



# **CAMBRIDGE** CITY COUNCIL

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Public Questions for Council – Thursday 30 November 2023

Question 1.

My question is about the outcome of the Public Inquiry which now allows Queens' College to go ahead with major development at their Owlstone Croft Site. This decision will have a huge impact on Newnham Croft School and Paradise Nature Reserve, but also has important and worrying consequences for the whole city.

Like many residents, I have closely followed the process of the Queens' College application and Appeal.

While the Planning Committee unanimously refused the application, its position at Appeal was fatally undermined by a set of favourable officer reports and weak, hastily-drafted reasons for refusal, despite a raft of policy grounds on which to reject the application.

This represents a complete and catastrophic failure of the planning system at all stages. A system intended to protect our communities, schools and environmentally unique Nature Reserves.

The interpretation of the biodiversity policy requirements by the Inspector, if unchallenged, seriously undermines their efficacy in future developments in Cambridge. What action will the Council take to address this?

Question 2.- FeCRA

What protection is there for existing trees in Cambridge?

We ask because residents are telling FeCRA there seems to be no protection at all for trees that are not in Conservation areas and that even trees in those are not safe.

They say this seems at odds with the two recent reports sent to all councillors that focused on the value of tall mature trees to the city and the importance of tree canopy cover and the need to plant more trees.

We are hearing very disturbing reports from residents about garden clearances just like the recent one in Dorset which featured in all the national media where: 'They completely destroyed an eco-system in one day and all the wildlife...didn't even leave the trees on site to let small animals or bats or insects to crawl out, put it straight in the chipper.' Residents highlight that a garden at Queen Edith's Way was completely cleared of all the mature trees and shrubs in what they say would seem to be an attempt to remove any evidence of existing biodiversity before a planning application. It was only after the support of a determined councillor and the sharing of information on social media that 'documents started appearing on the planning web portal, documents that should have been published there some time ago' which residents say 'gives the impression that all the documents have been posted promptly and in chronological order and have been publicly accessible on the web portal since the claimed publication date'.

Residents say Google maps can enable the tracking of information required for BNG assessment for a planning application but this doesn't protect mature trees in gardens that are not in conservation areas from being felled or severely lopped or even slowly poisoned.

In April this year contractors who are on a list approved by the council and employed by the Clarion Group Housing Association, took saws to the trunks of old ivy on mature trees in the front gardens of Glebe Road at peak nesting time when both the ivy and trees were full of nests, a wildlife crime. To tenants' distress the contractors came back to severely lop the trees in what seems like a process aimed at the trees' managed decline. The contractors gave no advance notice that the tall mature trees were to be lopped or even their location . There were no ecology reports even though the trees of this road form a leafy, beautiful and verdant corridor that is full of wildlife. The contractors showed tenants who had lived there for 25 years an email from the council's technical services dept. It stated that, as the mature trees of their leafy road were not in a conservation area and did not have tree protection orders, the contractors could do what they liked.

Residents were delighted that members of the planning committee voted to refuse permission to fell the trees at St Matthew's Piece but there are concerns that many mature trees across the city are still at risk.

They highlight that at the recent Public Inquiry into Queens' College appeal over the council's refusal of planning permission for their development at Owlstone Croft, the barrister acting for Queens' pointed out in his closing statement that

"it was the tree officer's choice to fell the five mature trees in the Protected Open Space that form the bat corridor for Paradise Nature Reserve: "Had she asked for the poplars to be retained doubtless they would be in the scheme".

Question 3.

My question has to do with the Repair Café movement in relation to the cost of living crisis and the climate emergency. The City Council has already championed and funded Repair Cafés locally, I know, but I want today to ask that it now champion them more forcefully and fund them more generously. Given the cost of living crisis, the breaking of a kettle, a heater or a Hoover may be the last straw for many in this most unequal of British cities. The casting of millions of such appliances into landfill is an environmental disaster too, and for one and all. The mending of broken things is thus a twofold good. But anyone who has been to a Repair Café – and I urge everyone to go and see for themselves – will know that these events represent a further good, being hives of busy, sociable and cheerful activity. To mend is to heal, and the healing goes beyond the objects.

