and this duty has not been brought to an end.

The date in band will be the date that the applicant approached the Council for housing assistance and a Prevention or Relief Duty was triggered.

#### **h) Urgent multiple needs**

This priority will be applied where an applicant is assessed as having two or more Band B needs. This may include an application where two household members have the same assessed need e.g. two high medical needs.

For multiple needs in Band A please see 'emergency housing status' (see Chapter 5)

### **4.7 Band B: High need**

Applicants with the following circumstances will be placed into Band B:

#### **a) High health and safety risk**

The condition of the applicant's current accommodation has been assessed by the Council or a partner organisation as posing a high health and safety risk to them or members of their household. This will apply where the assessment has identified that the applicant is living in a property, the condition of which places them or members of their household at a high risk of harm as identified in the assessment, which cannot be remedied in a reasonable time and where the health and safety risk has not been caused intentionally by the applicant or a member of the applicant's household who will continue to live with them.

#### **b) High medical need**

A high medical priority will be awarded where the assessment concludes that the applicant or household member has a serious medical condition or disability that is made substantially worse by their current housing, but who are not housebound or whose life is not at risk due to their current housing. However, their housing conditions directly contribute to causing serious ill health and the condition of the property cannot be resolved within a reasonable period of time.

Documentary evidence will be required. Circumstances will be assessed and may need to be referred to a relevant health care professional. The following are only examples of cases that **may** qualify (but not in all circumstances) for a high medical need award:

- The applicant's accommodation is directly contributing to the deterioration of the applicant's health, such as severe chest condition, requiring intermittent hospitalisation because of chronic dampness in the accommodation
- Children with severe conditions such as autism, or cerebral palsy, where their long-term needs cannot be met without suitable accommodation
- A member of the household seeking accommodation is disabled and re-housing will enable that person to overcome physical barriers created by current accommodation e.g. steps and stairs
- A person with a severe disability requiring substantial adaptations to a property which is not, and cannot be provided for in their current accommodation
- A person with a terminal illness or long-term debilitating condition whose current accommodation is not having a significant impact on their condition but

where their quality of life would be significantly improved by moving to alternative suitable accommodation

- A person suffering with a diagnosed mental illness where the medical condition would be significantly improved by a move to alternative accommodation.

**b) Lacking one bedroom**

This priority will be applied where the household is assessed as lacking one bedroom based on the bedroom calculation in (see s.5.4).

**d) Under-occupancy by one bedroom.**

This priority will be applied where an existing council or housing association tenant is assessed as having one bedroom more than required by the household (see s.5.4).

**e) Victims of harassment, violence or abuse**

Where the Council or a partner organisation has investigated and identified that the applicant or a member of their household is being subjected to harassment or other conduct causing alarm and distress that will be improved by a move to alternative accommodation. Harassment might be, but is not limited to, harassment due to, race, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, mental health, physical disability, learning disability, religion, domestic abuse or harassment by a former partner or associated persons.

The Council will offer advice and support to assist the applicant in identifying possible ways to resolve the situation.

**f) Applicants owed a Prevention or Relief duty (under s, 189a or 189B of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended))**

Where an applicant is threatened with homelessness within 56 days, the Council will work with the applicant to try and prevent their homelessness. Those applicants who the authority has reason to believe may be in priority need in the event of a main duty assessment and have a local connection, will be placed in Band B whilst the prevention measures are being pursued and the applicants are actively co-operating with the prevention work being done.

Where homelessness prevention has not been possible and an applicant becomes homeless, they will be owed a relief duty. Those applicants who the authority has reason to believe may be in priority need in the event of a main duty assessment and have a local connection, will remain in Band B during this time. Where placed in temporary accommodation by the local authority, applicants will not be awarded additional priority on any other accommodation related factors.

This priority will no longer apply once the prevention and relief duties have ended and applicants will be re-assessed on their circumstances.

**g) Sleeping rough**

This priority will be applied where it has been confirmed that an applicant is sleeping rough and has no other accommodation available to them. The council will verify that an applicant is sleeping rough before awarding this priority. Rough sleeping priority will not be awarded when accommodation is available to the applicant, including a placement at a direct access hostel, but the applicant chooses not to take up this offer of accommodation. Applicants assessed as 'Sleeping rough' will not be awarded additional priority on any other accommodation related factors. This will apply even when duties have ended as described under Section 4.8 (d).

**h) Multiple needs**

This priority will be applied where an applicant is assessed as having three or more Band C needs. This may include an application where more than two household members have the same assessed need e.g. three medical needs.

**4.8 Band C: Medium need**

Applicants with the following circumstances will be placed into Band C:

**a) Medium medical need**

Medium medical need will be awarded where an applicant has a medical condition or disability that is affected significantly by their housing circumstances, not at a critical or serious impact level but a move would be likely to improve their quality of life.

**b) Need to move for social reasons**

Where the Council or a partner organisation has assessed the applicant's need to move for social reasons. An applicant will only be awarded this factor once irrespective of the number of social needs that may apply to their situation.

Examples where a social need to move may apply may include where an applicant:

- a) Needs to move to or within an area of the sub-region to give or receive support, and a proven level of support is required and can be given
- b) Has found employment in the Council area and needs to move closer to work, or will otherwise lose their employment, or suffer hardship
- c) Has staying contact with a child/children and is living in accommodation where the child/children are not allowed to stay overnight.
- d) Is living in a first floor or above property and has children less than 10 years of age as part of their household, or is more than 24 weeks pregnant.

**c) Housing conditions**

This priority will be applied where the applicant/s either lack or share one or more of these facilities with persons, who are not members of their household. Facilities may include:



- a) A living room
- b) Kitchen
- c) Bathroom

**d) Other homelessness**

Applicants:

- a) Who are owed a Prevention Duty by the council but have been assessed as not having a local connection as set out in this policy.
- b) Who are owed a Prevention or Relief Duty but where the council believe the applicant would be unlikely to have priority need in the event of a Main Duty assessment if the relief duty were to come to an end unsuccessfully, although see 5.2.4.
- c) Where the Relief Duty has come to an end unsuccessfully and the applicant has been determined to be intentionally homeless.
- d) Where the Relief Duty has ended unsuccessfully and it has been determined that the applicant is not owed the main duty as they are not in priority need.
- e) Who are owed the s193C (4) duty where the Relief Duty has been ended due to the applicants deliberate non-cooperation.
- f) Who are owed a main homelessness duty by a local authority that is not a partner organisation in Home-Link scheme but has a local connection as defined in this policy.
- g) Where the Relief or Main Duty has ended due to the applicant's unreasonable refusal of an offer.
- h) Where the Relief Duty has ended following the expiry of 56 days.

Applicants assessed as 'Other homelessness' will not be awarded additional priority on any other accommodation related factors.

Applicants given this priority will have their application reviewed on the anniversary of the decision, unless there is a change in their circumstances in the meantime.

**e) Reasonable preference but no connection to the local area**

This priority will apply to any applicant in one of the reasonable preference groups but who do not meet any of the criteria for connection to the local area in section 3.4.1 of this policy.

**4.9 Band D: Low housing need**

- 4.9.1 Any applicant who does not meet any of the criteria in Bands A, B and C will be assessed as having a low level of housing need and their application will be placed in Band D.
- 4.9.2 Anyone assessed as having sufficient financial resources to resolve their own housing need (see s.4.13) will be placed in band D. These applicants will only be considered for an offer of a property once all other bidding applicants who do not have sufficient financial resources to resolve their own housing need have been considered.

#### **4.10 Low priority**

4.10.1 In certain circumstances, applicants will be accepted onto the housing register, but their application will be considered as low priority as a result of unacceptable behaviour or circumstances that affects their suitability to be a tenant. In these circumstances their application will be placed in a housing needs band but they will not be actively considered for an offer of a tenancy or be able to express interest in available properties. Their application will remain in low priority until the applicant has shown that the circumstances or behaviour has changed so that they are considered suitable to be a tenant.

4.10.2 The following categories will be considered as low priority:

- a) Applicants with recoverable rent arrears, former rent arrears or other housing-related charges or debts, where these are not sufficiently high to class them as not qualifying to join the register (see s.3.5). Other than in exceptional circumstances, an applicant with outstanding recoverable rent arrears, former rent arrears or other housing-related debts will not be considered for an offer of a tenancy or eligible to bid for housing until they have shown a regular repayment record.
- b) Applicants with a history of unacceptable behaviour where this is not sufficiently severe to class them as not qualifying to join the register (see s.3.5).

4.10.3 All applicants who are considered low priority will be informed of this decision in writing, and how their application could be re-assessed, for example, by agreeing and keeping to an arrangement to make payments towards rent arrears, or by the applicant satisfying the council that the circumstances or unacceptable behaviour that made them unsuitable to be a tenant have changed.

4.10.4 The Council expects applicants to clear any recoverable housing related debts owed to any social housing landlord before an offer of a tenancy is made, where it is clearly within their means to do this (for example where the debt is relatively low and the applicant has a reasonable disposable income or has sufficient savings available).

4.10.5 When a financial assessment shows that the debt cannot be cleared immediately then a realistic and affordable repayment arrangement should be agreed to clear the debt. The applicant may become eligible to bid for property as long as they have made regular payments in line with the agreement they have made.

4.10.6 Applicants found to be low priority have a right to ask for a review of the decision (see Chapter 6).

#### **4.11 Intentionally worsening housing circumstances**

4.11.1 If an applicant is assessed as having intentionally worsened their circumstances, the effect of which would be to improve their housing priority irrespective of whether they had prior knowledge of the lettings policy, their level of housing need will be assessed on the basis of their previous accommodation, or previous circumstances at their current accommodation.

4.11.2 Applicants found to have intentionally worsened their circumstances have a right to ask for a review of the decision (see Chapter 6).

4.11.3 All applicants deemed to have intentionally worsened their circumstances will have their application reviewed on the anniversary of the decision, or earlier if there is a material change in their circumstances in the meantime.

4.11.4 If the Council has assessed and accepted the applicant is homeless or threatened with homelessness, has a priority need under the homeless legislation, but considers that they have become homeless intentionally; the applicant will be placed in Band C.

#### **4.12 Homeowners**

4.12.1 In line with the 'Allocation of accommodation: guidance for local housing authorities in England', the Council will usually only allocate social housing to homeowners in exceptional circumstances. However, the council may allocate housing that is in low demand. Applicants who are homeowners will usually be allocated a Band D status. In exceptional circumstances the Council may consider a homeowner's status. For example, the council may allocate housing to applicants who require support and whose age qualifies them for housing for older people, but who have insufficient financial resources to access housing for older people in the private sector.

#### **4.13 Financial resources**

4.13.1 All qualifying applicants are entitled to apply for housing regardless of income levels. However, if an applicant is assessed as having income and/or capital, which will enable them to resolve their own housing need through other tenures they will not receive any preference for social housing and when bidding will appear on the shortlist after all other applicants that do not have the resources to resolve their own need.

This assessment will be based on the following:

- a) The total income of the applicant/partner
- b) Any capital available to the applicant/partner
- c) Average property prices and rents in the area for the type of accommodation needed by the household
- d) The ability of the applicant/partner to rent a property in the private sector based on a realistic assessment of their financial position and commitments.
- e) The ability of the applicant/partner to acquire a mortgage and maintain required repayments based on a realistic assessment of their financial position and commitments.

4.13.2 Excluded from the above financial assessment will be any member of the Armed Forces who may have received a lump sum as compensation for an injury or disability sustained on active service.

4.13.3 An assessment of 'sufficient financial resources' will override the applicant's household needs assessment (and banding, if other than Band D). Applicants assessed as having sufficient financial resources will remain in Band D until such time as those resources are no longer

considered sufficient. Applicants can ask for this to be reviewed if and when their resources reduce or are rendered inaccessible, for example as a result of a Court Order, such that they are no longer able to resolve their own housing need.

#### **4.14 Officer review for Band A applicants**

4.14.1 Where an applicant has held Band A status for three months or more from their applicable date in band or the applicant has refused more than three reasonable offers of accommodation or has made little or no attempt to bid for accommodation the Council may carry out a review of their circumstances. This will result in either:

- a) A direct let – usually for statutorily homeless applicants living in temporary accommodation.
- b) Priority being maintained.
- c) Moving into a lower priority band if the circumstances under which they were placed in Band A no longer apply.
- d) Making the applicant unable to bid for a specified period, not exceeding 6 months

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## Chapter 5

### Assessment information and criteria

#### 5.1 Transfer applicants

5.1.1 Transfer applicants are those applicants who are tenants of a council or housing association property in the UK who wish to move to alternative accommodation.

#### 5.2 Homeless applications

5.2.1 Applicants who are already on the housing register will remain in their existing housing needs band whilst a homeless assessment is carried out (unless the criterion in s.5.2.3 below applies).

5.2.2 When a decision has been made by the Council that an applicant is owed a main homelessness duty under s.193 (2) of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) their application will be placed and remain in Band A until that duty is brought to an end (See s.4.6 (g))

5.2.3 A person who is threatened with homelessness may have an existing housing register application. Applicants already in Band A will retain their existing Band A status whilst homelessness prevention measures are pursued.

5.2.4 An applicant who is owed a Prevention or Relief Duty but would be unlikely to have priority need in the event of a Main Duty assessment will be placed in Band C (unless other circumstances are such that they are eligible for placement within a different band).

5.2.5 Applicants where a Main Duty decision has been reached but are intentionally homeless will be assessed as having Band C status in line with 4.8 (d) (c).

5.2.6 The main homelessness duty will come to an end, and a homeless applicant loses their priority under this section, when any of the circumstances within s.193 (6) or (7) of the Housing Act 1996 Act (as amended) are met. This will include an applicant:

- a) Accepting an offer of accommodation made through the Home-Link scheme
- b) Accepting an offer made through the direct let process within the policy (see s.5.10), or
- c) Accepting a suitable offer of accommodation in the private rented sector in line with section 193 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) and the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012
- d) Having been informed of the possible consequences of refusal and the right to request a review of the suitability of the accommodation, refuses a reasonable offer of suitable accommodation made through the direct let process, or in the private rented sector as outlined in c) above

S. 193(6) of the Housing Act 1996 Act (as amended) gives the full circumstances under which the main homelessness duty comes to an end.

### **5.3 Split families**

- 5.3.1 Where an application is made by family members who it would be reasonable to expect them to live together but they are unable to do so, the council will assess their particular circumstances to consider the best way of addressing their housing needs.

### **5.4 Bedroom requirement guidelines**

- 5.4.1 Bedroom requirements are generally determined in line with the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) regulations and these regulations will be applied when calculating bedroom requirements in overcrowding and under-occupancy assessments. They will also be used when calculating the size of property (number of bedrooms in the property) that an applicant will be able to bid on and eligible to be offered through the letting process.

