



## Cambridge City Council Civic Affairs

**Date:** Wednesday, 9 October 2019

**Time:** 5.30 pm

**Venue:** Committee Room 1 & 2, The Guildhall, Market Square, Cambridge, CB2 3QJ

**Contact:** democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk, tel:01223 457000

### Agenda

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes (Pages 3 - 12)
- 4 Public Questions
- 5 Oral Update on 2018/19 External Audit Process
- 6 Internal Audit Plan: Progress Report (Pages 13 - 34)
- 7 Polling District Review (Pages 35 - 60)
- 8 Annual Complaints Report 2018-19 (Pages 61 - 108)
- 9 Freedom Of Information, Data Protection And Transparency: Annual Report 2018/19 (Pages 109 - 118)
- 10 Proxy Voting at Council Meetings (Pages 119 - 124)
- 11 Calendar of Meetings 2020/21 (Pages 125 - 130)
- 12 Flag Flying Protocol (Pages 131 - 134)

**Civic Affairs Members:** McPherson (Chair), Sergeant (Vice-Chair), Chadwick, Dalzell, Davey and Thornburrow

**Alternates:** Martinelli and Moore

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# Public Document Pack Agenda Item 3

Civic Affairs

Civ/1

Wednesday, 24 July 2019

## CIVIC AFFAIRS

24 July 2019  
5.30 - 7.00 pm

**Present:** Councillors McPherson (Chair), Chadwick, Dalzell, Davey and Thornburrow

### Officers:

Chief Executive: Antoinette Jackson

Head of Finance: Caroline Ryba

Head of Human Resources: Deborah Simpson

Head of Shared Internal Audit Service: Jonathan Tully

Democratic Services Manager: Gary Clift

Electoral Services Manager: Vicky Breading

Committee Manager: James Goddard

### Others Present:

Ernst & Young External Auditor: Suresh Patel

Independent Person: Rob Bennett

Independent Remuneration Panel Member: Jane Phillips

## FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

### 19/20/Civ Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Sargeant.

### 19/21/Civ Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor McPherson	19/13/Civ	Personal: Former Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

### 19/22/Civ Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 13 and 22 May 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Councillor Thornburrow clarified was the Spokesperson for Joint Development Control Committee following his election as Vice Chair at the first meeting. This information became available after the 13 May Civic Affairs Committee.

### **19/23/Civ Public Questions**

Councillor Porrer submitted a written question asking if the Chief Executive could confirm that she would be willing to take forward my request to investigate whether proxy voting for members on parental leave would be possible for council meetings (as now being trialled in the UK parliament), and that a report on this would be put forward to the next Civic Affairs committee in October 2019.

The Chief Executive advised the committee that she had explained to Councillor Porrer that she did not know whether it was possible to apply this within local government law, but a report to explore the issue could come to the next meeting.

### **19/24/Civ Review of Elections 2 May 2019**

The Committee received a report from the Chief Executive.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. The Elections Team had to organise 23 May European election with just 6 weeks' notice. They had done a good job under the circumstances. Councillors queried how the situation could be handled in future if a general election occurred at short notice.
- ii. The Officer's report suggested some issues were within the City Council's control and some were not. For example, the Central Government website omitted key election information for (non-UK) EU citizens.
- iii. An unreliable postal system led to issues affecting the return of forms.
- iv. Email filters may block messages so bulk email was not a reliable method of communication (instead of hard copies by mail). Given the short timescales involved, coupled with a need to communicate quickly the decision was taken to e-mail those electors where an e-mail address was held and to send letters to the remainder. As referenced in '*lessons learnt*' there was a need to check emails had been received.

The Electoral Services Manager said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. All forms said a clear/legible scanned image could be returned by email instead of sending hard copies by post and this would be highlighted at future polls.
- ii. Some forms were received after the response deadline although people had paid a premium for next day delivery.
- iii. Council Officers would liaise in future with the Royal Mail about the issues experienced.
- iv. If people received no response from the City Council about a submitted application form, it was recommended they follow up to ensure it had been received. This would be promoted in future.
- v. The City Council had responded to all complaints from EU nationals who were unable to vote in the European election.
- vi. Expressed concern that development of European elector application forms (UC1's) by IDOX delayed the issue of information to EU citizens.