The last Repair Café I went to was on International Repair Day, which falls on the third Saturday in October: we were all asked to request on their behalf more funding and more support. But I am writing this on Black Friday. Everyone knows Black Friday but how many have heard of International Repair Day? In the Global North we tend to live our lives as if there were two or three earths, not one; Repair Cafés honour the one and only earth we have. I therefore ask the City Council to promote these wonderful events more vigorously and to fund them more generously, enabling the skilled and dedicated volunteers who give their time and expertise to purchase or hire more of the equipment and materials they need.

#### Question 4.

At its last meeting, this Council asked the Leader and Chief Executive to initiate discussions with other Authorities in the region to identify options for a less fragmented and more cohesive model of Government for Cambridge. I appreciate that this was only a few weeks ago, but could the Leader please give an update on any discussions that have been held so far, and indicate the likely timescales for future discussions.



## **STRATEGY & RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**20 November 2023**

**5.30pm – 7:05pm**

Present: Robertson (Chair), Baigent, Bennett, Bick, Gawthrope Wood, Holloway, Sheil and Young.

## **RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL (EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR FINANCE & RESOURCES COUNCILLOR S. SMITH)**

### **TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REVIEW REPORT 2023/24**

The council has adopted The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management (Revised 2021).

This half-year report has been prepared in accordance with the Code and covers the following: -

- i. An economic update for the first half of the 2023/24 financial year;
- ii. A review of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and
- iii. Annual Investment Strategy;
- iv. The Council's capital expenditure, as set out in the Capital Strategy,
- v. and prudential indicators;
- vi. A review of the Council's investment portfolio for 2023/24;
- vii. A review of the Council's borrowing strategy for 2023/24; and
- viii. A review of compliance with Treasury and Prudential Limits for
  - a. 2023/24.

Cash and investment balances as at 29 September were £142 million. The balance is forecast to gradually reduce over the remainder of the year as existing balances are used to fund General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital expenditure.

Interest receipts for the year are projected at £6,271,000 which is £3,954,000 above the original budget. Interest receipts are forecast higher than last year due mainly to increases in investment rates and higher cash balances being held for longer periods than expected.

### **Accordingly, Council is recommended to:**

- i. Recommend the council's estimated Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2023/24 to 2026/27 (Appendix A).

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## **RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL (EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR FINANCE & RESOURCES COUNCILLOR S. SMITH)**

### **General Fund (GF) Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)**

This report presents and recommends the budget strategy for the 2024/25 budget cycle as outlined in the MTFS October 2023 document, which is attached and to be agreed (Appendix 1). Also presented at Appendix 2 is the proposed budget consultation for 2024/25.

This report also recommends the approval of new and amended revenue and capital items as shown in the MTFS.

At this stage in the 2024/254 budget process the range of assumptions on which the Budget Setting Report (BSR) published in February 2023 was based need to be reviewed in light of the latest information available to determine whether any aspects of the strategy need to be revised. This then provides the basis for updating the budget for 2024/25 and to provide indicative budgets to 2033/34. All references to the recommendations to Appendices, pages and sections relate to MTFS Version 1.0

The recommended budget strategy is based on the outcome of the review undertaken together with financial modelling and projections of the council's expenditure and resources in light of local policies and priorities, national policy and economic context. Service managers have identified financial and budget issues and pressures, and this information has been used to inform the MTFS.

**Accordingly, Council is recommended to:**

#### **General Fund Revenue**

- i. Agree the incorporation of changed assumptions as presented in Section 3 [pages 12 and 13], which provide an indication of the net savings requirement, by year for the next five years [page 16], and

revised projections for General Fund (GF) revenue and funding as shown in Appendix A [page 34] and reserves, Section 6 [page 26].

- ii. Agree the 2023/24 revenue budget proposal as set out in Section 4 [page 15], for a £651k increase in pay budgets to reflect the recently agreed pay settlement for 2023/24.

### Capital

- iii. Note the changes to the capital plan, as set out in Section 5 [pages 22 to 25]. and Appendix B [pages 35 to 44] of the MTFS document.
- iv. To agree a capital spending proposal, rephasing and scheme deletions/reductions as set out below.