Bedroom requirements are determined by the applicant's size of household. Ineligible household members may be included, subject to paragraph 2.1.2. Generally, the LHA regulations allow one bedroom each for:

- a) Every adult couple
- b) Any other adult aged 16 or over
- c) Any two children (aged under 16) of the same sex
- d) Any two children, regardless of sex, under the age of 10
- e) Any other child aged under 16
- f) A non-resident carer (claimant/partner or child have disability and need overnight care)

Applicants requiring help in calculating their bedroom entitlement can use the Directgov online bedroom entitlement calculator at <https://lha-direct.vo.a.gov.uk/BedRoomCalculator.aspx>.

If, in exceptional circumstances, the council considers that a room designated by a landlord as a bedroom is not capable of being used as a bedroom, they may re-assess overcrowding for the household.

- 5.4.2 Single and joint applicants of pensionable age may be eligible to be considered for one and two bedroom properties considered to be housing for older people.
- 5.4.3 A pregnant woman expecting her first child will be assessed as requiring two bedrooms from week 24 of her pregnancy.
- 5.4.4 An applicant may be assessed as requiring an additional bedroom where the Council considers there are special circumstances.

### **5.5 Staying contact with children**

- 5.5.1 A child, or children, living between parents at separate addresses will only be considered as having one main home unless there are exceptional circumstances that mean that both parents should provide a home. A Court Order allowing access to children, or confirming residence between separated parents does not mean that the council must consider that the

child is part of an applicant's household for the purposes of a housing register application.

- 5.5.2 An assessment will be made by the council as to which parent's property is considered as the child's main home. If the council considers that an applicant does not provide the child with his or her main home then the child will not be considered as part of the housing register application. The child would then not be considered as part of the bedroom requirements when assessing overcrowding or under-occupation. They would also not be considered when assessing the size of property (number of bedrooms) that the application would be eligible to bid for and offered through the lettings process.

## **5.6 Medical assessments**

- 5.6.1 Medical assessments will be carried out for any applicants who believe that their medical condition or disability is affected by their current accommodation. The applicant will be required to fill in a self-assessment medical form, or provide information from a medical professional, detailing the effect that their current accommodation has on their medical condition or disability. These forms will be assessed and where appropriate referred to a medical professional or appropriately trained officer for their opinion of how the medical condition is affected by the applicant's housing circumstances.

## **5.7 Harassment and domestic abuse**

- 5.7.1 Where the applicant is a victim of harassment, domestic abuse or anti-social behaviour, the Council will offer advice and support to assist applicants in identifying possible ways of resolving their situation.

## **5.8 Applicant subject to Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements, (MAPPA)**

- 5.8.1 Where an applicant is subject to Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), the Council will liaise with the panel to ensure an appropriate housing solution to meet the needs of the applicant and the community.

## **5.9 Emergency housing status**

- 5.9.1 An emergency housing status may be awarded to applicants in exceptional circumstances, where remaining in their current accommodation may cause risk of death or serious injury, where an applicant has been assessed as having multiple needs that fall within Band A, where an applicant is terminally ill, is already in Band A and, in the opinion of a qualified medical practitioner, is likely to have less than 12 months to live, or where the applicant's home is to be demolished under one of the council's or partner organisation's redevelopment schemes. An applicant with emergency housing status who bids for a home will be considered as a priority above all other applicants in any other band.

## **5.10 Direct Lets**

- 5.10.1 Most properties will be advertised through the Home-Link scheme. However, in certain circumstances some properties may be let directly to

applicants and these properties will be let outside of the allocation scheme. Where an applicant is identified as requiring a direct let the case will be referred to a senior officer for approval. The list below gives some examples of where this may happen.

- a) Where the council has accepted a main homelessness duty towards a household but the household has not found suitable accommodation during a period of choice through the Home-Link scheme.
- b) Where the council has accepted a s189 (b) relief duty towards a household but the household has not found suitable accommodation during a period of choice through the Home-Link scheme.
- c) Where an applicant and their household require a specific size, type or adapted property and the applicant has not been able to find suitable accommodation through the Home-Link scheme.
- d) Where an existing social housing tenant is required to move to make the best use of stock, including where their home is to be demolished, and they have not been successful in finding a suitable property through the Home-Link scheme.
- e) Where the applicant has emergency housing status.
- f) Use and occupation cases.
- g) Where an applicant in Band A has refused 3 reasonable offers or made little or no effort to bid.

5.10.2 Information as to which properties have been allocated though direct lets will be made available through the Home-Link feedback information.

5.10.3 Direct lets will be made based on a suitable property becoming available. Where a property becomes available that is suitable for more than one applicant with a direct let status, the date applicants were awarded a direct let status will be used as a deciding factor in deciding to whom the property will be let.

## **5.11 Direct lets to homeless applicants**

5.11.1 Homeless applicants who are owed a main homelessness duty by the Council (under s.193 (2) of the Housing Act 1996, as amended) will be placed in Band A and will be able to bid for properties through the Home-Link scheme. Their date in band will be the date they originally applied to the council as homeless.

5.11.2 Where homeless applicants in Band A have not been offered a tenancy through the bidding process at the point at which the Council has accepted the main homelessness duty, the council reserves the right to make a direct let of a property, either in the social or private rented sector.

5.11.4 Where a homeless applicant is to be allocated a property through the direct let process the Council has responsibility for determining the suitability of any allocation. They will do this by assessing the household's particular needs and circumstances within the context of the general housing conditions in the area.

5.11.5 Where a homeless applicant is offered accommodation through a direct let, but does not feel that this offer is suitable; they have the right to request a



review of the decision that the offer is suitable. For details of the review process (see Chapter 6).

5.11.6 As the property does not have to remain available during the review of the suitability and reasonableness of a direct let, homeless applicants are advised to accept and move in to the accommodation pending the decision on review. If the review outcome is unsuccessful for the applicant they will still have accommodation to live in whilst they consider their further options.

5.11.7 If a homeless applicant refuses a direct let and it is then deemed suitable at review, the main homelessness duty will come to an end. They will also have to vacate any temporary accommodation that is being provided.

5.11.8 If, on reviewing an applicant's refusal of a direct let, the property offered is considered to be unreasonable or unsuitable, the duty under s.193 (2) will continue and the applicant will be made a further offer of suitable accommodation.

## **5.12 Applicants who require a specific size, type or adapted property.**

5.12.1 Where an applicant requires a specific size, type or adapted property, they will be placed in the appropriate housing needs band, but may be offered a direct let if the Council have a shortage of suitable properties. For example:

- a) An applicant requires a very large property to accommodate their household.
- b) An applicant requires a property of a specific type in a specific area of the district.
- c) An applicant requires a property with specific adaptations and such a property becomes available.
- d) Where an applicant is willing to move to release a property larger than required to meet their housing needs.

## **5.13 Housing for older people (also known as sheltered housing)**

5.13.1 Housing for older people will be advertised through the Home-Link scheme. Housing for older people is generally available to applicants over 60 years of age but the age limit can be lower on some properties and it will be clearly shown in the advert. Prior to an offer of a tenancy, applicants will be subject to an assessment by the landlord of the property to establish their support needs and suitability to living in housing for older people.

## **5.14 Extra care properties**

5.14.1 Extra care properties are for older people who need the additional support services that are provided. Extra care properties are not often advertised through Home-Link. Where they are advertised, applicants who bid will be assessed based on their care needs by a specialist panel.

## **5.15 Refusals of direct let**

5.15.1 Where an applicant (other than a person owed the main homelessness duty) refuses a reasonable offer of a direct let a senior officer will review the reasons for the refusal and the applicant may lose any housing priority they held,

dependent on the reasons for the offer refusal. Applicants have the right to ask for a review of this decision (see Chapter 6).

## **5.16 Local lettings plans**

5.16.1 Local lettings plans are used across the Home-Link area to help create balanced and sustainable communities. Where a local lettings plan applies, it will be stated in the property details when advertised. Details of any local lettings plans will be available from the local authority in whose area the property is situated. Some local lettings plans may ask for an applicant to have a local connection to a specific parish or village. In those cases, the connection criteria will be stipulated in the legal agreement for that development.

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## Chapter 6

### 6.1 Reviews of decisions

6.1.1 The Council will carry out reviews of assessment decisions as required.

6.1.2 Examples of circumstances that may be reviewed include:

- a) Multiple need in band
- b) Emergency housing status
- c) Moving people up a band or down a band
- d) Priority assessments, in complex cases.
- e) Housing people in different accommodation to designated need size
- f) Low priority decisions
- g) Direct lets
- h) Being restricted from bidding

The above list is not exhaustive.

### 6.2 Statutory reviews

6.2.1 An applicant has the right to request a review of certain decisions made under part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended). These are:

- a) Decisions about the facts of the applicant's case which are likely to be, or have been, taken into account in considering whether to accept onto the housing register or to allocate housing accommodation to the applicant
- b) Lack of any reasonable preference based on previous behaviour s167 (2C) Housing Act 1996 (as amended)
- c) Ineligibility for an allocation based on immigration status s160ZA (9)
- d) Decisions that an applicant does not qualify for entry on to the housing register (see sections 3.3 to 3.5)

6.2.2 Decision letters issued in respect of housing applications will advise the applicant of their right to request a review and provide appropriate guidance on how to do this. An applicant can obtain further details of the review procedure from the Council.

6.2.3 A request for a review of a decision can be made in writing or verbally to a member of staff at the Council. The request should be made within 21 days following the notification of the decision. Reviews will normally be considered within 56 days of the request being received but may be completed sooner. The applicant will receive a written response outlining the result of the review.

6.2.4 An applicant will only be entitled to one internal review. If an applicant is still unhappy following the review of a decision, they can make a complaint through the council's complaints procedures. If they continue to be dissatisfied after the council complaints procedure is concluded, they can contact the Local Government Ombudsman (see s.6.4) or seek to challenge the decision through a judicial review.

6.2.5 Statutory reviews will be undertaken by a designated officer who was not involved in the original decision, and who is senior to the original decision-making officer.

### **6.3 Homeless reviews**

6.3.1 Homeless applicants have the right to request a review of certain decisions made by the Council in respect of their homeless application. Within the context of the council's lettings policy this includes the decision to bring to an end the main homelessness duty by making a suitable offer of permanent accommodation through the housing register through the direct let process or in the private rented sector (see s.5.11).

6.3.2 If an applicant wishes to ask for the review of the Council's decision following a homeless application they must request this within 21 days of the date of the decision letter.

6.3.3 If an applicant wishes to request a review of the reasonableness of an offer or the suitability of the property, this must be made within 21 days of notification of a decision to make the offer. Late review requests can be considered under exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the council.

6.3.4 Applicants who request reviews of decisions about suitability of accommodation will be advised to accept and move into accommodation pending the outcome of their review request. If the review goes in their favour alternative accommodation will be provided as quickly as possible. However, if the reasonableness and suitability of the offer is upheld the applicant will still have accommodation to live in whilst they consider their further options.

6.3.5 The applicant has the right of appeal to the county court if they are dissatisfied with the decision on a review.

### **6.4 The Local Government Ombudsman**

6.4.1 The Local Government Ombudsman investigates complaints of injustice arising from maladministration by local authorities and other bodies. They can be asked to investigate complaints about most council matters including housing.

6.4.2 If an applicant is not satisfied with the action the council has taken, and has exhausted the council's own complaints procedure, they can send a written complaint to the ombudsman.

6.4.3 The Local Government Ombudsman can be contacted at:

Local Government Ombudsman  
PO Box 4771 53-55 Butts Road  
Coventry  
CV4 0EH

Tel: 0300 061 01614

Website: [www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)

If an applicant wishes to make a complaint against a housing association, they should contact:

The Housing Ombudsman Service

PO Box 152

Liverpool

L33 7WQ

Tel: 0300 111 3000

Website: [www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

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## Chapter 7

### 7.1 Letting of accommodation

7.1.1 Properties will be advertised through the Home-Link scheme. The advertising will be carried out on a regular basis and for specific periods of time, known as advertising cycles.

### 7.2 Labelling property adverts

7.2.1 All adverts will include a description of the property and any other relevant information, for example rent charge, property size, length and type of tenancy, local facilities, disabled adaptations or if the property is housing for older people. The property will be labelled to show who is able to express an interest in it (known as bidding), for example, where a local connection is required, or if there is an age restriction on the property.

7.2.2 At least 1% of adverts will offer preference to social housing tenants needing to move for employment reasons (who would otherwise suffer hardship) under the Right to Move scheme.

7.2.3 Applicants should check the information contained in the property advert labelling to see if they qualify to be considered for the property.

### 7.3 Bedroom requirements

7.3.1 Bedroom requirements will generally be determined in line with the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) regulations (see s.5.4).

7.3.2 Landlords may choose to allow the under-occupation of certain properties including those that they advertise. The property advert will explain this on those properties the landlord is willing to under-occupy. Where a landlord is willing to allow under-occupation, this will generally be by allowing an applicant to be considered for one bedroom more than their assessed Local Housing Allowance (LHA) entitlement (for example allowing applicants with an assessed two bedroom LHA need to be considered for a 3-bedroom property). All households bidding for these properties and meeting the labelling criteria will be considered in line with the shortlisting criteria contained in 7.4.1 below.

7.3.3 Where a landlord is willing to allow under-occupation an affordability assessment will be completed to ensure that the applicant being considered for the property is able to meet rent payments and household utility bills. If the applicant is assessed as being unable to afford the rent payments and household utility bills the landlord may bypass them on the shortlist.

### 7.4 Shortlisting

7.4.1 After the end of an advertising cycle a shortlist of applicants bidding for the property and meeting the labelling criteria will be produced. Applicants will be ranked in order of their priority band with Band A above Band B, Band B above Band C, and Band C above Band D. Where more than one applicant in the same priority band appears on the shortlist they will be ranked in date

order as determined by their date in band (see 2.3). In circumstances where there is more than one applicant in the same band with the same date in band, the applicant with the earliest registration date will appear higher on the shortlist. If there is more than one applicant with the same band, date in band and registration date an officer will make an allocation decision based on the best use of the housing stock and needs of the applicants.

7.4.2 Preference during shortlisting will be given to applicants within a band who have a proven connection to the local area.

7.4.3 When a shortlist of applicants is completed the landlord of the available property may offer an accompanied viewing of the property to a group of the highest priority applicants. This is to ensure that if the applicant who tops the shortlist decides not to take the tenancy, the property can be quickly offered to the next person on the shortlist.

7.4.4 After viewing the property the applicant at the top of the shortlist will be given 24 hours to accept or refuse the offer. If an applicant is offered a tenancy (verbally or in writing) and does not reply to accept that offer within the deadline given, the landlord will take this as a refusal of the offer. If the offer is refused the next person on the shortlist will be offered the property. The landlord will work down the shortlist in order.

7.4.5 In exceptional circumstances an officer may make a decision to bypass an applicant on a shortlist, for example, if, in doing so, the offer could put a person at risk of any harm. Any such decisions will be explained fully to the applicant in writing by the landlord making the decision. This is known as a 'sensitive let'.