The Chief Executive made the following points:

- i. Various local authorities had been affected by the IDOX development issue when the company needed to do a system upgrade.
- ii. The Elections Team had processes to mitigate short notice election issues as much as possible.
- iii. The City Council enjoyed good and flexible relationship with polling stations so buildings could generally be used when needed.
- iv. The City Council would run elections on existing ward boundaries until they changed in May in 2020.

The Democratic Services Manager said following the review of ward boundaries by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England, a review of polling districts would be carried out during summer/autumn 2019. A (delayed) six-week consultation began on 16 July. Details would be updated on the City Council website.

**Unanimously resolved:**

- i. To note the Officer's report and provide feedback to the Returning Officer on issues the Committee would like to be considered in the management of future polls.
- ii. That the Returning Officer sends this report to the Cabinet Office and the Electoral Commission highlighting the issues experienced by EU electors in Cambridge in connection to EU Parliamentary elections on 23 May.

**19/25/Civ Oral update on the 2018/19 External Audit Process'**

The Committee received an oral report from the Ernst & Young External Auditor:

- i. The audit of council accounts was rescheduled to September 2019. This was due to a lack of resources in Ernst & Young to undertake City Council audit work, which reflected the national situation.
- ii. The situation was exacerbated by two staff leaving Ernst & Young in early summer.
- iii. The audit should take place 9 September and a report will be brought to the 9 October Civic Affairs Committee.
- iv. The External Auditor was confident the situation would not arise in future.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. This was the second time in one week that Ernst & Young had not been able to complete an audit.
- ii. Sought assurances that the audit would be complete by September. Asked for early notification if this would not be possible.
- iii. Queried if Ernst & Young could meet its audit obligations.
- iv. The council was struggling to recruit staff for services as Ernst & Young were. This needed to be reviewed as a matter of urgency as Cambridge was a competitive job market.

The External Auditor said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. The intention was to have resources in place to allow the audit to be reported back in October. He would liaise with the Head of Finance to facilitate this.
- ii. The External Auditor had liaised with the Head of Finance to check what the Council's responsibilities were. Statutory deadlines would not be missed through the delay in account sign-off. The Council has published that it was not able to publish its accounts as the audit was not complete. It had fulfilled its obligations to date. Re-iterated the accounts should be published in October.

The Head of Finance made the following points:

- i. The Council had not met the draft deadline of publishing its draft accounts 31 May 2019. The process will be reviewed to streamline it for 2020.
- ii. Not publishing the statement of accounts did not impact on Council finances, which were healthy.
- iii. The accounts had been completed. Draft accounts should be published circa 26 July after being checked.
- iv. The delay in publication of accounts was caused by:
  - a. Complex accounts.

- b. Loss of staff/expertise.
  - c. New staff had to grasp council processes in a short period of time.
- v. A number of process improvements had been identified for 2020 including the hand-over of arrangements from interim senior staff to new ones.

The Independent Person commented that local authority accounts were complicated, and City Council accounts even more so, so he understood why it was possible to miss the audit deadline.

**Unanimously resolved** to note the oral update.

### **19/26/Civ Annual Report on Counter Fraud and Corruption**

The Committee received a report from the Head of Shared Internal Audit Service regarding the annual review of the Council's counter fraud arrangements. It also set out a summary of fraud/whistle-blowing activity for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. County Lines was a widely publicised area of serious crime.
- ii. There was a risk of 'cuckooing' in social housing. (Criminals taking over properties occupied by vulnerable adults in order to use them as bases for drug dealing.)
- iii. Cambridgeshire Police had been doing a lot of work to reduce cuckooing in the city, but this had pushed drug dealing/taking into open spaces instead.

The Head of Shared Internal Audit Service said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. The Council had recognised the risk regarding cuckooing and was addressing the issue by working in partnership with other organisations.
- ii. A serious organised crime review had been undertaken across the council, noting good practice guidance from Central Government.
- iii. The Whistleblowing Policy set out how people could report concerns. They were encouraged to do this internally first before reporting externally.

**Unanimously resolved** to note the details of fraud/whistle-blowing activity in section 3 of the Officer's report.

### **19/27/Civ Annual Head of Internal Audit Opinion**

The Committee received a report from the Head of Shared Internal Audit Service regarding his opinion on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's internal control environment, governance, and the risk management framework.

