



# **CAMBRIDGE** CITY COUNCIL

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## **INFORMATION PACK**

**Date:** Thursday, 25 February 2021

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## **Extract from Cambridge City Council's Constitution: Part 4A - Council Procedure Rules**

### **Appendix A2 - Council Procedure Rules – Budget Recommendations and Amendments**

1. These rules supplement the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules contained in Part 4C of this Constitution. They also modify the Council Procedure Rules as follows.

2. Subject to the provisions contained in this paragraph, only amendments submitted in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules shall be considered at the Budget Council Meeting.

2.1 The Executive may introduce amendments at the Council meeting or give advance notice of revised recommendations. This might be necessary, for instance, in response to changed circumstances, or in the light of scrutiny of amendments or to correct technical errors. The Leader must explain why it has proved necessary to introduce any amendment. This is to be done at the beginning of the budget item.

2.2 The Executive may make changes to the budget recommendations to give effect to decisions by precepting authorities.

2.3 Further amendments may be moved by any member in direct response to amendments made by the Executive at the meeting.

2.4 Technical amendments may be made by leaders of minority groups or proposers of amendments to correct arithmetical or factual errors.

2.5 The Mayor shall have discretion to permit amendments from members when satisfied that the need for the amendment could not have been anticipated before the deadline. The Mayor should also be satisfied that advance notice of such amendments was given as soon as reasonably practical, and not left to the day of the meeting unless this was unavoidable.

2.6 Members may submit revised amendments where the Mayor is satisfied that the substantive issues have been considered at the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee meeting.

2.7 The Executive may amend its budget recommendations in the light of amendments moved at the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny meeting or at the Council meeting.

2.8 If the Executive fails to secure Council adoption of its budget, further amendments may be moved, and these rules will not apply;

2.9 The Council may, by a simple majority, suspend these rules and permit further amendments.

3. The rules of debate contained in the Council Procedure Rules shall be modified in respect of the Budget Council Meeting as follows:

3.1 The Executive shall present its budget recommendations. A period of 45 minutes is allowed for this, extendable at the discretion of the Mayor. The format and mode of the presentation is for the Executive to decide.

3.2 Minority groups may then present alternative budgets, subject to compliance with the provisions of this Appendix. A period of 45 minutes is allowed for each alternative budget, extendable at the discretion of the Mayor. The format and mode of the presentation is for the minority group to decide.

3.3. Alternative budgets will then be moved in turn as amendments to replace the Executive recommendation. They will be debated in the usual way, although replacement budgets will be deemed to have been moved and seconded.

3.4 At the conclusion of each debate, a vote will be taken for and against the alternative budget.

3.5 If the alternative budget is voted down, the Leader of the proposing Group may ask for separate votes to be taken on individual proposals within the alternative budget, but there shall be no further debate.

3.6 Where individual amendments have been submitted by councillors, these will then be debated in the usual way. However, where they are to the same effect as something in an alternative budget, they shall be considered at the same time as the alternative budget, with the proposer being able to ask for a separate vote in accordance with paragraph 3.5.

3.7 After consideration of amendments the Executive's budget proposals will be debated in the usual way but, subject to paragraph 3.8 below, no amendments may be moved.

3.8. If the Executive's budget is rejected, amendments and alternative proposals may be made as under the present rules, subject to the dispute resolution provisions set out in the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules contained in Part 4C of this Constitution.

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Labour amendment from Councillor Smith to the Update to the Liberal Democrat Group Amendment to the Budget Setting Report paragraph 2.3 (updated 19.2.21)

As it was already planned to report to future committees on the details of the Corn Exchange improvement programme, for the benefit of clarity, a report on the heating project will be brought to the March meeting of the Environment and Communities Committee. This will include details of why the heating proposals are, at the present time, both the most viable option, and the least harmful solution environmentally

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Council-25 February 2021  
Agenda Item 8 - Oral Questions

Question 1

From: Cllr Payne  
To: Ex Cllr for Climate Change, Environment and City Centre

After a Liberal Democrat motion highlighted the dramatic increase in littering over the summer months, the Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee recently unanimously supported a new litter strategy. While work on this strategy begins, what immediate steps will the Council take to try to prevent another inundation of litter as outdoor socialising begins?

Question 2

From: Cllr Gehring  
To: Leader

Brexit continues to be a greatly unsettling process, especially for EU citizens. How is the Council ensuring that EU citizens will exercise their right to vote in the upcoming local elections for Council, County, P&C Commissioner and Metromayor

Question 3

From: Cllr O'Reilly  
To: Leader

What are the city council's priorities so Cambridge recovers strong when COVID is beaten?

Question 4

From: Cllr Bird  
To: Ex Cllr for Communities

What is the council doing to support LGBTQ+ history month?

#### Question 5

From: Cllr Matthews  
To: Ex Cllr for Planning Policy and Open Spaces

The planning department appears to be becoming stricter with the timelines available to councillors to “call-in” applications so that they can be decided by the planning committee: Are there clear guidelines for councillors on when to call-in applications to committee? And could councillors be given clarity in writing on how the planning department’s discretionary powers are now being applied to call-ins after the official deadlines?