## **7.5 Formal offer of the property**

7.5.1 Once the applicant has confirmed their acceptance of the tenancy the landlord of the property will write to confirm the formal offer of the tenancy. The Home-Link system will then not allow that applicant to be considered for any further properties and once the tenancy starts their housing register application will be cancelled.

7.5.2 Once the property is ready to let the landlord of the property will complete the tenancy sign up.

## **7.6 Withdrawal of offers**

7.6.1 In exceptional circumstances an offer of a property may be withdrawn, for example:

- a) Where there has been a change in the applicants' circumstances
- b) Where the successful applicant has rent arrears or other housing related debts that had previously not come to light
- c) Following verification the applicant is not eligible for the property
- d) Where an error has been made in the advertising criteria
- e) Where an offer of accommodation could put a person at risk of any harm
- f) Where the property is no longer available to let

## **7.7 Refusing an offer of accommodation**

7.7.1 Usually, if an applicant refuses an offer of accommodation made through Home-Link, they will remain in their housing needs band. If an applicant unreasonably refuses three or more offers of a property made through Home-Link or has made little or no attempt to bid for accommodation, an officer may contact the applicant to offer support and assistance and verify their circumstances. The applicant may be moved into a lower priority band or be unable to bid for a specified period not exceeding 6 months.

## **7.8 Allocations to staff, council members or their family members**

7.8.1 Members of staff, their close family and elected members who require housing with the Council may apply for housing in the same way as other applicants. Their status should be disclosed on the application form at the time of applying.

7.8.2 If an applicant who is a member of staff, elected member or a member of their direct family, makes a successful bid for a property the senior officer will be informed and must approve the letting prior to the formal offer being made.

## **7.9 Tenancy management outside the scope of the lettings policy**

7.9.1 The following tenancy management areas are not included as part of this lettings policy as they are not included within part 6 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended):

- a) Mutual exchanges
- b) Introductory/starter tenancies converted to secure/assured tenancies
- c) Where a secure/assured tenancy of a property is assigned by way of succession to the same property
- d) Where a secure/assured tenancy is assigned to someone who would be qualified to succeed to that tenancy if the secure/assured tenant died immediately before the assignment
- e) Where court orders are made under one of the following:
  - i. Section 24 of the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973
  - ii. Section 17 (1) of the Matrimonial and Family Proceedings Act 1984
  - iii. Paragraph 1 of schedule 1 to the Children Act 1989



## **Chapter 8**

### **Confidentiality and access to information**

#### **8.1 Applicants' rights to information**

8.1.1 Applicants have the right to request such general information as will enable them to assess:

- a) How their application is likely to be treated under the lettings policy (including whether they are likely to be regarded as a member of a group of people who are to be given preference by this policy, (see Chapter 3)
- b) Whether housing accommodation appropriate to their needs is likely to be made available to them.

8.1.2 Applicants have the right to request information held about their application which is likely to be, or has been, taken into account when considering whether to allocate them housing.

#### **8.2 Data protection**

8.2.1 When an applicant applies to the Home-Link scheme the partner organisations will only ask for information that they need to assess their eligibility and housing needs. The partner organisations will collect and keep data in accordance with the council's guidelines on handling personal, sensitive personal or special categories of personal data. You can find out how the Council hold and use information about you on the Council's website.

8.2.2 These guidelines are in accordance with the national regulations which cover both electronic and manual records and the govern everything we do with the data, including collecting, storing, using and disposing of it.

8.2.3 Personal, sensitive personal or special categories of personal data held about applicants will not be disclosed to third parties apart from:

- a) Where the individual who is the subject of the confidential information has consented to the disclosure
- b) Where disclosure is made in accordance with an information sharing protocol that complies with the ICO's current data sharing code of practice
- c) Where the council or a partner organisation is required by law to make such disclosures

#### **8.3 Requesting information**

8.3.1 Applicants are able to request copies of the information held regarding their application. Please note that we cannot provide you with personal information about other people if doing so will breach the regulations.

## Appendix 1 Home-Link Partner Organisation List

### Local Authority

#### Cambridge City Council

Mandela House  
4 Regent Street  
Cambridge  
CB2 1BY  
Email: [cbl@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:cbl@cambridge.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.cambridge.gov.uk](http://www.cambridge.gov.uk)

#### South Cambridgeshire District Council

South Cambridgeshire Hall  
Cambourne Business Park  
Cambourne  
Cambridge  
CB23 6EA  
Email: [cbl@scambs.gov.uk](mailto:cbl@scambs.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.scambs.gov.uk](http://www.scambs.gov.uk)

#### East Cambridgeshire District Council

The Grange  
Nutholt Lane  
Ely  
Cambs  
CB7 4PL  
Email:  
[customerservices@eastcambs.gov.uk](mailto:customerservices@eastcambs.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.eastcambs.gov.uk](http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk)

#### Huntingdonshire District Council

Pathfinder House  
St Mary's Street  
Huntingdon  
Cambridgeshire  
PE29 3TN  
Email: [housingservices@huntsdc.gov.uk](mailto:housingservices@huntsdc.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk](http://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

#### Fenland District Council

Fenland Hall  
County Road  
March  
Cambridgeshire  
PE15 8NQ  
Email:  
[info@fenland.gov.uk](mailto:info@fenland.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.fenland.gov.uk](http://www.fenland.gov.uk)

### LSVT landlord

#### Sanctuary Housing

Avro House  
49 Lancaster Way Business Park  
Ely  
Cambs  
CB6 3NW  
Email:  
[east-lettings@sanctuary-housing.co.uk](mailto:east-lettings@sanctuary-housing.co.uk)  
Website: [www.sanctuary-housing.co.uk](http://www.sanctuary-housing.co.uk)

#### Chorus Homes

Brook House  
Ouse Walk  
Huntingdon  
Cambridgeshire  
PE29 3QW  
Email: [info@chorushomesgroup.co.uk](mailto:info@chorushomesgroup.co.uk)  
Website: [www.chorushomesgroup.co.uk](http://www.chorushomesgroup.co.uk)

#### Clarion Housing

Reed House  
Peachman Way  
Broadland Business Park  
Norwich  
NR7 0WF  
Email:  
[March-Home-Link@myclarionhousing.com](mailto:March-Home-Link@myclarionhousing.com)  
Website: [www.myclarionhousing.com](http://www.myclarionhousing.com)

**Local Authority**

**West Suffolk Council**

West Suffolk House  
Western Way  
Bury St Edmunds  
Suffolk  
IP33 3YU

Email: [customer.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:customer.services@westsuffolk.gov.uk)

Website: [www.westsuffolk.gov.uk](http://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk)

**LSVT landlord**

**Flagship Housing Group**

Keswick Hall  
Keswick  
Norwich  
Norfolk  
NR4 6TJ

Email: [info@flagship-housing.co.uk](mailto:info@flagship-housing.co.uk)

Website: [www.flagship-housing.co.uk](http://www.flagship-housing.co.uk)

**Havebury Housing Partnership**

Havebury House  
Western Way  
Bury St. Edmunds  
Suffolk  
IP33 3SP

Email: [office@havebury.com](mailto:office@havebury.com)

Website: [www.havebury.com](http://www.havebury.com)

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## Appendix 2

### Glossary of Terms

**Adapted properties** – a property that has been adapted for an applicant with disabilities.

**Advertising cycle** – how often properties are advertised and available to make a bid on.

**Advertised** – properties that are advertised and are available for applicants to bid for through Home-Link.

**Age restrictions** – where a property is labelled, as only being available to applicants of a certain age.

**Application number** – a unique housing register number generated by the computer system.

**Bedroom eligibility** – how many bedrooms a household is assessed as needing.

**Bid** – the process used by applicants in registering an interest in an available property.

**Choice based lettings (CBL)** – a method of allocating social and affordable homes which have become available for letting by openly advertising them, and allowing applicants to bid for these.

**Customer/applicant** – is either a tenant of a partner organisation (including those in temporary accommodation) or a housing applicant on the Home-Link housing register.

**Date of registration** – the date an application form is registered with a partner organisation.

**Date in band** – the date an application is placed in a housing needs band and used as the applicable date when shortlisting.

**Decision making organisation** – the organisation that made a decision about a housing or homeless application.

**Direct let** – a property that is offered directly to an applicant, without them having to bid.

**Domestic abuse** – is threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (physical, psychological, sexual, financial or emotional) by a partner, former partner or a family member.

**Housing options** – looking at the number of ways in which an applicant or customer might be assisted and supported to find a solution to their housing

needs. Housing options may include private rented accommodation, mutual exchange, or even a help to buy product.

**Housing register** – a list of those requesting, eligible and qualifying for housing.

**Housing related debts** – are defined as recoverable current rent arrears, former tenant arrears, outstanding re-chargeable repairs, current and former housing related service charge arrears and court costs. They may also include Council Tax debts or Housing Benefit overpayments.

**Joint application** – where more than one applicant applies to join the housing register on one application form.

**Labelling properties** – describing who is eligible to bid for a property and if there will be a preference applied.

**Local Connection** – The connection an applicant has to a specific area.

**Local elected members** – each local authority is governed by a group of elected members also known as councillors.

**LSVT landlord** – Large Scale Voluntary Transfer, where a local authority has sold its housing stock to a Registered Provider

**Mutual exchange** – a scheme which allows two social housing tenants to swap their homes.

**Partner organisations** – all the councils that are partners to the Home-Link scheme.

**Reasonable Preference** – The phrase used in the Housing Act to describe those types of housing need that should be given a priority in an local allocations policy.

**Registered Providers** – also known as housing associations. These are social landlords who also provide social and affordable rented homes for which applicants/customers can bid for through the Home-Link scheme.

**Regular Forces** – Means the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines, Her Majesty's regular army or the Royal Air Force

**Reserve Forces** – Means the Royal Fleet Reserve, the Royal Naval Reserve, the Royal Marines Reserve, the Army Reserve, the Regular Reserves, the Royal Air Force Reserve or the Royal Auxiliary Air Force

**Section 193C (4)** – The Main Housing Duty does not apply, but the authority will still have a duty to ensure that accommodation is available for occupation by the applicant.

**Transferring tenant** – an applicant who is currently a tenant of a local authority or registered provider and who wishes to move.

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**TITLE: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Against Scams Partnership (CAPASP) newsletter**

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 14 June 2021

Author: Shona McKenzie

[W30]

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1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To consider the Council becoming an official supporter of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Against Scams Partnership (CAPASP) and to consider individual Member sign-up.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 Members are asked to:

- (i) Note the benefits of the Council becoming a CAPASP Supporter
- (ii) Note the benefits of Members becoming a CAPASP supporter and details of how to sign up individually
- (iii) Agree for the Council to become an official supporter of CAPASP

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 CAPASP, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Against Scams Partnership (CAPASP) is a county-wide partnership of public, private and voluntary sector organisations committed to taking a stand against scams. It was launched in December 2018 and aims to make Cambridgeshire and Peterborough a scam-free county. East Cambs Community Safety Partnership (ECCSP) joined as a Partner and a Member of the Board in 2018 and has been involved in the Action Planning from the start. Together with the Partnership, and through delivery of Eyes and Ears, the ECCSP want to help residents identify the signs of a potential scam so that they can look out for their neighbours in the community and make East Cambridgeshire a safer place to work and live.

3.2 Scams are fraud and fraud is crime. Being a victim of this crime can have a devastating impact. These crimes are often targeted at people in communities that are vulnerable for a variety of reasons, including poverty, isolation, frailty, disability, cognitive impairment, and by the very nature of them being specifically targeted. The internet is a delivery channel for 84% of identity fraud with only 5% of scams being reported.

#### 4.0 ARGUMENTS/OPTIONS

4.1 ECDC and/or individual ECDC Members would become an official 'supporter' of CAPASP.

4.2 A CAPASP supporter is someone who passes on communications from the partnership to others in the local community to help keep people safe.

4.3 The benefits of ECDC becoming an official CAPASP supporter are:

- ECDC would be listed as an official supporter on the CAPASP website.
- ECDC will receive useful information from CAPASP to share with the community. This includes information on the latest scams, or new funding opportunities, for example.
- ECDC will have access to resources such as posters and leaflets. These include general information on scams and details of local support which can also be shared with staff.

4.4 The benefits of individual Council Members becoming official CAPASP supporter are:

- Members can be listed as a Supporter on the CAPASP website.
- Members will receive useful information including newsletter, latest scams from CAPASP directly to their email rather than through a third party. This will allow Members to share directly with their community, friends and family.
- Members will have access to resources such as posters and leaflets. These include general information on scams and details of local support which can also be shared within their Parish.

4.5 Members are encouraged to share the CAPASP newsletter and alerts onwards (and follow as many of the "5 Simple Steps" as they are able) and make their involvement official by registering as a supporter.

4.6 Here are five quick-win steps you could take to increase the resilience of local residents to scams and fraud.

1. Print and display scams awareness posters on parish noticeboards and in key locations such as your village or town hall, schools, churches, pubs and post office.
2. As many councillors as possible to become a 'Friend Against Scams' by completing the 20 minute 'express' online training at [www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/elearning/Cambridgeshire](http://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/elearning/Cambridgeshire)
3. Promote the easy online Friends Against Scams training across your community by including the link on your parish council website, community Facebook page and in your local newsletters.
4. Ideally identify a local SCAMchampion or champions to spread the word on how to spot a scam. This could include having a display of information, running their own

Friends Against Scams training session, holding a drop-in advice session or anything else that you can think of.

5. Distribute scams awareness materials to the most vulnerable members of your community and those who cannot access the internet. Perhaps your Friends Against Scams could hand deliver leaflets, hand out information at coffee mornings or give it to the organisers of local community groups and local churches to share with their members.

- 4.7 CAPASP list supporters on the website and celebrate great things they are doing in their newsletters.

## 5.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 Information about local scams and sources of support can make a real positive impact on people. There will also be an opportunity as a supporter to celebrate events and awareness raising the CAPASP website and other social media therefore it is recommended that the Council becomes a supporter of CAPASC for the reasons outlined at 4.3 and that individual Members consider signing up as supporters for the reasons outlined at 4.4.

## 6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 Signing up as a CAPASP supporter is free of charge.

- 6.2 No CIA/EIA required

## 7.0 APPENDICES

- 7.1 'Friend Against Scams' 20 minute 'express' online training  
[www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/elearning/Cambridgeshire](http://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/elearning/Cambridgeshire)

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### Background Documents

### Location

Room  
F008, The  
Grange

### Contact Officer

Shona McKenzie, Community Safety  
Officer  
(01353) 665555  
shona.mckenzie@eastcambs.gov.uk





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**TITLE: Quarter 4, 2020/21 Performance Report for the Waste and Street Cleansing Services**

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 14 June 2021

Author: James Khan, Head of Street Scene

[W31]

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1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To provide the Committee with the Quarter 4, January - March 2021, performance report for the delivery of the waste and street cleansing services by East Cambs Street Scene Ltd (ECSS).

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 Members are requested to note the performance of service delivery, for the fourth quarter.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 This quarter started with the final collections following the Christmas and New Year day changes. All changes in collection dates were effectively communicated with all collections continuing with little impact.