Ref.	Description - £'000s	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total
	<b>Proposals</b>							
SC853	East Barnwell redevelopment	49	1,447	1,996	677	-	-	4,169
	<b>Rephasing</b>							
SC732	Park Street car park development	(69,203)	(7,173)	-	-	-	-	(76,376)
		11,295	65,081					76,376
PR055	Operational Hub	(9,308)	-	-	-	-	-	(9,308)
		705	8,063	-	-	-	-	9,308
	<b>Deletion/reduction</b>							
SC771	Data and analytics	(70)	-	-	-	-	-	(70)
SC770	ICT project delivery	(40)	-	-	-	-	-	(40)
SC804	ICT and digital capabilities	(145)	-	-	-	-	-	(145)
SC659	Online customer portal	(19)	-	-	-	-	-	(19)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>(66,736)</b>	<b>67,418</b>	<b>1,996</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,355</b>

### Reserves

- v. Agree changes to GF reserve levels, the prudent minimum balance being set at £5.934 million and the target level at £7.121 million as detailed in Section 6 [page 27].
- vi. Approve the contribution of £700k of general reserves and £274k of funding released from capital schemes to the Our Cambridge Transformation earmarked reserve as set out in Section 4 [pages 19 to 21].
- vii. Approve the council's reserve policy as set out in Appendix E [page 47].

# Agenda Item 4

Number	From	To	Question
1	Elliot Tong	Executive Councillor for Communities	What steps has the Council taken to investigate the adoption of a Leeds style negotiated stopping places <a href="https://www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk/">https://www.negotiatedstopping.co.uk/</a> for the GRT communities?
2	Matthew Howard	Executive Councillor for Community Wealth Building and Community Safety	The London Metropolitan Police has noted an increase in hate crime following the Israel / Gaza conflict. It states that “Between 1 October and 18 October, we saw 218 antisemitic offences compared to 15 in the same period last year. Similarly we saw an increase in Islamophobic offences from 42, to 101. These represent percentage rises of 1,353 per cent and 140 per cent respectively. “Can the city council confirm whether officers have seen any increase in racially motivated incidents, such as staff harassment, graffiti, neighbour disputes and ASB since 7 October 2023
3	Jean Glasberg	Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure or Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services	Zurich Insurance reports a 26% increase in overall subsidence claim volumes in 2022 and a 40% increase in the first half of 2023. Much of our city sits on clay soil which is particularly vulnerable to subsidence. Other insurers report similar outcomes and general concerns as to the impact of more volatile weather have been raised. Trees are often blamed for subsidence and are routinely felled on a just in case basis although the Association of British Insurers figures suggest that only 60 % of subsidence cases are tree related. What steps do the relevant Executive Councillors consider should be taken, firstly to ensure new buildings are subsidence proof and secondly, that the planting of the new street trees we need for the city are managed to minimise their future loss to subsidence claims ?

4	Naomi Bennett	The Leader	<p>Together with other city councillors, I listened to the encouraging reports of the SCDC 4 day week trial which affects the key shared services of Planning and Waste. Will the executive councillors responsible for these services comment on their experience of the trial and state whether they will be responding to the recent best value notice served on SCDC or have any other opportunity to ensure that the impact on Cambridge City Council services has been reflected in the SCDC response?</p>
5	Immy Blackburn-Horgan	Executive Councillor for Communities	<p>Queen Edith's residents tell me they still don't know when the Pavilion on Nightingale Recreation Ground will be open, will the Executive Councillor tell me when that is going to happen and will the Pavilion be wheelchair accessible?</p>
6	David Levien	Executive Councillor for Climate Action and Environment	<p>At a recent South Area Committee an officer described the recently disappeared large orange cardboard recycling skip at Waitrose, Trumpington as no longer necessary because it was only required whilst the new houses at Trumpington Meadows were still selling rapidly, and the new residents had high volumes of packaging to dispose of.</p> <p>However, this recycling point (which is organised by the City Council under contract to the county) became very popular with old and new residents in Trumpington and the skip was frequently over-filled due to its relevance and popularity.</p> <p>In reality it would remain very popular if it was still there. Its old site looks like a recycling point and is prone to fly-tipping.</p> <p>The modest cost of a new skip and emptying arrangements would be fully justified by the reduction in fly-tipping, and the multiple car journeys to the Waste Recycling centre. Could it be restored?</p>