The Head of Shared Internal Audit Service said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. An update would be provided at a future committee on how the new project management system was working.
- ii. The County Council had responsibility as the Lead Local Flood Authority to produce a Flood Risk Management Strategy. (Councillors had expressed concern that city drains and the water treatment centre were not able to cope which could lead to flooding.) The City Council had reviewed its responsibilities (working on its own and with the County Council as part of the Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership) and these had been met.
- iii. Information/computer security was critical. Varied audit work had been undertaken:
  - a. Huntingdonshire District Council completed ICT audits as the lead shared service for ICT.
  - b. The ICT Team had undertaken testing to be compliant with accredited standards, such as the Public Services Network.
  - c. The Internal Audit Service completed GDPR reviews and also tested general ICT controls as part of system reviews.

**Unanimously resolved** to note the annual opinion of the Head of Shared Internal Audit.

### **19/28/Civ Annual Governance Statement and Local Code of Corporate Governance**

The Committee received a report from the Head of Shared Internal Audit Service which provided:

- An update on the progress of actions identified in the previous year.
- Reported the annual review of effectiveness and any new governance issues.
- Provided an update of the Local Code of Corporate Governance.

In response to Members' questions the Head of Shared Internal Audit Service said that if there were any changes to the Annual Governance Statement, these would be brought back to committee at the next meeting.

The Chief Executive said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. A report on lessons learnt from 'Cambridge Live' being brought back in-house in December 2018 would be presented to Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee when the review was completed. Themes from this could feed into the Civic Affairs Annual Governance Statement.
- ii. The Annual Governance Statement was presented to committee in advance of the Statement of Accounts to even out committee workload.

The Chief Executive proposed to amend the Officer recommendation as follows:

Approve the **draft** Annual Governance Statement in advance of the Statement of Accounts.

The amendment was **unanimously agreed**.

**Unanimously resolved** to:

- i. Approve the draft Annual Governance Statement in advance of the Statement of Accounts. To help complete this members noted:
  - the arrangements for compiling, reporting on and signing the AGS;
  - the progress made on issues reported in the previous year;
  - the current review of effectiveness
  - the issues considered for inclusion in the current AGS;
- ii. Note and endorse the amendments to the updated Local Code of Corporate Governance.

## **19/29/Civ Review of Officer Employment Procedure Rules**

The Committee received a report from the Head of Human Resources asking Civic Affairs Committee to consider and recommend to Full Council changes to the Officer Employment Procedure Rules in relation to the level of post for which Executive Notification is required.

**Unanimously resolved** to approve and recommend to Full Council that:

- i. Part 41: Officer Employment Procedure Rules be amended to include the following statement:

### **Other Employees**

Appointment of employees at head of service level and below is the responsibility of the Head of Paid Service or his/her nominee, and may not be made by Councillors.

- ii. 2.1.2 Part 41: Officer Employment Procedure Rules be amended to include the following statement:

### **Director Posts**

A committee of the Council appointed for that purpose will appoint Director level posts. The Executive Notification process will be undertaken for these roles.

- iii. The Head of Human Resources and Head of Legal Services be given delegated authority to update Constitution in Part 41: Officer Employment Procedure Rules to include the approved statements.
- iv. The Head of Human Resources and Head of Legal Services be given delegated authority to update the Constitution in Part 41: Officer Employment Procedure Rules to modify the remaining paragraphs to simplify and clarify the text in line with the practice of South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire District Councils.

### **19/30/Civ Mayoral Allowance**

The Committee received a report from the Democratic Services Manager asking them to consider the report and recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel regarding the Mayor and Deputy Mayor's Allowances with effect from 2019/20.

The Independent Remuneration Panel Member said there was a lack of clarity on spend by all incumbents interviewed which led to one of the recommendations.

Councillor McPherson said the Deputy Mayor stood in for the Mayor on a number of occasions. The Officer's Report (P142) stated it was extremely rare for the Deputy Mayor to deputise for the Mayor.

**Unanimously resolved** to agree with the IRPs recommendations.

### **19/31/Civ Update on Issues on Standards for Councillors**

The Committee received a report from Head of Legal Practice regarding general update on the standards regime for city councillors and councillor appointments to outside bodies.

**Unanimously resolved to:**

- i. Note the update on the standards regime as outlined in the Local Government Ethical Standard Report referenced under paragraph 3.1.5 of the Officer's report and that an update report will be brought to the Committee next year.
- ii. Approve the *Guidance for Members and Officers who Serve on Outside Bodies* (Appendix A of the Officer's report).
- iii. Agree that a copy of the Officer's report be sent to all Members of the Council for information.