#### Question 6

From: Cllr McGerty  
To: Ex Cllr for Transport and Community Safety

Wednesday’s meeting of the Greater Cambridge Partnership Joint Assembly provided some interesting updates on plans to ease congestion and resulting pollution around the Cambridge Biomedical Campus, including progress on Cambridge South Station, the Cambridge Southeast Transport scheme and various walking and cycling projects. Would the leader of the council join me in welcoming these measures?

#### Question 7

From: Cllr Baigent  
To: Leader

What obligations do local political parties in Cambridge have to follow Government national safety guidance during the current lockdown on campaigning?

#### Question 8

From: Cllr Porrer  
To: Leader

Would the Leader of the council agree that we need to continue to make representations to the ONS (Office of National Statistics) to ensure that the Census on 21st March 2021 fully accounts for those in our community who may not currently be resident in our city. In particular those in our EU and International student populations who may not have had accommodation in the city over the pandemic, and who won't otherwise be counted.

Question 9

From: Cllr Hadley  
To: Ex Cllr for Planning Policy and Open Spaces

Are there any interesting outcomes from Draft Chalk Stream Project Report?

Question 10

From: Cllr Sheil  
To: Ex Cllr for Housing

Can the Executive Councillor provide an update on the council's work helping support rough sleepers during the pandemic into sustainable, longer-term housing placements?

Question 11

From: Cllr Thittala  
To: Leader

Given the Covid 19 impact on the BAME community, what measures are in place to provide additional support to the community in Cambridge?

Question 12

From: Cllr McQueen  
To: Ex Cllr for Communities

What impact does the executive councillor think that universal credit has had on the people of Cambridge?

Question 13

From: Cllr Martinelli  
To: Ex Cllr for Housing

Is the Executive Councillor satisfied with the energy efficiency of council houses in Cambridge?

Question 14

From: Cllr Robertson  
To: Ex Cllr for Housing

What is the Executive Councillor's view on the Government confirming that Local Housing Allowance will be frozen in cash terms from this April onwards

Question 15

From: Cllr Todd-Jones  
To: Ex Cllr for Housing

Could the Executive Councillor report back on the council's recent Empty Homes Week?

Question 16

From: Cllr Barnett  
To: Ex Cllr for Communities

What measures will be taken to ensure that the works on the Corn Exchange are as green as possible?

Question 17

From: Cllr Dryden  
To: Ex Cllr for Transport and Community Safety

As exec for community safety what are your views on the issue of police and crime commissioner raising the precept for additional police funding whilst removing half of the PCSO's?

Question 18

From: Cllr Chadwick  
To: Ex Cllr for Planning Policy and Open Spaces

What is the current average waiting time for those who use the paid for pre-application planning advice service? I'm aware of at least one instance where there has been a significant delay, a promised response within 6 weeks still hadn't been received after almost 4 months.

Question 19

From: Cllr Davies  
To: Ex Cllr for Communities

What is being done to address the digital divide in Cambridge?

Question 20

From: Cllr Summerbell  
To: Ex Cllr for Communities

I'm sure the Executive Councillor will join me in celebrating the remarkable successes achieved by a diverse range of local community groups in responding to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Are there any plans for a formal thanks or celebration of these groups?

Question 21

From: Cllr Smart  
To: Leader

What are the risks to Cambridge of conducting the decennial Census on 25th March 2021?

Question 22

From: Cllr Collis  
To: Ex Cllr for Communities

Food poverty isn't going away - what are the council's long term plans to combat it in the city?

Question 23

From: Cllr Sargeant  
To: Ex Cllr for Transport and Community Safety

The new children's hospital for East Anglia is to be built by Addenbrookes and has recently appointed an architect, what input have councillors had and what impact will the children's hospital have on Cambridge city residents?

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Agenda item:9a

Councillor Davey proposed and Councillor Moore seconded the following amendments to motion (deleted text struck through additional text underlined).

~~Council is aware of the large structural changes in the retail sector occurring during the pandemic, both reflecting and accelerating the trend towards online shopping, and that recent bankruptcies impact a significant proportion of retail space in Cambridge city centre;~~

~~The pandemic has had a major impact on the Council believes that this has the potential for profound impact not only on the precious environment in of the city centre itself but and also on the economic and social contribution it makes to the whole of our city and beyond; Equally concerning has been the effect of COVID 19 on neighbourhood shopping areas such as Mill Rd, Cherry Hinton Rd, Arbury Ct., Chesterton Road and Chesterton High St. Council recognises the work undertaken to date to prepare for the future and thanks all City Council staff for their outstanding endeavours over the last 12 months. Council notes the structural changes in the retail sector that have occurred over the last twelve months and of the significant challenge still to come. Therefore, it is timely to take stock, and review and coordinate our ongoing activity with an eye to the future.~~

~~that this represents a challenge beyond straight-forward bounce-back recovery; and that it is therefore timely and opportune to start a conversation to take stock of the centre's recent evolution and to re-imagine it for the future, using a placemaking approach in the public interest.~~