3.2 This quarter continued to see all services supplied with little to no disruption. Like previous quarters of this challenging year, the successful delivery of the services has been heavily reliant on the hard work and determination of all ECSS's employees.  
We continue to be thankful to them for their commitment to their duties.

3.3 With COVID continuing to be present, the possible impact on staff continued to apply pressure to service delivery. This comes in addition to the existing pressure normally faced by sickness absence seen in this quarter.

However, ECSS faced little to no absences relating to COVID with minimal employees having to take minimal time off work due to receiving their first round of vaccinations.

With employees slowly receiving their vaccinations, this provides greater security and reduces the possible impact on service delivery.

3.4 Demand for bulky waste collections remained high for this quarter with all three collection days in the week operating at or near total capacity.  
This demand continues to evidence the effectiveness of the service with every successful bulky waste collection reducing the chance that the waste could be illegally fly tipped somewhere in the district.

3.5 Communication has continued to take a differing approach with the development team continuing to utilise social media and ECSS's dedicated Facebook page to share information with the public.

Our Facebook presence continues to grow and evidences a valuable platform for us to communicate with residents and local groups.

As of 31 March, our Facebook page has 239 followers and 215 page likes.

During the quarter we released 42 new posts which had an average reach of 561.

- 3.6 ECSS’s development team has also been working closely and creating positive relationships with local and community litter picking groups.

With the increase in groups across the district, ECSS has been able to share resources and information with these groups, ensuring any waste gathered while picking, is disposed of responsibly by ECSS.

Building of these relationships has improved successful reporting of waste and litter related issues in the district and assisted in ensuring issues are resolved quickly.

- 3.7 March saw the release of two of the three consultation documents related to the Governments Waste and Resource Strategy.

These two consultations covered Extended Producer Responsibility, which aims to place an additional tax on producers for the use of certain materials and Deposit Return Scheme, which seeks to include a tax place on products at the point of sale, aimed to incentivise consumers to return the empty vessel to a dedicated deposit point to claim back the additional fee.

Returns to these consultations are due by the 4 June 2021. The Council will be submitting their own response along with a shared response through the RECAP partnership and will ensure our support and concerns are heard.

The third and final consultation is scheduled for release on the 7 May.

- 3.8 During this quarter, ECSS officers have continued to gather the vital information required to prepare round reconfiguration proposals. ECSS remains committed to reviewing the collection rounds to ensure it is providing an efficient and practical service.

Completing this work will also aid in highlighting possible carbon reduction savings which supports the Council’s pledge to become carbon neutral by 2050.

#### 4. PERFORMANCE UPDATE

- 4.1 Detailed in Table 1 is an update on ECSS’s performance in relation to the management and resolution of service requests against a performance target of 80% completion set within the service level agreement (SLA).

Table 1: Update on ECSS Performance in Relation to the Management and Resolution of Service Requests within the Time Specified Resolution (as a %)

Service	Jan			Feb			Mar		
	Month (%)	Cum (%)	Trend	Month (%)	Cum (%)	Trend	Month (%)	Cum (%)	Trend
Refuse	98	91	▲	99	91	-	99	92	▲
Recycling	77	92	▼	88	92	-	99	92	-
Green	98	96	-	99	96	-	93	96	-
Bulk & Clinical	94	97	-	100	97	-	96	97	-
Street Cleansing	94	92	▲	86	91	▼	82	90	▼

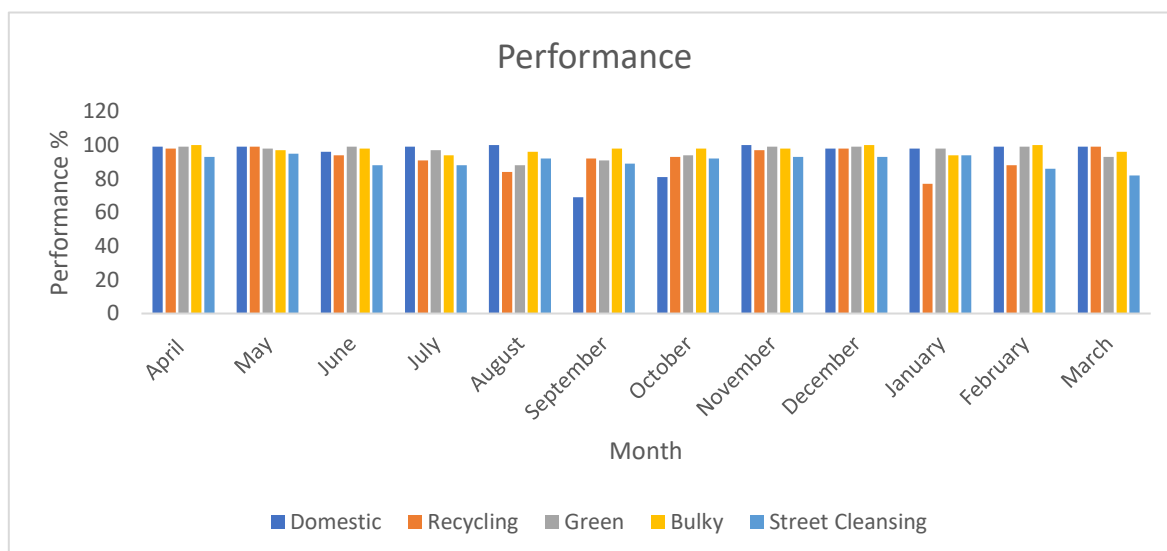
**Note:** The RAG rating relates to the month on month cumulative performance trend.

Green indicating achievement of the performance target set.

Yellow indicating performance is within 15% of target set.

Red indicating performance is below 15% of target set.

- 4.2 The reduction in recycling performance in January and continuing in the first few weeks of February, is linked to bin deliveries. Due to a delay in the supply of wheeled bins, a percentage of bin deliveries failed to meet the SLA timeframe. The remainder of the service continued to perform positively.
- 4.3 All service areas continued to operate strongly in the last quarter, with all service areas end of year cumulative performance rates at 90% or above.
- 4.4 The COVID outbreak continued to apply pressure to operational performance, with the continued risk of staff absences playing a considerable factor. Thankfully, with well managed absences and resource deployment, all services we delivered throughout the year and high-performance figures were sustained.
- 4.5 The graph below highlights the performance for the entire 2020/21 financial year.



5.0 **SICKNESS ABSENCE**

5.1 Outlined in Table 2 below are the targets for sickness absence set for the waste and street cleansing services. They reflect that the majority of staff work outside in all weathers carrying out physically arduous tasks.

These targets reflect similar targets set in other high performing waste and street cleansing service delivery organisations.

**Table 2: Sickness Absence Targets Set for the Waste and Street Cleansing Services**

Staffing Category	Number of Staff	Annual Sickness Target (Hours)	Annual Sickness Target (Working Days)	Monthly Sickness Absence Target (Hours)	Monthly Sickness Absence Target (Working Days)

HGV Drivers (Waste)	16	672	96	56	8
Driver/Operative (Waste)	3	126	18	10.5	1.5
Operatives (Waste)	29	1,218	174	101.5	14.5
HGV Drivers (Street Cleansing)	3	126	18	10.5	1.5
Driver/Operatives (Street Cleansing)	3	126	18	10.5	1.5
Operatives (Street Cleansing)	7	294	42	24.5	3.5
Ops Management & Admin	5	210	30	17.5	2.5
Waste Management Team	3	126	18	10.5	1.5

5.2 The sickness report contained in Table 3 below highlights the fourth quarter's sickness rates against the targets set, highlighted above. One day sickness absence is equivalent to 7 hours.

The table below includes a RAG rating with the following explanation:

**Green rating = Actual is less or equal to the Cumulative Target**

**Amber rating = Actual is up to 12 hours greater than the Cumulative Target**

**Red rating = Actual is in excess of 12 hours of the Cumulative Target**

5.3 Due to the time of year, sickness levels have increased as assumed. These increases are genially down to an increase in coughs and colds and are typical of a workforce who work outside in all weather conditions.

5.4 Many cases seen through this quarter are continuous long-term sickness cases where employees are suffering from pre-existing injuries or health conditions. This is common in an aging workforce predominantly focused on manual labour.

### **HGV Drivers (Waste)**

Two employees suffering from long term sickness related to existing health conditions.

### **Operatives (Waste)**

One employee has been absent for the entire quarter due to the deterioration of pre-existing injury who is awaiting surgery to rectify.

### **Operatives (Street Cleansing)**

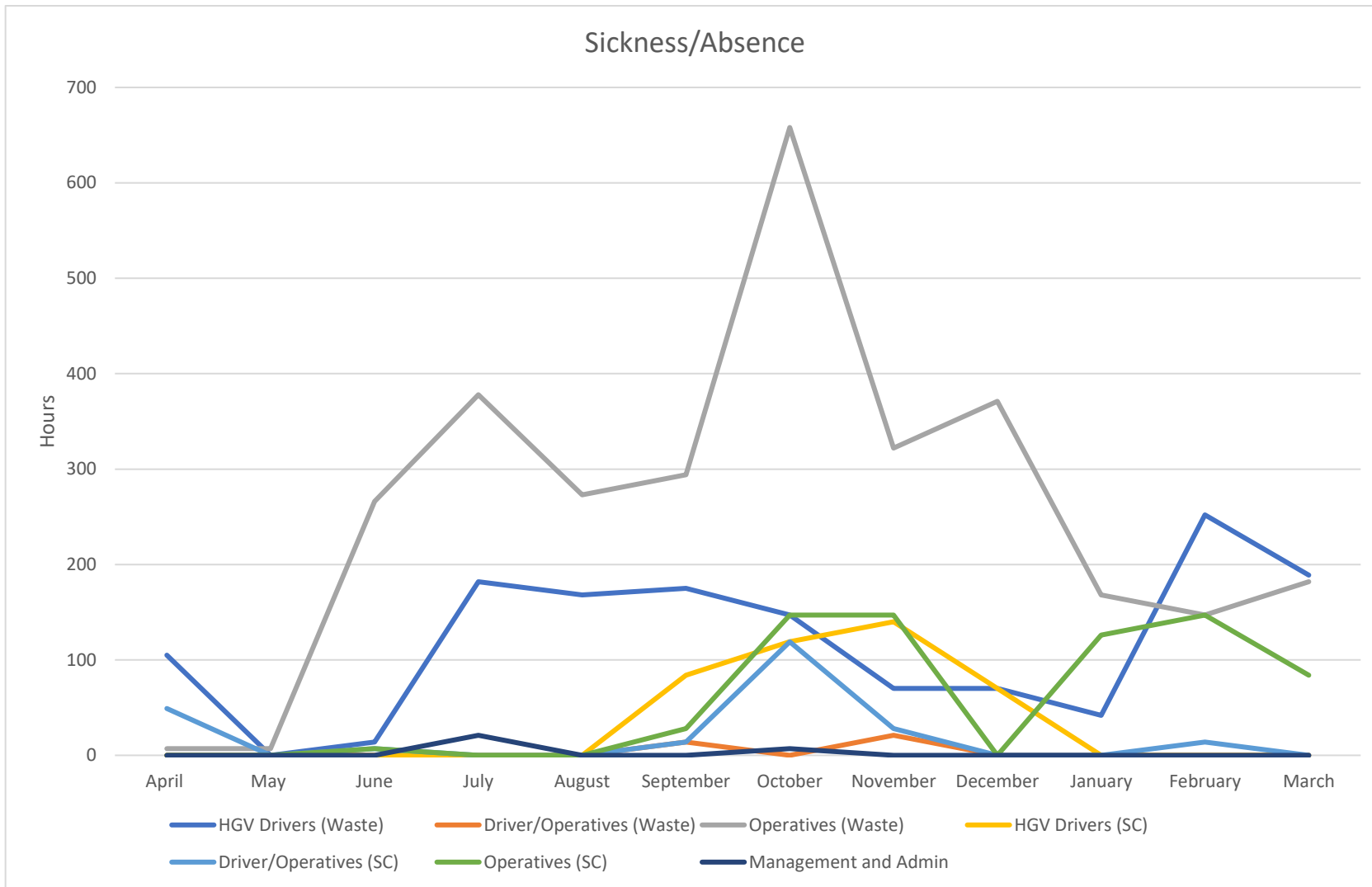
One employee has been absent for the quarter due to suffering a heart attack and undergoing emergency treatment.

One employee has been absent due to a pre-existing health condition.

**Table 3: Monthly Sickness Absence Report for the Waste and Street Scene Services**

Staff Category	HGV Drivers (Waste)	Driver/ Operatives (Waste)	Operatives (Waste)	HGV Drivers (SC)	Driver/ Operatives (SC)	Operatives (SC)	Ops Mgmt. & Admin Staff	Waste Mgmt. Team
<b>Number of Staff/Target Hours</b>	<b>16 Target Hours - 56</b>	<b>3 Target Hours - 10.5</b>	<b>29 Target Hours - 101.5</b>	<b>3 Target Hours - 10.5</b>	<b>3 Target Hours - 10.5</b>	<b>7 Target Hours - 24.5</b>	<b>5 Target Hours - 17.5</b>	<b>3 Target Hours - 10.5</b>
<b>January</b>	Actual = 42 Hours	Actual = 0 Hours	Actual = 168 Hours	Actual = 0 Hours	Actual = 0 Hours	Actual = 126 Hours	Actual = 0 Hours	Actual = 0 Hours
<b>February</b>	Actual = 252 Hour	Actual = 0 Hours	Actual = 147 Hours	Actual = 0 Hours	Actual = 14 Hours	Actual = 147 Hours	Actual = 0 Hours	Actual = 0 Hours
<b>March</b>	Actual = 189 Hours	Actual = 0 Hours	Actual = 182 Hours	Actual = 0 Hours	Actual = 0 Hours	Actual = 84 Hours	Actual = 0 Hours	Actual = 0 Hours
<b>Cumulative Performance for the Quarter</b>	Target = 168 Hours Actual = 483 Hours	Target = 31.5 Hours Actual = 0 Hours	Target = 304.5 Hours Actual = 497 Hours	Target = 31.5 Hours Actual = 0 Hours	Target = 31.5 Hours Actual = 14 Hours	Target = 73.5 Hours Actual = 357 Hours	Target = 52.5 Hours Actual = 0 Hours	Target = 31.5 Hours Actual = 0 Hours
<b>RAG Rating</b>								

5.5 The graph below outlines the sickness rates for the financial year 2020/21.



6.0 RECYCLING RATES

6.1 Table 4 is a summary of the total tonnage of waste collected and the recycling rate for the year 2020/21. The recycling target for this year is 59%.