The meeting ended at 7.00 pm

**CHAIR**

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Item

## INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE

**To:**

Civic Affairs Committee [09/10/2019]

**Report by:**

Jonathan Tully, Head of Shared Internal Audit Service

Tel: 01223 - 458180 Email: [jonathan.tully@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.tully@cambridge.gov.uk)

**Wards affected:**

All

### 1. Introduction / Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the committee of the work of Internal Audit, completed between April 2019 to September 2019, and the developments within the team.
- 1.2 The role of Internal Audit is to provide the Civic Affairs Committee, and Management, with independent assurance on the effectiveness of the internal control environment.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of the report.

### 3. BackgroundPage: 1

- 3.1 The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require that the Council "must undertake an effective internal audit to evaluate the effectiveness of its risk management, control and governance

processes; taking into account public sector internal auditing standards or guidance.”

- 3.2 Internal Audit assists the Council, and the Civic Affairs Committee, to discharge its governance responsibilities. Our work supports the Council’s corporate objectives, and the corporate governance framework.
- 3.3 Internal audit coverage is planned so that the focus is upon those areas and risks which will most impact upon the council’s ability to achieve its objectives.
- 3.4 Internal Audit work should help add value to the Council by helping to improve systems, mitigate risks, and subsequently inform the Annual Governance Statement.

## **4. Implications**

### **(a) Financial Implications**

None.

### **(b) Staffing Implications**

The audit plan reflects current available resources, and factors in current vacancies in the team, plus time for successful recruitment.

### **(c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

There are no implications.

### **(d) Environmental Implications**

None.

### **(e) Procurement Implications**

None.

### **(f) Community Safety Implications**

None.

## **5. Consultation and communication considerations**

None

## **6. Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- Risk-Based Internal Auditing – Working Standards and Procedures
- Public Sector Internal Audit Standards
- CIPFA Local Government Application Note
- Cambridge City Council Risk Registers
- Corporate Plan

## **7. Appendices**

- a) Internal Audit Progress report
- b) Audit definitions

## **8. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact:

Jonathan Tully, Head of Shared Internal Audit Service,  
tel: 01223 - 458180, email: [jonathan.tully@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.tully@cambridge.gov.uk).

# Appendix A – Progress report

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## Cambridge City Council

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### **Introduction**

1. Management is responsible for the system of internal control and establishes policies and procedures to help ensure that the system is functioning correctly. On behalf of the Civic Affairs Committee, Internal Audit acts as an assurance function by providing an independent and objective opinion on the control environment.
2. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the recent work completed by internal audit. The information included in the progress report will feed into and inform our overall opinion in the annual Head of Internal Audit (HoIA) report issued at the year end. This opinion will in turn be used to inform the Annual Governance Statement which accompanies the Statement of Accounts. We previously provided an update, to the committee, in July 2019.
3. Where appropriate reports are given an overall opinion based on four levels of assurance. This is based on the evaluation of the control and environment, and the type of recommendations we make in each report. If a review has either “Limited” or “No” assurance, the system is followed up to review if the actions are implemented promptly and effectively. Further information is available in Appendix B – Glossary of terms.

## **Resources and team update**

4. An audit plan is presented at least annually to the Civic Affairs Committee. It is good practice to continually review the plan, to reflect emerging risks, revisions to corporate priorities, and changes to resourcing factors. The latest internal audit plan commenced from April 2019.
5. Progress of the plan delivery is illustrated on the following pages for information.
6. We have been implementing new hardware and software as part of the corporate Council Anywhere roll-out. This is enabling us to start leveraging new technology to support the way that we work, by being more agile, and also developing our use of data analytics to support our assurance work.
7. We have started to use Teams software which enables us to hold virtual meetings and conference calling. The software enables us to co-author and display documents in real-time. This is particularly useful and is also helping us to reduce unnecessary travel between various sites.