~~We therefore welcome the proposed appointment of the Economic Recovery Officer as set out in the Budget Setting Report. It We also resolves that the council, as the city's representative body and, with its key roles in planning, streets & open spaces and commercial property ownership, should continue to lead the process of preparing the City's recovery, building on the effective work undertaken to date to respond to COVID19. This work should be undertaken in conjunction with the Cambridge Business Development (BID), established partnerships such as the GCP and the Combined Authority, working with stakeholders and actively involving the public.~~

~~lead this process, working with partners and stakeholders and involving the public: the broad aim of the exercise to maintain the city centre as a destination of vitality and jobs for local people, and of hospitality to its~~

~~many visitors, in a way which complements its identity as historic university city encircled by public open spaces and residential areas and growing city quarters with neighbourhood centres of their own.~~

~~In the process it urges consideration of: The proposed Review will consider:~~

- ~~• The work of the Economic Recovery Officer in facilitating the recovery of the city centre and neighbourhood shopping areas~~
- ~~• means of facilitating offering a larger and much stronger broader range of local independent shops, including start-ups, making the centre a destination for retail and supporting the recovery of neighbourhood areas. ~~that is genuinely differentiated from elsewhere and what is online~~~~
- ~~• ensuring a secure future for a thriving, popular 7-day market which works for customers and traders~~
- ~~• the changing nature of physical retail for ongoing high street businesses, in particular the key anchor presences~~
- ~~• the demand for co-working spaces which builds on remote and flexible working trends outside the home, ~~which seem likely to have a post pandemic legacy~~~~
- ~~• the role that a larger of arts and culture and offering might play~~
- ~~• the importance of conserving the city's heritage~~
- ~~• developing a pipeline of reviewing the public realm schemes such as the market square, available to currently proposed thereby capitalising on the likely possible availability of government funding for city centre improvements~~
- ~~• faster the development of improved public transport access and cycle parking and completion of the traffic-free goal envisaged in our "Making space for People" process~~
- ~~• the need for to continued strong to challenge to the national planning policy proposals under which even more regarding switches between use classes which may become 'permitted development' and therefore beyond local planning policy and control.~~

~~Council requests the Chief Executive to bring a report to the July meeting of Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee on the ongoing work that the council has taken to respond to the needs of the City. an initial report to the July meeting of Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee on how the council can most effectively start to take this matter forward.~~

## **Council 25 February 2021 Written Question and Answer**

### **1. Councillor Porrer**

#### **To Councillor Thornburrow the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Open Spaces**

Please can the Executive Councillor provide details of any city council owned land (including parks and open spaces) where herbicides are still used. This would include amongst other things: paths, verges and infrastructure such as benches, play equipment and lampposts."

#### **Response**

Pesticides are substances that are meant to control pests, including weeds. The term pesticide includes herbicide.

On Parks and Open Space, we no longer use herbicides in our maintenance regimes as part of our commitment to achieving the pledges made in Biodiversity Emergency Motion<sup>1</sup>. There are however occasions that merit herbicide uses, and these are for exceptional circumstances and when approved by Senior Managers, for example evasive and noxious weeds<sup>2</sup> in defined or specific locations and where no other alternatives are available.

The Council recognise that our parks, open spaces and road verges provide significant opportunities for habitat enhancement to help buffer and connect the existing network of nature green spaces already designated and managed for their biodiversity value, LNRs, County Wildlife Sites etc.

The Streets & Open Space operational plan for 19/20 included a number of items to help deliver new habitats, including the production of a Parks Biodiversity Toolkit to inspire and provide technical guidance to community groups (supported by the community engagement team) and

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<sup>1</sup> May 2019, <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/7485/motion-to-declare-a-biodiversity-emergency-2019-05.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> For example Japanese Knotweed or Giant Hogweed

operational staff to suggest areas for enhancement, be it tree planting, long grass areas, pictorial meadows, wetland creation, log piles etc.

Streets and Open Space are using current best practice<sup>3</sup> to determine where and how we carry out weed control. The guidelines help ensure the Council complies with the law, minimise pesticide use and improve public perception.

Recent investment in new IT and software has afforded us the opportunity to for the first time to be able to produce lists of sites and maps with asset information. From this information we can create priority zones/areas and therefore understand all treatment options potentially by late 2021.

In respect of other land, herbicides are used on Highways footpaths, hard surfaces and footpaths on Property Services and Housing land.

Herbicide use on Highways, Property and Housing land continues because at this time there are limited alternative effective controls. Weeds in hard surfaces pose health ad safety risks with a range slips, trips and falls the likely impact.

S&OS will in their Service Plan in 20/21, appraise a range of new innovations and products such as hot steam, foams, and mechanical sweepers with the intention to reduce our use of herbicides further.

As Cambridge City Council moves to cease the use of herbicides on the green verges, and working in conjunction with County Council colleagues to achieve Plantlife (managing grassland road verges best practice) standards for biodiversity, in line with our Biodiversity Crisis Motion, the bid B4791 in tonight's Budget Setting Report is to support a trial of new working practices and the hire/evaluation of a cut-and-collect vehicle.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.emr.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/BPWeeds2015web1.pdf>