<b>7</b>	Cheney Payne	Executive Councillor for Housing and Homelessness	Could the Executive Councillor please offer an update on the situation regarding whether the trees on Histon Road recreation ground can be retained during the ATS/Murketts Garage redevelopment?
<b>8</b>	Anthony Martinelli	Executive Councillor for Community Wealth Building and Community Safety	Could the Executive Councillor update us on progress with the King's Parade barrier?
<b>9</b>	Katie Porrer	Executive Councillor for Communities	Could the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services please update members on progress on our policy, as agreed at council in October 2021, to remove single use plastics from events on council owned land.
<b>10</b>	Ingrid Flaubert	Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services	Could the Executive Councillor please explain why has it taken so long for a new outdoor play strategy to come forward, which is of concern to my residents in Trumpington as our population of children is growing and provision needs to keep up?
<b>11</b>	Olaf Hauk	Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services	Can the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces please explain why there is no system in place to allow street traders onto Hobson Square, despite the huge demand from local residents, great interest from traders, and strong support from local Councillors?
<b>12</b>	Cllr Divkovic	Executive Councillor for Community Wealth Building and Community Safety	In August 2023, the Council was reaccredited by the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance. What does the accreditation signify?
<b>13</b>	Cllr Robertson	Executive Councillor for Housing and Homelessness	Can the exec Cllr for Housing and Homelessness give us an update on how the audits of our council homes are going?
<b>14</b>	Cllr Griffin	Executive Councillor for Communities	Can the exec cllr for Communities tell us about what work the council is doing to support our food hubs and what progress has been made since the city achieved silver sustainable food city status?

<b>15</b>	Cllr Holloway	Executive Councillor for Communities	Can the exec cllr for Communities give us an update on the Council's pledge to introduce a youth strategy for the city at a previous council meeting earlier this year?
<b>16</b>	Cllr Baigent	Executive Councillor for Climate Action and Environment	The climate crisis is being felt around the world and this year has been the hottest on record so far. What are we doing a council to reduce our own emissions and how is it going?
<b>17</b>	Cllr Swift	Executive Councillor for Climate Action and Environment	There has been some debate about whether we suffer from poor air quality in Cambridge. What is air quality like in Cambridge and what are we doing as a council to improve it?
<b>18</b>	Cllr Pounds	Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources	Can the exec councillor for Finance and Resources highlight some of the key takeaways from the Government's Autumn Budget announcement and how they may impact our council and residents?
<b>19</b>	Cllr Thittala	Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure	It has been reported this week that potentially toxic 'forever chemicals' have been detected in the drinking water sources at 17 of 18 England's water companies. This included Anglian Water with 22 raw samples above the limit from two groundwater sources. Can the executive Cllr for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure give us some detail on how the Council can get more information on this issue and put pressure on Anglian Water to improve their water monitoring and safety levels.
<b>20</b>	Cllr Sheil	Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure	How is the Design Code trial progressing in the north of the city, and how might it help improve the planning process in the long run?
<b>21</b>	Cllr A Smith	Executive Councillor for Community Wealth Building and Community Safety	25 November marked the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. What is the council doing to combat violence against women and girls and promote this day of significance?
<b>22</b>	Cllr Ashton	The Leader	Can the Leader give the Council an update regarding progress on Cambridge 2040?
<b>23</b>	Cllr Lee	The Leader/Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control, and Infrastructure	Given the gridlock in Cambridge over recent weeks, could the leader of the council let us know what role he thinks the City Council has in encouraging active travel within the city?



24

Cllr Bick

Executive Councillor for  
Open Spaces and City  
Services

The successful and popular community orchard on Midsummer Common is managed for the enjoyment of the public by a team of volunteers. Is the Executive Councillor satisfied that the bid they made to the council for improvements, paid for from developer contributions and approved in October 2021, has still not been delivered?

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## Council 30 November 2023 Written Questions

### 1. Councillor Tong

#### To Councillor Carling the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services:

Although I know many residents look forward to the firework season, for others it's an ordeal for beloved pets and some humans.

Displays based on lasers, drones and LEDs , with or without music, offer an exciting modern alternative to traditional fireworks displays but don't have the same risks. Costs are comparable to conventional displays but are coming down as these displays become more common. Will the executive councillor take action to protect pets, humans and planet from the adverse impact of noise, fire and pollution and investigate these options with a view to having an alternative Guy Fawkes display in 2024 that we can all enjoy?