## Progress against the plan

### Finalised reviews

The following reviews have reached completion, since April 2019:

Audit	Assurance and actions		Summary of report and actions
Carbon management - Data Quality	<b>Assurance:</b> Current: Reasonable  Previous: Reasonable  <b>Actions:</b> Critical 0 High 0 Medium 0 Low 0		<p>The Council collates annual energy consumptions and fuel usage data, and converts these into tonnes of CO2 emissions, to demonstrate how it is reducing carbon emissions. This information is then reported to members in the Annual Greenhouse Gas report and used to complete the Authority's annual carbon emissions data submission to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). The Council has currently achieved a 24% improvement against a target of 15%.</p> <p>We completed a data quality check, which included reviewing the accuracy of data input, and that all calculations and formulae were correct. Data was also verified back to available source data. Feedback was provided where data was incorrect, the appropriate corrections were completed, and the revised data sets were subsequently rechecked. This provides assurance that the data was reliable.</p> <p>There were no actions arising.</p>

Audit	Assurance and actions		Summary of report and actions
HRA - Gas Safety Compliance	<b>Assurance:</b> Current: Limited Previous: Limited <b>Actions:</b> Critical 0 High 8 Medium 5 Low 0		<p>Under the 'Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2018', the Council have a legal duty to ensure all Council owned gas appliances in the properties are checked at intervals of no more than 12 calendar months, and have been issued with a Landlords Gas Safety Record (LGSR). Gas safety inspections, including gas servicing, are carried out by a contractor.</p> <p>Our review highlighted that there was a heavy reliance on the use of spreadsheets which is a potential risk. As part of the review, Management have agreed to implement actions, which will help improve their processes, and reconcile data, to provide assurance that all LGSR records are complete. This will be followed up in the current audit plan.</p>
Planning Obligations - S106 / Community Infrastructure Levy (BF)	<b>Assurance:</b> Current: Reasonable Previous: Reasonable <b>Actions:</b> Critical 0 High 0 Medium 0 Low 2		<p>The Council maintains a complex fund of allocated and unallocated S106 contributions in excess of £6 million utilising an in-house developed Access database, spreadsheet extracts, and separate supporting documentation in both Word and PDF formats. Whilst in its current state it is being managed adequately, due mainly to the effort and diligence of the Section 106 team, Management could benefit from utilising a holistic single system to manage the funds and to act as a document repository for the supporting evidence files.</p> <p>Discussions are already taking place across Corporate Strategy, the shared Planning Service and 3CICT to safeguard the integrity of data during the transition to Council Anywhere. Managers in the shared Planning Service are conscious of the need to review S106 data management systems in 2019/20.</p>

Audit	Assurance and actions		Summary of report and actions
Procurement cards	<p><b>Assurance:</b>            Current: Full            Previous: New review</p> <p><b>Actions:</b>            Critical 0            High 0            Medium 0            Low 0</p>		<p>Procurement cards should be used for low value payments which need to be made quickly and are a preferable alternative to petty cash and cheques (which generally have a higher transaction cost). There were 1727 transactions between April 2018 and March 2019, totaling £143,303.</p> <p>A compliance review of the procurement card process was undertaken for managing procurement cards, to confirm that cards are used in accordance with policies; that expenditure is monitored and approved appropriately; that best value is achieved; and that the risk of fraud is minimised.</p> <p>Controls were found to be operating effectively in practice and several areas of good practice were identified during the review. Our review also included sample testing of 20 procurement card transactions, which were processed through the new Financial Management System. All of the sample of transactions were authorised by a manager, receipts were retained, and saved on the Financial Management System.</p>

Audit	Assurance and actions		Summary of report and actions
Safeguarding - 3rd Party Providers & Contractors	<p><b>Assurance:</b>            Current: Limited            Previous: Reasonable</p> <p><b>Actions:</b>            Critical 0            High 4            Medium 1            Low 0</p>		<p>The Council needs to be satisfied that third parties and contractors are discharging their safeguarding duties appropriately, which is achieved through vetting and monitoring. We reviewed a sample of contracts awarded since July 2016 to ensure that all necessary checks have been undertaken, that contract monitoring takes place, and that safer recruitment guidance has been complied with.</p> <p>Our review established that controls were operating effectively. A safeguarding training matrix has recently been established for officers with direct involvement with children and vulnerable adults, and work is underway to improve contract terms relating to safeguarding. Opportunities to further enhance this work were identified during the review, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• development of guidance notes on the importance of Safeguarding, and how it should form part of the procurement and contract management processes;</li> <li>• agree minimum requirements and standard processes for evaluation of bidders safeguarding submissions; and</li> <li>• extension of the safeguarding training matrix to include officers with procurement and/or contract management responsibilities for contracts with safeguarding needs.</li> </ul> <p>We regularly review the arrangements for safeguarding best practice and legislation, as it is a key Corporate Risk, focusing on different elements for each review. The previous reviews provided Reasonable Assurance, and management have agreed to implement the actions identified in this review as a priority. We will complete a follow-up review to test the effectiveness of this.</p>