Month	Tonnage All Waste Collected	Tonnage All Waste Recycled (Recyclates + Garden Waste)	% of Waste Recycled	Trend (Target = 59% of Waste being Recycled) - RAG
April	3307	1962	59	
May	3271	1958	60	
June	3120	1884	60	
July	3330	2019	61	
August	2629	1555	59	
September	3169	1925	61	
October	2822	1600	57	
November	2868	1618	56	
December	2539	1185	47	
January	2755	1332	48	
February	2306	1134	49	
March	3024	1665	55	
<b>Total</b>	<b>35140</b>	<b>19837</b>	<b>56</b>	

6.2 The recycling rate for the financial year is set at 59%. This is an increase of 1% from the last financial year.

6.3 As the table highlights, the tonnage collected through the year fluctuates substantially. This is mainly due to the fact that garden waste tonnage is used, in conjunction with recycling waste, to calculate the overall recycling rate.

The heavy fluctuation in the amount of garden waste produced during some months, has a detrimental effect on the overall average recycling rate at year end.

6.4 Comparing to last year's tonnage figures (2019 - 2020), it is clear to see that the COVID pandemic has had an impact on the tonnage of all waste collected.

This year witnessed an increase of 9% of total tonnage collected (32,227 tonnes in 2019/20 to 35,140 tonnes in 2020/21) and an increase of 9.8% in recyclable waste collected (18,066 tonnes in 2019/20 to 19,837 tonnes in 2020/21).

6.5 It is clear that continued efforts are needed to reduce the tonnage of household waste collected, to have the greatest impact on the district's recycling rate.



The proposals within the Government's strategy outline substantial changes to the way material is produced, disposed of and processed which aims to enforce the changes needed to achieve increased recycling rates.

- 6.6 ECSS aims to continue its efforts next year to educate and inform residents of the importance of reducing the quantities of waste created and how to recycle efficiently, which will have a positive effect on the districts recycling rate.

## 7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The financial year 2020/21 was unfortunately presented with the additional challenge of operating through a global pandemic.

Although at times in the year ECSS suffered increase pressure around staffing and resource demand and availability, all services continued to operate, providing residents with constant reliable collections.

Additionally, street cleansing services continued and ensured that when residents could, they could enjoy clean and maintained open spaces.

ECSS were able to adjust to the ever-changing control measures that had an impact directly on our employees and the level of service that was required.

The lessons learnt and experiences leave ECSS in a positive position to face any other challenges that present themselves in the future.

- 7.2 This year, employees have excelled in thinking differently and finding ways to provide solutions and work around the difficulties they faced.

Working in this way has opened up possibilities and methods of working which may have not been accessed until future years.

This has allowed ECSS to expand its communication methods and build new relationships which it may have not done previously.

- 7.3 The increase in residents working from home and the associated increase in waste collected, although presenting an additional challenge operationally, evidenced that our residents are great recyclers and truly care about dealing with waste responsibly.

This information provides valuable reassurances that any changes to waste collection will likely be received positively and our residents will continue to perform highly.

- 7.4 Performance levels have remained fairly consistent through the year, supporting the reviews, changes and new systems we have implemented during the year to create a stable and sustainable platform for the future of ECSS.

- 7.5 Although stunted by the pandemic, ECSS's communication and education plans continue to grow. The development and investigation into new methods of communication allow us to better reach all demographics of the district.

## 8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 The waste and street cleansing services are being delivered within the contract value.

8.2 Supporting financial report in Appendix 2.

9.0 APPENDICES

**Appendix 1:** Summary of ECSS's Performance against the Annual Stretch Target for Resolving Service Requests: January – March 2021 (Service Requests through the Call Centre and Website Closed off (80%) within the Specified Response Time).

**Appendix 2:** End of year, 2020/21 financial overview report.

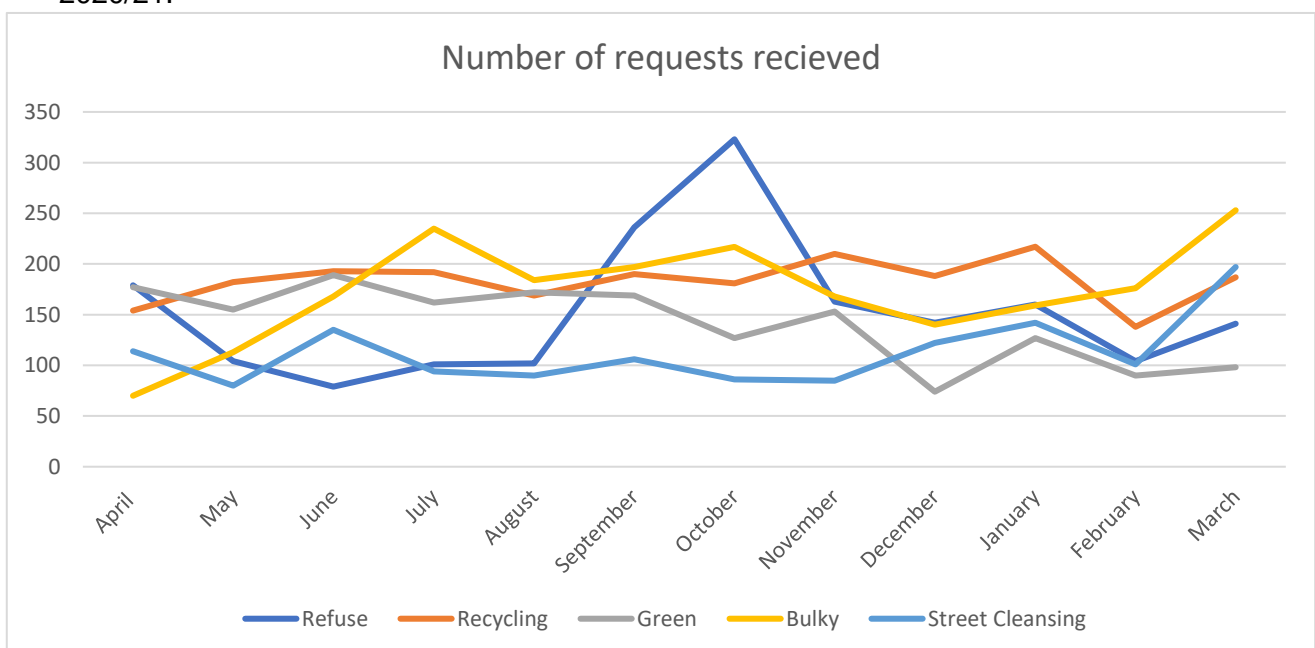
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<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
None	The Grange,	James Khan
	Ely	Head of Street Scene
		E-mail: james.khan@eastcambs.gov.uk

**Appendix 1: Summary of ECSS's Performance against the Target for Resolving Service Requests: January, February, March 2021 (Service Requests through the Call Centre and Website Closed off (80%) within the Service Level Agreement (SLA)).**

Performance Summary – January – March 2021	Monthly			Cumulative			Trend
Service Stream	Service Requests Due to be Closed	Service Requests Completed within the SLA	Performance against the Target (80%)	Service Requests Received	Service Requests Closed and Completed within the SLA	Performance against the Target (80%)	Positive or Negative Cumulative Trend against previous month
<b>Domestic Collections</b>							
January	160	156	98%	1591	1446	91%	▲
February	104	103	99%	1695	1549	91%	-
March	141	139	99%	1836	1688	92%	▲
<b>Recycling Collections</b>							
January	217	168	77%	1881	1733	92%	▼
February	138	121	88%	2019	1854	92%	-
March	187	186	99%	2206	2040	92%	-
<b>Garden Collections</b>							
January	127	124	98%	1509	1448	96%	▲
February	90	89	99%	1599	1537	96%	-
March	98	91	93%	1697	1628	96%	-
<b>Bulky and Clinical Collections</b>							
January	159	149	94%	1654	1603	97%	-
February	176	176	100%	1830	1779	97%	-
March	253	244	96%	2083	2023	97%	-
<b>Street Cleansing</b>							
January	142	134	94%	1066	979	92%	▲
February	101	87	86%	1167	1066	91%	▼
March	197	161	82%	1364	1227	90%	▼

The below graph highlights the total number of requests received for the financial year 2020/21.



**Note: Set Response Times for Services Request:**

<b>Waste Collection Services</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Missed waste, recycling and garden waste collections:</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Missed waste, recycling and garden waste collections assisted collections:</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Black Bags Not Left – Annual Delivery:</b> Response time to close of the request is 10 working days.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Spillages all collection services:</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Operative behaviour - collection services:</b> Response time to close of the request is ten working days from the receipt of the request.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Refuse collection vehicle incidents:</b> Response time to close of the request is ten working days from the receipt of the request.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Bins not returned to property – recycling and garden waste collections:</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Replacement bin requests for recycling and garden waste services:</b> Response time to close of the request is ten working days from the receipt of the request.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Additional blue bin requests:</b> Response time to close of the request is ten working days from receipt of the request.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Additional clear sacks request for recycling collections:</b> Response time to close of the request is ten working days from the receipt of the request.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Brown bags not left garden waste collections:</b> Response time to close of the request is 5 working days</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Second brown bin requests:</b> Response time to close of the request is ten working days from receipt of the request.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Service requests for bulky items:</b> Response time to close of the request is ten working days from the receipt of the request.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Service requests for clinical collections:</b> Response time to close of the request is ten working days from the receipt of the request.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Missed collection for bulky items:</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Missed collection for clinical waste:</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li></ul>

<b>Street Cleansing</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Litter picking and manual sweeping:</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mechanical Sweeping:</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Emptying Litterbins:</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Emptying Dog waste bins:</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Removal of Dead Animals and Birds:</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Removal of Dog waste:</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Hazardous Flytip Removal: (including Hazardous Spillages):</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Non-hazardous Flytip Removal:</b> Response time to close of the request is 48 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Offensive Graffiti Removal:</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Non-offensive Graffiti Removal:</b> Response time to close of the request is 48 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Autumn Leafing Clearance:</b> Response time to close of the request is 48 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Drug Paraphernalia clearance:</b> Response time to close of the request is 24 hours, with requests received on a Friday having to be closed the following Monday.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>New and replacement litterbins:</b> Response time to close of the request is 10 working days from the receipt of the request.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>New and replacement dog waste bins:</b> Response time to close of the request is 10 working days from the receipt of the request.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Other:</b> Response time to close of the request is 5 working days from the receipt of the request.</li> </ul>

**TITLE: Management Accounts – 12 months to March 2021.**

Date: 14 June 2021

Author: ECSS Finance Manager

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**1.0 ISSUE(S)**

1.1 Members are asked to note the contents of this report, which covers the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

**2.0 FORMAT**

2.1 A summary view of the management accounts for the period. Please be aware that the field work for the 2020/21 financial audit is being conducted as this report was prepared so the figures are subject to the final audit review. These are management accounts only, the full statutory accounts will be presented following the completion of the audit and approval by ECSS Board.

**3.0 REVENUES**

3.1 The actual additional costs incurred as a result of the Covid19 pandemic were £77,597, so the difference between that and the additional revenue agreed by East Cambs District Council of £91,000 will now be returned to ECDC.

3.2 Increases in the sales of additional bins and bulky collections accounted for £25k more revenue, with recycling credits being £36k higher than planned.

**4.0 STAFFING COSTS**

4.1 Overall a slight increase in overall staffing costs against budget of £23k. This is however only a 1.2% variance so is relatively minimal given the actual values and the large number of variables that affect this area of cost, especially during 2020/21.

4.2 At the end of the year, most staff had large amounts of unused holiday to carry forward into 2021/22 and so a large accrual (£54k) was made for this as it occurred during 2020/21. This will then be released as and when staff take their holiday or carried forward until they do. Had it not been for this, then there would have been an underspend on budget on overall staffing costs.

**5.0 NON-STAFFING COSTS**

5.1 Vehicle costs were £38k lower than budget.

- 5.2 Due to a complicated insurance claim involving one of the Company's vehicles a cost was incurred in sourcing a replacement vehicle for quite a period which may be able to be recovered from a third-party insurer. However, as this is not certain it has been decided to allow for the cost in the 2020/21 financial year. Discussions are ongoing with insurers over whether this cost can and will be recovered.
- 5.3 Waste disposal costs were slightly higher than anticipated due to higher tonnages collected in the year. There is the associated increase in revenue for this mentioned in 3.2

## **6.0 PROFIT**

- 6.1 A small profit of £3.5k was recorded for the whole year. This would have been a lot higher save for the one-off incident mentioned in 5.2.
- 6.2 With each year of the first three years of trading being profitable, accumulated profits for ECSS now amount to £8k.

**ECSS: SUMMARY P&L YEAR-ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

	2020-21		
	Actual	Plan	Variance
Management Fee	2,780,205	2,780,205	-
Additional Covid 19 Management Fee	77,597	91,000	(13,403)
Third Party Income	111,085	85,682	25,403
Recycling Credits	418,265	382,625	35,640
Other Income	17,056	16,596	460
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>3,404,208</b>	<b>3,356,108</b>	<b>48,100</b>
Management & Administration	337,072	353,470	(16,398)
Core Staffing	1,403,805	1,374,385	29,420
Overtime Costs	79,035	71,731	7,304
Agency Costs	115,516	112,547	2,969
<b>Staffing Costs</b>	<b>1,935,427</b>	<b>1,912,133</b>	<b>23,294</b>
Vehicle Dept Repayment	214,299	214,299	(0)
Vehicle costs inc Maintenance	406,249	444,180	(37,931)
Insurance	93,891	48,321	45,570
Fuel	253,764	246,834	6,930
Supplies & Services Costs	148,792	155,000	(6,208)
Waste Disposal	199,943	180,224	19,719
Premises Costs	52,320	65,000	(12,680)
Support Services Costs	70,747	69,860	887
Miscellaneous	21,234	15,000	6,234
Vehicle Depreciation	4,004	5,257	(1,253)
<b>Non-Staffing Costs</b>	<b>1,465,242</b>	<b>1,443,975</b>	<b>21,267</b>
			-
<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>3,400,670</b>	<b>3,356,108</b>	<b>44,562</b>
			-
<b>Profit (Loss)</b>	<b>3,538</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,538</b>





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**TITLE: Annual Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies**

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Author: Democratic Services Officer (Committees)

[W32]

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1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To receive the annual reports from Council representatives on Outside Bodies within the responsibility of the Operational Services Committee and appoint a new representative to the Cambridgeshire County Council Health Committee.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 That a new appointment be made to fill the vacancy on the Cambridgeshire County Council Health Committee (paragraph 3.4).

2.2 That the annual reports from Council representatives on Outside Bodies within the responsibility of the Operational Services Committee be noted (Appendix 2).

3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

3.1 The Council's Constitution specifies in the Terms of Reference for the Operational Services Committee that it should appoint representatives to Outside Bodies within its remit, from the wider membership of Council, for a period of up to 4 years. The most recent appointments were made at the Operational Services Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

3.2 Following the Committee re-structuring and subsequent amendments to the Constitution, approved at Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021, the responsibility for Leisure Services moved from the Finance & Assets Committee to the Operational Services Committee. Consequently, responsibility for appointments to both the Paradise Centre Management Committee and the Soham and District Sports Association has transferred to the Operational Services Committee.