Will the executive councillor also work with the 2024 May Ball committees to help them explore this environmentally friendly option?

Response:

Thanks for bringing this up, Councillor Tong. The impact of fireworks on pets and indeed some people, as you raise, is important for us to consider, and it is something we have made significant commitments on as a council. Let me begin by highlighting the commitments we have already made in this area.

In July 2022 the Council considered a Motion and agreed as follows:

- To encourage the organisers of all public firework displays within the local authority boundaries to advertise in advance of the event, allowing residents to take precautions for their animals and vulnerable people,
- To actively promote a public awareness campaign about the impact of fireworks on animal welfare and vulnerable people – including the precautions that can be taken to mitigate risks.
- To write to the UK Government urging them to introduce legislation to limit the maximum noise level of fireworks to 90dB for those sold to the public for private displays.

- To encourage local suppliers of fireworks to stock 'quieter' fireworks for public display.

As a council, we operate and run a November fireworks display as this is deemed to help reduce the number of local neighbourhood organised fireworks, and indeed those run by individuals. Our event strives to be as sustainable as possible, with this year's operator using carbon offsetting to produce carbon-neutral displays.

This managed, at-scale event therefore significantly reduces the impact on pets during the fireworks period. It also addresses the disturbance to those that do not wish to attend these types of displays by discouraging the use of fireworks in local neighbourhoods.

There is an important question arising from the suggestion you make about drones, lasers and LEDs in terms of whether the lack of actual fireworks would undermine the benefits I have just described, leading to more individual displays across the city and therefore increasing the risk of harm. In short, if we don't provide traditional fireworks, there is a significant possibility that others will, and we may end up with more fireworks across the city overall. However, we continue to keep abreast of all new research on firework technology and alternative technology to explore new forms of entertainment, and I am sure your suggestions can be fed into that process.

On your point about May Balls, the City Council is working with the May Ball Committees and Colleges to ensure that they are considering additional environmentally friendly options and alternatives to traditional firework displays.

We hold a workshop with the colleges in November, which will be taking place this year on the day this response is published. I am reassured by the Communities Group that the points above around fireworks at May Balls will be raised at this workshop.

If you would like further details on the companies we use and the details of the display, please contact the Cultural Services and Events department of Cambridge City Council, within the Communities Group.

## **2. Councillor Bennett**

**To Councillor Bird the Executive Councillor for Housing and Homelessness**

We note from the figures in the summer edition of Open Door that average water use in the council properties surveyed is considerable in excess of local averages and required maximum allowances for new developments. We note that the high use is considered due to the use of less modern plumbing fixtures. We note that there are no comparable figures for the private rental sector which contains many older style properties. Will the executive councillor for housing bring forward plans to roll out more modern fixtures to council houses and will she also consider what steps need to be taken to support and encourage private landlords in older properties to make such changes?

Response:

In 2022/23 the Council commissioned a report from specialist consultants, Water Environment Ltd. The report evaluates the likely water demand of the Council's own existing housing stock, using available data, and recommends actions to improve water efficiency.

The report suggested significant improvements could be made within the Council's existing refurbishment programmes by replacing the taps installed as standard with low flow taps of a similar style, which could reduce water demand by around 51 litres/person/day. This change to the specification would result in small cost increase in kitchen and bathroom replacement costs.

Our contractors are providing prices for alternative low flow taps and it is proposed to implement this water efficiency measure as part of the 2023/24 kitchen and bathroom replacement programme.

It is also proposed that an awareness program should be implemented, including preparation of a leaflet detailing simple behavioural measures that can be applied by tenants to reduce their water consumption.

Collection of rainwater for external use is also strongly recommended in the report, and the Council already installs water butts as part of re-roofing works.

As part of the Council's "Net Zero Retrofit Project" we are planning to add water efficiency measures and fit showers over baths in fifty properties. This should save water, including hot water consumption.

With regard to private sector landlords the Council Environmental Health team is focussing on ensuring that private landlords comply with their legal responsibilities and keep properties in good repair. This includes ensuring properties are free from leaks. The Council does not currently have any powers to require water efficiency measures to be implemented in private sector housing.