Audit	Assurance and actions		Summary of report and actions
BACS	<b>Assurance:</b> Current: Previous: <b>Actions:</b> Critical High Medium Low	Reasonable Limited 0 0 0 0	<p>We completed a follow-up review of BACS processes and controls, which originally concluded there was limited assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the internal controls in mitigating the risks.</p> <p>Additional mitigating controls have been highlighted, and consequently the assurance level has improved from Limited assurance to a Reasonable level.</p>
Brexit - preparation and response	<b>Assurance:</b> Current: Previous: <b>Actions:</b> Critical High Medium Low	Reasonable New review 0 0 3 0	<p>We completed a review to assess if the Council has taken reasonable steps to prepare for Brexit.</p> <p>The Council has compiled a specific Brexit Risk Register with the input of Senior Managers. Examples of risks themes include: Workforce, Supply chain, Data, Community Impact, Regulatory, Transport and Income. Two of the risks were rated amber: food supplies, and unregulated food entering the supply chain.</p> <p>To help provide assurance, and identify further insight on potential risks, we also reviewed the plans and programmes from the UK Government, strategic partnership plans with other Local Authorities and the Council's own internal programmes which seek to mitigate risk and strengthen operational controls.</p> <p>Due to the quick changing pace of Brexit, the risk register is regularly reviewed by management. This provides assurance that management are taking reasonable steps to manage risks associated with Brexit.</p>

Audit	Assurance and actions		Summary of report and actions
Trading operations - Vehicle Engineering Centre	<p><b>Assurance:</b>            Current: Reasonable            Previous: New review</p> <p><b>Actions:</b>            Critical 0            High 0            Medium 6            Low 0</p>		<p>The Vehicle Engineering Services operates from a dedicated unit based at Waterbeach. The team helps to generate income and supports the Council's objective of protecting the environment and tackling climate change by ensuring vehicles are compliant with DoT/MOT requirements.</p> <p>The review looked at the main control elements needed to maintain a successfully operational maintenance garage. We considered the Council's own policies procedures and guidelines, and the standards and practices as required by the regulatory authorities including the Driver and Vehicle Standards Authority (DVSA), Department of Transport (DoT), Driver and License Authority (DVLA), Health and Safety Executive (HSE).</p> <p>Management have demonstrated their commitment to meeting the standards required to maintain the operator's license, assessment of drivers' hours and their submission to DVSA. Health and Safety assessments have been undertaken internally by the Council.</p> <p>Management have demonstrated their commitment to maintaining a service which is compliant with the Council's internal policies and guidelines. There are some areas for improvement, in particular resource planning, the control of obsolete stock, and management reporting. We have agreed with management to return to look at other areas at a future date.</p>

Audit	Assurance and actions		Summary of report and actions
Flood Assessment	<p><b>Assurance:</b>            Current: Reasonable            Previous: New review</p> <p><b>Actions:</b>            Critical 0            High 0            Medium 3            Low 7</p>		<p>Flooding causes significant damage to local infrastructure ruining historical landmarks, disrupting local transport and provision of critical public services and amenities. There is also a costly impact to businesses and households. Cambridgeshire, as one of the lowest and flattest counties of England, is very susceptible to flooding.</p> <p>Our review concluded that Cambridge City Council is a committed and valued member of the Cambridgeshire Flood Risk Management Partnership, led by the County Council. The review identified opportunities to improve online support and advice offered to residents and businesses in Cambridge.</p>