3.3 The list of Outside Bodies currently within the remit of the Operational Services Committee is attached as Appendix 1, which includes the names of the appointed representatives.

3.4 Attention is drawn to a vacancy on the Cambridgeshire County Council Health Committee created by the resignation of Cllr David Ambrose Smith from that role at the end of the 2020/21 municipal year. The Conservative Group has proposed that Cllr Lis Every be appointed to fill the vacancy.

3.5 Attached as Appendix 2 are the relevant pages of the Outside Bodies Booklet which detail the aims and activities of the Outside Bodies within the remit of the Operational Services Committee, and the annual reports from the Council representatives.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

4.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required.

4.3 Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) not required.

5.0 APPENDICES

5.1 Appendix 1: Summary of the Outside Bodies and representatives for 2021-22 under the remit of the Operational Services Committee.

Appendix 2: The relevant pages of the Outside Bodies Booklet which detail the aims and activities of the Outside Bodies within the remit of the Operational Services Committee, and the annual reports of the Council representatives.

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<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
None	Room 214 The Grange, Ely	Caroline Evans Democratic Services Officer (Committees) (01353) 616457 caroline.evans@eastcambs.gov.uk

**SUMMARY OF OUTSIDE BODIES AND REPRESENTATIVES 2021-22 UNDER  
THE REMIT OF THE OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

ORGANISATION	REPRESENTATIVE(S)	ECDC CONTACT OFFICER
Cambridgeshire County Council Health Committee	<b>Vacancy</b> ( <i>Lead Member</i> ) Julia Huffer ( <i>Substitute</i> )	Environmental Services Manager: Liz Knox
Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Panel	Alan Sharp ( <i>Lead Member</i> ) Julia Huffer ( <i>Substitute</i> )	Director, Operations: Jo Brooks
Citizens Advice West Suffolk	Amy Starkey ( <i>Lead Member</i> ) Alan Sharp ( <i>Substitute</i> )	Communities & Partnerships Manager: Lewis Bage
Community Safety Partnership	Lis Every ( <i>Lead Member</i> ) Christine Ambrose Smith Jo Webber ( <i>Substitute</i> ) Alan Sharp ( <i>Substitute</i> )	Neighbourhood Support Officer: Shona McKenzie
Health & Wellbeing Board	Julia Huffer	Environmental Services Manager: Liz Knox
Historic England – Heritage Champion	Lis Every	Planning Manager: Rebecca Saunt
Paradise Centre Management Committee, Ely	David Ambrose Smith	Senior Leisure Services Officer: Victor Le Grand
RECAP Board	Julia Huffer	Environmental Services Manager: Liz Knox
Sanctuary Housing Services Ltd – East Cambridgeshire Management Committee	Christine Ambrose Smith Jo Webber	Housing & Community Safety Manager: Angela Parmenter
Soham and District Sports Association	Ian Bovingdon Dan Schumann	Senior Leisure Services Officer: Victor Le Grand

# EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL



## REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES WITHIN THE REMIT OF THE OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE 2021-22

(Including reports from representatives for 2020-21)

Organisations (including 2020-21 reports)

	page no.
Cambridgeshire County Council Health Committee .....	3
Cambridgeshire Health & Wellbeing Board .....	4
Cambridgeshire Police & Crime Panel .....	5
Citizens Advice West Suffolk.....	6
Community Safety Partnership.....	8
Historic England – Heritage Champion .....	11
Paradise Centre Management Committee – Ely.....	13
RECAP Board.....	14
Sanctuary Housing Services Ltd – East Cambridgeshire Management Committee.....	16
Soham & District Sports Association .....	19

## CAMBRIDGESHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH COMMITTEE

### **Aims & Activities**

- The County Council's public health duty including health improvement, individual and community wellbeing, and reduction of health inequalities;
- To respond as appropriate to central government consultation relating to policy or legislation falling within the remit of the Committee;
- The review and scrutiny of any matter relating to the planning, provision and operation of the health services in Cambridgeshire;
- To report to the Secretary of State for Health on any proposals for substantial change to any part of the NHS's services within Cambridgeshire.

<b>Representation</b>	<b>Meetings per year</b>	<b>Status of Member</b>
One Member (and substitute)	6	Non-voting member

<b>Expenses paid by Organisation</b>	<b>Insurance Provision</b>
No	Yes

<b>Category of Officer Support</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Representatives for 2020/21</b>
1	Environmental Services Manager: Liz Knox	Cllr David Ambrose Smith (Lead Member) Cllr Julia Huffer (Substitute)

### 2020/21 Report from Cllr Ambrose Smith

*(Attended eight of nine meetings.)*

This is a County Council committee and I have found that the committee members meet the Aims & Activities of the committee in full.

With the detail and scrutiny / challenge members give every topic it is reassuring for all parts of Cambridgeshire to know that the NHS's services are very well protected.

I do not believe that continued representation on this Outside Body is required. The county members cover the committee's remit extremely well and as a non-voter, to date I have found that I have little to add to the debates/discussions. Representation on the Health and Wellbeing Board with its aims and activities is a more appropriate outside body for ECDC to continue membership.

### 2020/21 Report from Cllr Huffer

*(Not required as substitute.)*

<b>Representatives for 2021/22</b>
<b>Vacancy</b> (Lead Member) Cllr Julia Huffer (Substitute)

## CAMBRIDGESHIRE HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD

### **Aims & Activities**

The remit of the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board is to work to promote the health and wellbeing of Cambridgeshire's communities and its focus is on securing the best possible health outcomes for all residents.

The Member should provide local information to the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Board, related to health and wellbeing within East Cambridgeshire and the impact (actual or potential) of any relevant policy changes, service changes, proposals, and/or identified need.

<b>Representation</b>	<b>Meetings per year</b>	<b>Status of Member</b>
One Member	4-6	Voting Member

<b>Expenses paid by Organisation</b>	<b>Insurance Provision</b>
No	-

<b>Category of Officer Support</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Representative for 2020/21</b>
1	Environmental Services Manager: Liz Knox	Cllr Julia Huffer

### 2020/21 Report from Cllr Huffer

*(Not advised of any meetings; none attended)*

Looking at strategies to improve local health and community provision throughout the Combined Authority. The Board is looking at ways to reach vulnerable members of our community in the most effective way, from Early Years to all areas of Adult Social care.

We need to be able to contribute to the benefit of our residents, the work is still at an early stage and the Covid 19 crisis has highlighted the importance of the invaluable contribution that local organisations bring to our District, it's my hope that we can find a way to harness the extraordinary efforts and knowledge gained by the numerous Covid 19 support teams set up all over our District.

Continued representation is worthwhile because it is vital we work to find ways to improve the delivery of services to the most vulnerable in our District.

<b>Representative for 2021/22</b>
Cllr Julia Huffer



## CAMBRIDGESHIRE POLICE & CRIME PANEL

### **Aims & Activities**

- To hold the Police & Crime Commissioner (P&CC) to account on behalf of the public;
- To review the draft Police & Crime Plan;
- To publicly scrutinise the Commissioner's Annual Report;
- To review and scrutinise decisions and actions by the P&CC;
- To review and veto the Commissioner's proposed precept levels.

<b>Representation</b>	<b>Meetings per year</b>	<b>Status of Member</b>
One Member (and substitute)	4	ECDC Representative

<b>Expenses paid by Organisation</b>	<b>Insurance Provision</b>
£920 per annum (maximum) From a central fund administered by Peterborough City Council	No

<b>Category of Officer Support</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Representatives for 2020/21</b>
1	Director, Operations: Jo Brooks	Cllr Alan Sharp (Lead Member) Cllr Julia Huffer (Substitute)

### 2020/21 Report from Cllr Sharp

*(Attended all nine meetings.)*

The work of this body is an important part of achieving the District Council's Corporate Objectives in terms of protecting the public and ensuring that they are represented in holding the PCC to account.

The start of the year caused challenges with the pandemic and getting meetings arranged.

The Panel had a meeting to confirm a new Chief Executive after the previous CE left to join the NHS after being seconded during the early part of the pandemic.

The approval and challenge on the budget proposals made by the PCC was discussed.

Continued representation on this body is worthwhile to continue to hold the PCC to account and have input into the police issues that affect and concern residents.

### 2020/21 Report from Cllr Huffer

*(Not needed as substitute.)*

<b>Representatives for 2021/22</b>
Cllr Alan Sharp (Lead Member) Cllr Julia Huffer (Substitute)

## CITIZENS ADVICE WEST SUFFOLK

### **Aims & Activities**

The Citizens Advice (CA) aims to ensure that individuals do not suffer through ignorance of their rights and responsibilities or of the services available; or through an inability to express their needs effectively.

Its main activity is the provision of a centre for advice and guidance, but the CA may also: publish reports, leaflets, etc; arrange exhibitions, meetings, lectures and classes; encourage or undertake research and disseminate results.

The Management Committee (Trustee Board) is responsible for the resource management of the CA i.e. employment of staff, utilisation of funds and compliance with NACAB rules. It prepares the annual budget, grant applications, and formulates a rolling programme for the development of the CA.

<b>Representation</b>	<b>Meetings per year</b>	<b>Status of Member</b>
One Member	12	ECDC representative, without decision-making powers.

<b>Expenses paid by Organisation</b>	<b>Insurance Provision</b>
No	Yes

<b>Category of Officer Support</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Representatives for 2020/21</b>
2	Communities & Partnerships Manager: Lewis Bage	Cllr Amy Starkey (Lead Member) Cllr Alan Sharp (Substitute)

### 2020/21 Report from Cllr Starkey

*(Attended three of eight meetings.)*

Each year, Citizens Advice helps give millions of people the knowledge and confidence to find a way forward, providing advice, education and support, and influencing policies and practices that affect clients, many of which live within our district.

The impact in 2019-20:

- Helped 2.8 million people get the advice they needed in 2019-20.
- To meet the Future of Advice ambitions, CAB worked collaboratively and innovatively to help more people access support.
- Impact data helps better understand the effect the advice has on people's lives, and the difference made to local communities. In 2019-20, over 80% of the people helped said their problem was resolved following CAB advice.

- For every £1 spent on the Citizens Advice service, CAB benefit clients by £12.60 and save the government and public services £685 million. CAB estimate the total social and economic value to society to be £4 billion. In 2019/20, 89% of people using our local services said they would recommend CAB to a friend. After contacting a local Citizens Advice, 77% of people were helped to solve their problem.
- In January 2020, the trustees agreed to increase the number of formal trustee board meetings each year from 4 to 6, along with other meetings and events, to help trustees shape the organisation's strategic direction and develop as a team.

Carol Eagles was appointed as Chief Officer in 2020, replacing Jane Ballard.

Carol first joined Citizens Advice West Suffolk in 2003 as a volunteer adviser when her youngest child started school. In 2006 she joined the paid staff as a Money Adviser and has held various roles over the years. For the past 11 years she has been Chief Officer at Citizens Advice Mid Suffolk for four days a week whilst still working one day a week at Citizens Advice West Suffolk.

In November 2020 following the retirement of the Chief Officer she took up the full time post of Chief Officer.

In her spare time Carol is a Guide Leader and helps her daughter run a Rainbow Unit.

Carol replaces the previous CO as the main ECDC contact. There is good contact at officer level as well as member representation.

I think representation and contact is important to ensure that ECDC understand the needs and challenges of residents in the South of the District.

#### 2020/21 Report from Cllr Sharp

*(Attended one meeting as substitute.)*

The work of this body fits in with the Corporate Objectives of the Council in providing support to members of the public in the south of the District.

A new Chief Executive was appointed during the year and reports were received on issues raised by the pandemic that have affected the Board.

It is very important to support the West Suffolk CAB, that delivers front-line services in the south of the District and be at the table to understand the issue.

<p><b>Representatives for 2021/22</b></p>
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<p>Cllr Amy Starkey (Lead Member) Cllr Alan Sharp (Substitute)</p>
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## COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP

### **Aims & Activities**

- Section 6 of the 1998 Act requires the responsible authorities<sup>1</sup> (commonly referred to collectively as a **Community Safety Partnership** (CSP)) in a local government area to work together in formulating and implementing strategies to tackle local crime and disorder in the area.
- To work in partnership with other organisations and groups to implement the Strategies.
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies.
- To contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of local people by improving Community Safety and reducing crime and disorder (and the fear of crime) in East Cambridgeshire

<b>Representation</b>	<b>Meetings per year</b>	<b>Status of Member</b>
Three Members (and one substitute)	4	Representative of ECDC (Lead Member has voting rights)

<b>Expenses paid by Organisation</b>	<b>Insurance Provision</b>
No	No

<b>Category of Officer Support</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Representatives for 2020/21</b>
1	Community Safety Officer: Shona McKenzie	Cllr Lis Every (Chair & Lead Member) Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith Cllr Alan Sharp Cllr Jo Webber (Substitute)

### 2020/21 Report from Cllr Every

*(Attended all three formal meetings and multiple informal meetings.)*

The 1988 Crime and Disorder Act (and subsequent related Acts) places a statutory duty on the Police, Local Authorities and Probation, together with Health Authorities and other agencies, to develop and implement a strategy for reducing crime and disorder in their area. Our Partnership has been formed to carry out the provisions of the Act and to prepare and implement a joint crime and disorder reduction strategy in the District with common objectives and targets for the Police, the Local Authorities and other partnership agencies and to implement this strategy within the local community.

The partnership commissions a strategic assessment and ensures it is updated every year. The contents of this form the consultation with the persons and bodies specified by the Home Secretary. There is a Strategy and Annual Rolling programme based on the evidence provided. There are objectives and long- and short-term performance targets, particularly the reduction of re-offending by adults and young people. We have a monitoring programme

and make the resources available (where possible) to implement the plan. Our approach is problem solving and our Delivery Group takes a task and finish approach.

The East Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership (ECCSP) has undergone changes this year, with a new Strategic Board and Delivery Group, meeting 4 times a year rather than the original twice a year. The action plan covers the following themes:

- The 'eyes and ears' EC strategy to raise awareness of all issues pertinent to this programme, deliver training and monitor outcomes
- Transforming lives helping to positively change young people's lives;
- Domestic Violence
- Safer Streets
- Modern Day slavery
- Organised crime and county lines exploitation
- Support for care leavers;
- Hate incidents and discrimination
- SCAMS
- Reducing re-offending
- Anti-social behaviour;
- Community Engagement and Consultation
- Parish and community training
- Investigating Domestic Homicides occurring in the area

As Chair of ECCSP, I also attend the County-wide Community Safety Partnership Board meeting 4 times a year where all CSP chairs and agency representatives come together to discuss latest themes and initiatives and report back on area findings and activities.

ECCSP are currently working on the new strategic assessment which has highlighted support required for:

- Young people;
- Increase in hate crime;
- Shop lifting;
- Domestic abuse among young women, particularly when pregnant (from our Health partners);
- Rise in drugs and alcohol abuse;
- Concerns about young people not being able to find work following the Covid pandemic.