### **3. Councillor Howard**

#### **To Councillor Carling the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services**

I welcome the council's various initiatives to encourage more tree planting. In these times of extreme weather, we hope our trees will help keep us cool and comfortable as well providing a home for small creatures. However, our trees can't protect us if we don't protect them from lack of water. We have seen the mass dieback of the trees planted along the A14 from thirst and the amazing work done by community groups such as Friends of Logan's Meadow to keep new trees alive. Will the executive councillor agree that we need a tree plan that goes further than planting trees and covers protecting them from drought too ?

Will the executive councillor, join me in writing to our local water companies to ask them to follow the example shown by Southern Water and roll out a slow release water butt scheme . Not only does this provide water for trees but it improves rainwater capture as well as decreasing flood risk?

Response:

The City Council's tree team aims to plant around 250 new trees every year, to replace those lost to old age. With grant funding, we have achieved planting rates well in advance of this target for a number of years. For the first three years, newly planted trees need a little extra care and attention to help them become firmly established. As you suggest in this question, the most critical element is to keep them well watered while they adjust to their new surroundings.

It is important to note that we water all new trees regularly, and that we also run social media campaigns to engage residents in this too. Privately owned trees in gardens make up a very significant proportion of Cambridge's canopy cover, and engagement with residents is also

important in relation to protecting those as well as encouraging the planting of more.

I would like to join you in recognising and thanking the many individual residents and community groups that work to help new trees thrive across our city. Our Tree Strategy makes several references to watering newly planted trees, which I hope provides additional reassurance that this is recognised.

Where possible, we plant our trees within irrigation bags or irrigation wells, which are designed to slowly release water to keep trees hydrated for longer. The Milton Road Project provides an example of this, with bags being visible around many of the new trees.

The Southern Water slow-release water butt scheme to which you refer has come about following investment of £5 million in pilot schemes proven to help reduce and slow the flow of surface water and sewage spills. It has been positive to see significant success especially on the Isle of Wight, where slow drain water butts provision has led to a 70% reduction in spills at one location.

Funding for similar projects can also come from other sources. Blackpool Council has recently received funding from the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund for a community flood resilience project, and as part of this project, all Blackpool households will be eligible to receive a free water butt, with flats and apartments also eligible if premises are suitable.

While I am sure you know how slow-release water butts work, I would like to explain it briefly for the benefit of anyone else that reads my response to your question. In short, around halfway up the storage tank of a slow-release water butt, a siphon is positioned to slowly drain the upper part into a household drain. These tanks therefore act as buffers to store rain after a heavy downpour, and release it over a longer period of time such that sewers are much more able to cope. This then restores additional space in the slow-release water butt, so even if it is not used for some time, the buffer capacity is retained as it does not remain full.

There would therefore be clear benefits to having a slow-release water butt distribution scheme in Cambridge, particularly in light of the flooding seen in several areas of the city this month. I would be happy to write to local water companies (primarily Cambridge Water and Anglian Water) and ask them to consider such a scheme.

There is evidence that the presence of numerous designated bathing waters in Southern Water's catchment area is driving some of their emphasis on developing innovative methods such as this one to reduce storm overflows. I look forward to hearing the outcome on the recent application to create a designated bathing water site at Sheep's Green, and while I recognise that the Green Party continues to oppose this measure to clean up our river, I hope that if it is approved, we can work together to use this as part of efforts to encourage local water companies to work with us on similar innovative methods to Southern Water.

### Further information

An example of an irrigation bag (left) and irrigation well (right):



## **4. Councillor Glasberg**

### **To Councillor Thornburrow the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control, and Infrastructure**

Will the executive councillor confirm the amount of the annual financial contribution made by Cambridge University to the planning service and outline what precautions are in place to ensure that the independence of the planning service is not compromised?

Response:

The planning service offers pre-application advice to any individual or organisation wishing to make a planning application. These come in the



form of pre-application for Householder applications, or a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) process for larger schemes that meet the criteria, and this process enables cost recovery.

In these situations, planning officers are employed directly by GCSP. The PPA will cover all functions of the service and includes colleagues from Delivery (Strategic Sites and Development Management), Landscape, Conservation etc. based on an hourly rate recharge. The PPA is available to any organisation.

GCSP don't currently have any signed PPAs with the University of Cambridge (although there is one in the process of being agreed).

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