#### 2020/21 Report from Cllr Ambrose Smith

*(Attended all meetings.)*

This CSP Board is made up of representatives from East Cambs (Officers & Members), Police, Fire & Rescue, Cambs CC Officers, Health & those representing other agencies.

This Board considers the problems affecting residents of East Cambs in terms of reducing crime & disorder and social issues (Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence, Substance Abuse & Dependency, Mental Health, Modern Day Slavery) and to look at strategies to identify and tackle these problems.

Presentations followed by Q & A and general discussion to assist members in reaching a better understanding of the subjects listed above and other similar concerns.

At the meeting held on 24 February 2021 speakers gave presentations on Domestic Abuse, County Lines & Exploitation, Inclusion & Development (Digital Connectivity), Drug & Alcohol Programme update, Council Communications, Youth Strategy, and an overview from CCC Place-based Co-ordinator.

Continued representation on this Outside Body is worthwhile because although problems are more visible in some communities, all communities are affected. The ECDC Member Representatives cover both the North & the South of the district and also represent two major committees of the council, namely Finance & Assets and Operational Services.

The problems under consideration by this board are complex and continually change & evolve. Input from experienced officers and professionals is of great assistance when trying to understand the problems affecting our communities.

2020/21 Report from Cllr Sharp

*(Not received.)*

2020/21 Report from Cllr Webber

*(Not required to substitute at any meetings.)*

**Representatives for 2021/22**

Cllr Lis Every (Lead Member)  
Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith  
Cllr Jo Webber (Substitute)  
Cllr Alan Sharp (Substitute)

## HISTORIC ENGLAND – HERITAGE CHAMPION

### **Aims & Activities**

The historic environment includes historic buildings, landscapes, monuments, places, archaeology (including marine archaeology) and areas. The Heritage Champion will promote the local historic environment, share best practice and attend training (where appropriate).

The network of Heritage Champions across the country supports the protection of the historic environment at a local level. At a strategic level, Champions can make sure that local plans and strategies capture the contribution that the local historic environment can make to the success of an area. More specifically they can:

- Help local authorities manage the historic environment of their area;
- Promote heritage within the local community, generating enthusiasm for and awareness of the importance of the local historic environment;
- Help ensure that commitment to the proper care of the historic environment is embedded in all relevant activities and plans of the local authority;
- Support the Authority's local historic environment services (both archaeological and historic buildings conservation officers);
- Influence and communicate with others to ensure benefits for the historic environment.

<b>Representation</b>	<b>Meetings per year</b>	<b>Status of Member</b>
One Member	0	Champion

<b>Expenses paid by Organisation</b>	<b>Insurance Provision</b>
No	No

<b>Category of Officer Support</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Representatives for 2020/21</b>
1	Planning Manager: Rebecca Saunt	Cllr Lis Every

### 2020/21 Report from Cllr Every

*(No formal meetings scheduled with Historic England, several informal meetings held with ECDC Conservation Officer in the Planning Department.)*

Using the mandate offered by Historic England, we have been working on identifying a volunteer stakeholder-led strategy to support the existing historic buildings, but also to identify other listed buildings and heritage trails that can add to local resident and visitor tourist experience of East Cambridgeshire. This is now finished. With money coming from central government there is a strong need to collaborate working with all those in this sector to maximise financial support and support for each other. Meeting planned with Conservation Officer early May.

Many thanks to the Conservation Officer from the Ely Museum whose new development is now completed. He has been very helpful along the way.

Continued representation is important because East Cambridgeshire is an historic area with large pockets of historic buildings, eg City of Ely. We are determined to raise the awareness and perceived value of our historic heritage which will add to our tourism offer bringing in more visitors and increasing footfall. It also supports the educational programmes in our local schools, particularly primary where a local study is part of the curriculum.

**Representative for 2021/22**

Cllr Lis Every



## **PARADISE CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, ELY**

### **Aims & Activities**

- The provision of facilities for playing sports;
- The provision of opportunities for recreation, social activities and refreshment, for the benefit of its members and the public;
- The provision and maintenance of a sports and leisure centre at Paradise Ground, Ely; including selection of the centre management.

<b>Representation</b>	<b>Meetings per year</b>	<b>Status of Member</b>
One Member	6	Non-voting Observer

<b>Expenses paid by Organisation</b>	<b>Insurance Provision</b>
No	Yes

<b>Category of Officer Support</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Representative for 2020/21</b>
3	Senior Leisure Services Officer: Victor Le Grand	Cllr David Ambrose Smith

### 2020/21 Report from Cllr Ambrose Smith

*(No meetings notified, therefore none attended.)*

East Cambridgeshire District Council's Corporate Objectives are to support all Leisure facilities throughout East Cambs. This is not necessarily with finance but with business advice from East Cambs experienced Leisure Services team.

With the excellent working relationships that the Leisure Services team have with all leisure facilities in East Cambs I see little reason why representation on this Outside Body is required, as ECDC does not have representation at committee/board level on all the other facilities.

<b>Representative for 2021/22</b>
Cllr David Ambrose Smith

## RECAP BOARD

*(formerly “Waste & Environment Forum, Cambridgeshire Councils Association”)*

### **Aims & Activities**

RECAP has representation from all Districts, Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. The partnership was set up to enable discussion and joint decisions. By working collaboratively on both the collection and disposal of waste as well as associated areas of work, education, fly-tipping efficiencies have been realised.

The RECAP Board shall:

- act as the focus for discussion and to deliver a political perspective and steer to the scope of activities undertaken by the RECAP Partnership.
- establish and implement a process of partnership and joint working on issues included within the scope of activities, seeking consensus within the budgets delegated by the constituent Councils, whilst respecting the individual council policies and authorisations of individual members.
- investigate ways of working to deliver services provided by Partner authorities in a more economic and efficient way, including the investigation of joint procurement where applicable.
- promote data sharing of the local environmental services provided by the Partner authorities and others in order to identify best practice.
- agree and recommend to the appointing authorities, the breakdown of the financial contribution to be made by respective Councils towards the coordination and development of the work of the RECAP Partnership.
- agree an annual work programme and recognise the achievements of the RECAP Partnership by regularly reporting on progress to the Cabinets of the County Council and Peterborough City Council and to the appropriate District Council Executives.
- promote common messages and common themes to ensure a consistent approach between the Partner authorities.
- contribute to the process of public consultation and public debate in relation to the services included in the scope of activities.
- consider the impact of legislation and national policy development and to make recommendations on the implications for, and response of, Partner authorities.

<b>Representation</b>	<b>Meetings per year</b>	<b>Status of Member</b>
One Member	4	Representative of ECDC. Decision-making role.

<b>Expenses paid by Organisation</b>	<b>Insurance Provision</b>
No	No

<b>Category of Officer Support</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Representative for 2020/21</b>
1	Environmental Services Manager: Liz Knox	Cllr Julia Huffer

2020/21 Report from Cllr Huffer

*(Attended four of four meetings.)*

Recap's work fits with the ECDC Corporate Plan by making the disposal of waste as cost effective as possible and working with other districts to find more creative ways of increasing recycling rates and effective methods of dealing with fly tipping.

Recap are currently part of the Government consultation on Waste, the second phase of the consultation will be discussed by the Recap Board on 17th June 21.

A national waste strategy is being discussed and Recap are well placed to take advantage of any funding from central Government that may be available to Councils to implement the final waste reforms.

Continued representation is worthwhile because we feel that we must explore all areas of cost saving and this committee will continue to be of importance.

**Representative for 2021/22**

Cllr Julia Huffer

**SANCTUARY HOUSING SERVICES LTD – EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**Aims & Activities**

A non-profit-making organisation, to provide affordable homes for rent throughout East Cambridgeshire.

<b>Representation</b>	<b>Meetings per year</b>	<b>Status of Member</b>
Two Members	4	Limited decision-making role

<b>Expenses paid by Organisation</b>	<b>Insurance Provision</b>
Travel	No

<b>Category of Officer Support</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Representative for 2020/21</b>
1	Housing & Community Safety Manager: Angela Parmenter	Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith Cllr Jo Webber

2020/21 Report from Cllr Ambrose Smith

*(Attended all three meetings.)*

Sanctuary is the most significant Housing Association operating within the East Cambs District area. Sanctuary houses large numbers of our residents and aims to keep void periods to a minimum in order that as many of those needing to be housed are accommodated.

These regular meetings are used by the two East Cambs representatives as an opportunity to update both ourselves and Sanctuary with matters of mutual interest, to highlight some of the recent issues we have dealt with and to discuss the causes and the resolutions achieved. There have been useful conversations around the necessity of a local lettings policy, particularly as this affects Littleport. The question of residents being able to access their rental payment accounts online, not currently available but a national scheme is being worked upon. It was pointed out that currently, any tenant has only to request an up to date copy of their statement for this to be produced and forwarded. A discussion around the importance of all maintenance and similar problems being made via the central helpdesk for logging and action. This ensures that all ancillary information is captured and that details of problems do not get lost. There has been a discussion around surveys to get information around community safety, anti-social behaviour, and crime. These surveys to go out to both Sanctuary and non-Sanctuary households. We discussed the importance of sharing information around community problems to ensure that those closely involved have up to date information.

Many of the Sanctuary properties throughout the district were built in the immediate post war period and during the following two decades. This means that much of the housing stock can be up to 70 years old. Although there have been regular schemes of work to update blocks

of properties (kitchens/bathrooms, exterior cladding/windows, heating systems), this does not upgrade all properties at once, or even all properties within that block. If the work involves extensive work within the property, some residents, especially the more elderly, will decline to have the work carried out. This means that future tenants of that property do not enjoy the improvements that their neighbours' properties have had. It is much more expensive and time consuming to carry out work in an isolated property than in a small estate or area, and work on one property may take longer than might be wished.

Continued representation is very important because in any large community there will always be examples of when matters are not dealt with as well as possible. When this happens, it is important to understand what and how this happened. In this way a process can be amended. All initial contact and follow up reports should go to the central reporting line by the tenant. Should a problem occur the District Ward Member or the local Sanctuary Housing Officer can be contacted. If the problem persists the council reps can take this up with senior staff to reach a resolution. We also act as a conduit between the two organisations to ensure that a close and helpful relationship is in place.

#### 2020/21 Report from Cllr Webber

*(Attended all three meetings.)*

Sanctuary Housing are a national housing association with a large stock of housing in East Cambridgeshire, which includes both general needs and residential care for the elderly.

ECDC have responsibility for housing services and Sanctuary Housing play a vital role in ensuring that our residents have access to suitable accommodation, which is safe and well maintained.

Sanctuary Managers and Housing Officers work closely with the Housing Team at ECDC and have staff located with the Customer Services Team so that residents can easily access support when required.

Quarterly meetings are normally held between Sanctuary management, tenant representatives, and representatives from East Cambs District Council. I am currently one of the representatives for ECDC along with Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith. Since the outbreak of the coronavirus it was agreed that the quarterly meetings would be put on hold with reports being sent to all members of the Committee for comment and feedback. Regular zoom meetings have still been held between the East Cambs Representatives, and Lorna Philcox, the Operations Manager for Sanctuary, to enable issues to be escalated and information to be shared.

As the largest residential social landlord in East Cambridgeshire I think it is crucial that a strong working relationship is maintained not only between Sanctuary Staff and ECDC Officers, but also with ward members who are representing their residents. It is important for members to gain an understanding of the processes and procedures that are in place, and how they can work with Sanctuary to support their residents in the most effective way.

Sanctuary have worked hard to support their residents' practical and emotional needs, throughout the last year which has been a challenge with the coronavirus restrictions in place. Prior to the coronavirus restrictions Sanctuary Housing Officers invited ward members to join them on the regular inspections of their housing stock. This has worked well and many councillors attended the inspections, which has given them an opportunity to both meet the Housing Officer working with their residents and gain a better understanding of the

daily issues and challenges. A Seminar for councillors will be arranged once restrictions have been eased further so that processes can be explained in more detail and any questions and queries can be addressed.

**Representatives for 2021/22**

Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith  
Cllr Jo Webber

## SOHAM AND DISTRICT SPORTS ASSOCIATION

### **Aims & Activities**

- To establish, maintain, finance and manage an indoor sports hall;
- To act as a central body representing all sports interests in Soham and the surrounding district;
- To maintain and improve the provision of all sports learning and recreational facilities within Soham and the surrounding district.

<b>Representation</b>	<b>Meetings per year</b>	<b>Status of Member</b>
Two Members	Bi-monthly, at least 3 per year	Voting Committee Member

<b>Expenses paid by Organisation</b>	<b>Insurance Provision</b>
No	Yes

<b>Category of Officer Support</b>	<b>Contact Officer</b>	<b>Representatives for 2020/21</b>
2	Senior Leisure Services Officer: Victor Le Grand	Cllr Ian Bovingdon Cllr Dan Schumann

### 2020/21 Report from Cllr Bovingdon

*(No meetings held due to COVID-19 and lockdowns.)*

The provision of sports and leisure facilities forms a very important part of ECDC's commitment to the area that the District continues to be an area where people want to live, businesses want to base themselves and grow and people want to visit.

Covid has been hard, but people want to return to normality as quickly as possible and we need to support this facility which will form an essential part of the growth of the town over the next 5 years.

Items considered over the year included:

- Cost of the roof/repairs
- Covid-related working practices
- Voting centre

ECDC representation is essential as the sports centre is an extremely important facility for the local community. As the town continues to expand, the demands on the centre will increase and unless another facility is built to ease pressure then drastic action will need to be taken to support the centre.

Covid has had a real impact on the activities of the sports centre, but the issues continue around funding for the roof.

2020/21 Report from Cllr Schumann

*(No meetings held due to COVID-19 and lockdowns.)*

Soham and District Sports Association operate The Ross Peers Sports Centre, which is part of the network of Leisure Centres that ECDC created and retains a relationship with. ECDC also grant a small amount of funding to The Ross Peers Sports Centre each year. The work of the centre links to the Community and Leisure department. The provision of sports and leisure facilities for the local population fits in with our key priority around making East Cambs a 'fantastic place to live'.

The Ross Peers Sports Centre is in desperate need of upgrade. Continued representation is important because this is a key facility in Soham and ECDC need to work with SDSA to plan for its improvement and sustainable future.

**Representatives for 2021/22**

Cllr Ian Bovingdon  
Cllr Dan Schumann





**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**  
**EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**EAST SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**WEST SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**ANGLIA REVENUES AND BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE**

**Held on Tuesday, 8 December 2020 at 11.00 am**  
**Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

**PRESENT**

Mr J.P. Cowen (Chairman)	Mr M. Cook
Mr D Ambrose Smith (Vice-Chairman)	Mrs J. French
Mrs S. Broughton	

**In Attendance**

Jo Andrews	- Strategic Manager (Revenues)
Sam Anthony	- Head of HR & OD
Alison Chubbock	- Chief Accountant (Deputy Section 151 Officer) (BDC)
Paul Corney	- Head of ARP
Brian Mew	- Chief Finance Officer & S151 Officer
Adrian Mills	- Strategic Manager (Billing & Benefits) ARP
Stuart Philpot	- Strategic Manager (Support Services) ARP
Ian Smith	- Finance Manager & S151 Officer (East Cambs)
Greg Stevenson	- Service Manager (Finance & Performance)
Teresa Smith	- Democratic Services Team Leader
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer

**62/20 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2020 were agreed as a correct record subject to the title of Councillor Kim French (substitute Member) being changed to Miss under those recorded as present.

**63/20 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer (S151) for Fenland District Council and Rachael Mann, Assistant Director (Resources & Performance) for West Suffolk District Council.

Sam Anthony, Head of HR & OD for Fenland DC and Greg Stevenson, Service Manager (Finance & Performance) for West Suffolk DC were in attendance as their substitutes.

**64/20 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)**

None.

**65/20 DECLARATIONS (AGENDA ITEM 4)**

None declared.

**Action By**

**66/20 PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE UPDATES (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 5)**

Stuart Philpot, the Strategic Manager (Support Services) ARP presented the performance and service update report and highlighted the following areas:

Council Tax Collection

The Council Tax collection rates for all partners had reduced due to the pandemic.

Two rounds of 'soft reminders' had been sent out to customers which had had a positive effect on collections.

In October 2020, statutory reminders had been issued. Magistrate Courts had re-opened and would be in session during December and as such Court Hearings had been booked for all authorities.

Fraud and Compliance

£1.5m of fraud had been identified with the majority being due to single persons discounts non-compliance.

Business Rates Collection

All revised targets had been achieved with the exception of East Suffolk showing a £1.7m collection target shortfall. However, since the publication of the report, East Suffolk had collected a further £1.2m reducing the shortfall to £500k under collection target.

For Fenland DC refunds were still outstanding in respect of the NHS Trusts pending appeals.

The Fraud Team had assisted and had been involved with checking the due diligence in respect of the Covid-19 grants for NNDR.

Enforcement

All enforcement visits had been suspended from March to August 2020 due to the pandemic and although the collection rates had since risen, with face-to-face visits now resumed, they were not back to the levels that had been collected the previous year. The Enforcement Team were taking all the necessary precautions in respect of PPE and risk assessments.

ARP Systems and Digital

There had been a significant increase in activity on the ARP website due to the offices being closed for face- to-face visits – up to 60% compared to 2019.

A more collaborative relationship with Capita had been demonstrated recently with the implementation of Total Mobile Software to aid the visiting officers in their work.

Members were then invited to ask questions.

**Action By**

Referring to fraud and compliance, Councillor French felt that the amount of fraud was quite concerning in respect of single persons discounts and asked how ARP was notified of such fraudulent activities.

In response, Members were informed that such information was captured through the Norfolk Fraud Information hub and through random checks that were carried out, but it could also be captured from notifications from neighbours, friends and even family.

Councillor French assumed that such claimants would have other people living with them and asked how many days a person was allowed to reside at the same property before the single persons discount was removed.

Adrian Mills, the Strategic Manager (Billing & Benefits) ARP explained that a person had to live at the property for a substantial part of the week, any less would be classed as casual. There were checks and balances in place to eliminate such fraudulent activities.

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Ambrose-Smith referred to benefits and the Government funding of £500 that had been awarded to claimants who had to self-isolate. Within the report he had noted that the demand would outstrip the funding and asked what would happen with this going forward.

The Strategic Manager (Billing & Benefits) ARP advised that the Test & Trace Self Isolation £500 payments were currently scheduled to continue until 31 January 2021; however, the Government was considering an extension to these grants until the end of March 2021. Furthermore, additional programme funding and discretionary funding to meet demand was also being considered as well as the administrative burden on local authorities in terms of coping and distributing this additional funding. Conversations were still on-going. The current demand for the Partnership areas had been at the level forecasted by the Government unlike other parts of the country where such funding had already been outstripped. It was noted that the funding was monitored weekly with the S151 Officers within the Partnership.

The Chairman was pleased that the automated services were increasing year on year.

The report was otherwise noted.

**67/20 ARP FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2020-21 (AGENDA ITEM 6)**

Alison Chubbock, the Chief Accountant & Deputy S151 Officer (BDC) presented the report that provided Members with a full year financial forecast against the budget.

The report had been based on information as of 31 October 2020 and showed an overspend against budget of £522k for the whole of the Partnership. This was mainly due to lost enforcement income that had been seriously affected by impact of the Covid pandemic. However, the forecast had slightly improved since the previous meeting and was moving in the right direction.

Members attention was drawn to the table on page 40 of the agenda pack. Members were assured that although the overspend was quite significant, the majority of that would be compensated from grants that the Government was

**Action By**

providing to individual authorities to offset the losses from sales fees and charges income.

The appendices on pages 42 and 43 provided further detail on the main variances.

The Chairman and the Vice-Chairman thanked the Chief Accountant for such a detailed report.

The report and appendix were otherwise noted.

**68/20 ARP JOINT COMMITTEE PARTNERSHIP BUDGET (AGENDA ITEM 7)**

The Chief Accountant & Deputy S151 Officer (BDC) presented the proposed budget for the whole of the Partnership for the next financial year, 2021-22. The report also included indicative future years allocations and highlighted the individual Partners' shares towards the costs.

The budget for next year was £151k lower than 2020-21, mainly due to additional income in respect of parking enforcement work – the detail behind this figure had been highlighted at paragraph 1.5 of the report.

Future budgets from 2022-23 included other efficiency targets to be achieved of £220k.

The recent spending review announced a public sector pay freeze just prior to the publication of the report. Consequently, this budget paper did not include any reduction from this potential change but with many of the Partners' on local pay schemes this would not be reflected in every single Partners' budget. It was likely that there could be a saving of approximately £40k from that pay freeze due to all Partners' making their own decisions; therefore, for next year, a small variance would be shown if that pay freeze came to fruition.

Although the enforcement income continued to be a risk, all services were continuing as normal and the budget had been based on those services as expected.

The Vice-Chairman referred to section 1.4 of the report where it mentioned new parking enforcement work would commence in 2020-21. He asked if this could be explained as he was not aware of this new service. Jo Andrews, the Strategic Manager (Revenues) ARP explained that ARP would be taking on this enforcement work in respect of parking fines for East & West Suffolk Councils. This would operate in the exact same way as council tax and business rates enforcement and an increase in fee collections and income was expected.

The Vice-Chairman also asked a question in respect of no changes being made to the budget setting going forward. The Chief Accountant (BDC) explained that this year had been used as a basis taking account of ARP's performance and continued delivery of services and was comfortable with the proposed budget going forward in such uncertain times.

Having seen the way that the ARP had delivered services during such difficult times, the Chairman felt that the Chief Accountant's assessment of this budget was correct.

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Councillor French had been very interested to hear about the new parking enforcement service. As the Portfolio Holder for Fenland DC, she had been looking into this matter and various meetings had been held and a draft report was being prepared hopefully prior to Christmas. One of the issues discussed during these meetings was how fines that had not been paid were collected and she would be very interested to have further conversations with ARP in respect of this work.

The Chairman felt that there had been much discussion at previous meetings on lessons learnt and transferring skills sets within the Partnership and this new enforcement work could clearly benefit Fenland DC. He was sure that the Strategic Manager (Revenues) ARP would be happy to assist Fenland in any way that she could.

Members were informed that Suffolk County Council delegated authority to East & West Suffolk District Councils who had their own in-house teams to manage such work. Enforcement matters then came to the ARP's Enforcement Team which all Partners would benefit from.

Paul Corney, the Head of ARP suggested that Sam Anthony, the Head of HR & Organisational Development for Fenland District Council speak to the other OIB Members from East & West Suffolk to understand exactly what process they followed that could be of some assistance.

In response, the Head of HR & Organisational Development said that she would be happy to follow that up with OIB Members.

The Chairman thanked the Chief Accountant (BDC) for an excellent report.

**RESOLVED** that the Partnership budget at Appendix A of the report for 2021-22 be approved.

**69/20 ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN AND RISK REGISTER (AGENDA ITEM 8)**

The Head of ARP presented the Service Delivery Plan that should be agreed by the ARP Joint Committee by the end of December each year and the Risk Register report that had to be reviewed every six months.

Details of the 2019/20 Service Delivery Plan at section 2.1 of the report were highlighted. The Head of ARP felt this was good news, even with the pressures of Covid, ARP had been able to continue its work with the Fraud Team and Recovery Team jointly funded by County Councils and the results of this work had been surprisingly favourable. A number of objectives had been achieved and the Digital workstream had progressed which had released resources for those who could not self-serve.

The priorities of the Revenues and Benefits service were highlighted including the introduction of "Colleagues" which was linked to building talent within the organisation and ending up with an excellent workforce to be able to carry on the good work and succession planning when certain Officers reached retirement age or left the organisation.

The Chairman felt that the last point made in respect of succession planning was appropriate going forward and congratulated all Officers involved for all their hard work and for making the Members' role a great deal easier.

**RESOLVED** that:

- the progress in respect of the December 2019 Service Delivery plan be noted; and
- the revised Service Delivery Plan and Risk Register at Appendix B of the report be approved.

**70/20 WELFARE REFORM UPDATE (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 9)**

Adrian Mills, the Strategic Manager (Billing & Benefits) ARP presented the report.

Members' attention was drawn to paragraph 2.2.3 in respect of Universal Credit.

Members had taken an interest previously in DWP's contract with Citizen's Advice to help provide help to claim Universal Credit service in the current year. DWP had originally stated that a review of this contract would be forthcoming; however, as yet this had still not been completed due to the Covid pandemic and following a number of meetings no further updates had been provided.

Any information received would be shared with OIB Members followed by ARP Joint Committee Members.

It was noted that DWP had stopped the Harrogate managed migration pilot again due to Covid-19 and such plans were still on hold. However, cases where a claimants' circumstances had changed were now being accelerated from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit accordingly – this method was more challenging for customers and administratively more complex for DWP and local authorities.

As far as the spending review was concerned in terms of Universal Credit, Members were aware, as part of the DWP Covid response, had increased Universal Credit rate by £20 per week. However, the spending review had not stated whether this would be continued into the forthcoming financial year although it had been announced by the Secretary of State that it would be reviewed in time for April 2021.

Attention was then drawn to paragraph 2.3, Discretionary Housing Payment.

DWP had increased funding to offset the impact of private sector rents for this year which had been very helpful. Spend continued to be within DWP grant, and all the grant monies would be used to help customers. The main area of expenditure continued to be to assist customers with rent shortfalls, due to restrictions on Housing Benefit rent levels.

Under paragraph 2.4.3 in respect of the Benefit Cap, DWP had provided New Burdens funding to assist Councils with extra administrative costs and had increased Discretionary Housing Payment grants to help customers with the reduction in benefits that had been reduced by £6k based on the maximum family income.

Under section 3 of the report, Government had confirmed an end to the four-

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year Benefit uprating freeze from April 2020. Spending Review had announced that state pensions would increase by 2.5% protected by the triple lock, whilst benefits would increase by the September 2020 inflation rate of 0.5%.

The report was otherwise noted.

**71/20 FORTHCOMING ISSUES (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 10)**

In a response to a concern in respect of why Breckland Council was taking over the HR services in-house, away from West Suffolk Council without ARP JC Members being informed, the Head of ARP explained the reason that Members had not been made aware was due to the arrangement being between Breckland Council and West Suffolk Council in the form of a Service Level Agreement.

It was agreed that the Operational Improvement Board should discuss the new arrangement.

**72/20 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 11)**

Due to other commitments, it was agreed that the date of the next would be changed to either the week before or the week after 16 March 2021.

The new date would be confirmed in due course, all Members were content with it being brought forward to Tuesday, 9 March 2021 if suitable for Officers.

The Chairman took the opportunity to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas.

The meeting closed at 11.45 am

CHAIRMAN





**OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**Lead Officer: Jo Brooks, Director, Operations**

**FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

**Democratic Services Officer: Adrian Scaites-Stokes**

<b>13<sup>th</sup> September 2021 4:30pm</b>		<b>15<sup>th</sup> November 2021 4:30pm</b>		<b>17<sup>th</sup> January 2022 4:30pm</b>	
Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed	Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed	Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed
Report Deadline:	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2021	Report Deadline:	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2021	Report Deadline:	1 <sup>st</sup> September 2021
Progress Report on the Youth Strategy Action Plan	Lewis Bage (C&P Manager) Angela Parmenter (H& CS Manager) Liz Knox (Env. Services Manager)	Review of Grant to Voluntary & Community Action East Cambridgeshire	Lewis Bage (Communities & Partnership Manager)	VCAEC -Service Level Agreement Update	VCAEC (presentation)
VCAEC -Service Level Agreement Update	VCAEC (presentation)	Review of Citizens Advice West Suffolk	Lewis Bage (Communities & Partnership Manager)		
Effects of COVID-19 on Housing and Community Advice Service	Angela Parmenter (Housing & Community Safety Manager)				
Quarter 1 Waste Performance	James Khan (Head of Street Scene)				
Review of Housing and Community Advice Service	Angela Parmenter (Housing & Community Safety Manager)				
Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sports Facilities Strategies	Victor Le Grand (Senior Leisure Services Officer)				
Budget Monitoring Report	Anne Wareham (Senior Accountant)				
ARP Joint Committee Minutes – June meeting	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)	ARP Joint Committee Minutes – September	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)	ARP Joint Committee Minutes – December	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)
Service Presentation – Housing & Community Safety	Angela Parmenter (Housing & Community Safety Manager)	Service Presentation – Communities & Partnerships	Lewis Bage (Communities & Partnership Manager)	Service Presentation – Customer Services	Annette Wade (Customer Services Manager)
Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)	Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)	Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)

**OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**Lead Officer: Jo Brooks, Director, Operations**

**FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

**Democratic Services Officer: Adrian Scaites-Stokes**

- ❖ Building Control
- ❖ Communities & Partnerships
- ❖ Customer Services

- ❖ Environmental Services
- ❖ Housing & Community Safety
- ❖ Information Technology

- ❖ Leisure Services
- ❖ Licensing
- ❖ Planning

- ❖ Public Relations/Communications
- ❖ Waste Services

<b>21<sup>st</sup> March 2022 4:30pm</b>		<b>To be confirmed 2022 4:30pm</b>		<b>To be confirmed 2022 4:30pm</b>	
Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed	Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed	Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed
Report Deadline:	9 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Report Deadline:	To be agreed	Report Deadline:	To be agreed
Progress Report on the Youth Strategy Action Plan	Lewis Bage (Communities & Partnership Manager) Angela Parmenter (Housing & Community Safety Manager) Liz Knox (Environmental Services Manager)				
Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Democratic Services Officer)	Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Democratic Services Officer)	Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Democratic Services Officer)

To be programmed:

- Preliminary Investigation - ECDC Renewable Energy Generation
- Community Safety Accreditation Scheme
- Memorandum of Understanding – East Cambs Street Scene