Audit	Assurance and actions		Summary of report and actions												
Procurement Governance	<p><b>Assurance:</b></p> <table> <tr> <td>Current:</td> <td>Reasonable</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Previous:</td> <td>Limited</td> </tr> </table> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <table> <tr> <td>Critical</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>High</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Medium</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Low</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </table>	Current:	Reasonable	Previous:	Limited	Critical	0	High	3	Medium	1	Low	0		<p>We have reviewed the framework for procurement, considering the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>flexibility of the framework to help the Council achieve value for money;</li> <li>alignment of Contract Procedure Rules (CPR) to partner organisations;</li> <li>benchmarking of procurement limits;</li> <li>clarity of guidance documentation for officers;</li> <li>the appropriateness of supplier information; and</li> <li>the appointment of consultants to undertake procurement on behalf of the Authority.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, we have also followed up progress with the management agreed actions in Internal Audit report 2015/16 - 11 on Tender Evaluation, which was given limited assurance. All actions had been implemented.</p> <p>Our review established that whilst there is evidence of good practice within the procurement team, there are areas where processes can be further enhanced to improve officer's ability to 'self-serve' and this will enable procurement officers to focus on larger procurements and generating additional income through external clients.</p>
Current:	Reasonable														
Previous:	Limited														
Critical	0														
High	3														
Medium	1														
Low	0														

## Works in Progress

The following reviews are currently in progress. We have provided an update with their status below :

Audit	Assurance and actions		Summary of report and actions
Payroll	<b>Assurance:</b> Current: Previous:  <b>Actions:</b> Critical High Medium Low	Reasonable Reasonable	<p>The objectives of the Payroll system are to ensure the Council pays the right people, the right amount at the right time. Payroll is one of the Council's core financial systems and processed approximately £20m in salary payments in 2018/19.</p> <p>There have been no significant changes to the control environment since our previous review, and controls are operating effectively.</p> <p>We have identified opportunities to improve internal controls, and streamline some of the current processes, by introducing a workflow so that new starters and leavers can all be set up within the system. This would eliminate the need to have hard copy forms transferring from HR to Payroll. The 'workflow' feature is currently being explored as part of the project plan for the procurement of the new system. We are currently finalising the report.</p>

Audit	Assurance and actions		Summary of report and actions
Project - Streets & Open Spaces	<b>Assurance:</b> Current: Previous: <b>Actions:</b> Critical High Medium Low	Reasonable None	<p>We completed a follow-up review, which previously concluded there was no assurance that the internal controls effectively mitigated the potential risks.</p> <p>This review considered the processes and controls on a sample of three projects to establish whether the 16 management agreed actions from the original report had been implemented.</p> <p>Since the original audit undertaken in 2016, there has been significant development in how the Council approaches project delivery. Streets and Open Spaces are engaging with this change with the introduction of standardised templates and new project governance arrangements.</p> <p>All of the actions have been implemented and the level of assurance has improved to Reasonable. We are currently finalising the report</p>
Trading operations - Car parks	<b>Assurance:</b> Current: Previous: <b>Actions:</b> Critical High Medium Low	Reasonable New review	<p>The Council provides a total of 1540 spaces across 5 multi-storey car parks and 4 street level car parks. This includes 124 Blue Badge Disabled bays and 62 Parent and Child bays. Some parking facilities have additional spaces for bicycles, motorcycles, car club sharing and charge points for electric cars.</p> <p>Our review focused on how the Council manages its car parking facilities, optimises the income collected, and minimises potential losses through fraud, corruption and misuse.</p> <p>Our testing has concluded, and the report is currently being finalised.</p>

Audit	Assurance and actions		Summary of report and actions
Licenses - Alcohol, Premises, Events	<p><b>Assurance:</b>            Current: Reasonable            Previous: New review</p> <p><b>Actions:</b>            Critical            High            Medium            Low</p>		<p>The audit is currently at draft report stage, and we are agreeing the management action plan.</p> <p>Testing of the control environment, and compliance testing of data, has been completed. There are no major risks arising.</p>
Contract management - Leisure	<p><b>Assurance:</b>            Current: Reasonable            Previous: New review</p> <p><b>Actions:</b>            Critical            High            Medium            Low</p>		<p>The audit is currently at draft report stage, and we are agreeing the management action plan.</p> <p>Testing of the control environment, and compliance testing of data, has been completed. There are no major risks arising.</p> <p>The Council enjoys a strong partnership with Greenwich Leisure Limited and operational issues are managed without recourse to contractually agreed conditions.</p>

Audit	Assurance and actions		Summary of report and actions
Licenses - Taxis	<p><b>Assurance:</b>            Current:            Previous:</p> <p><b>Actions:</b>            Critical            High            Medium            Low</p>	Reasonable	<p>The audit is currently at draft report stage, and we are agreeing the management action plan.</p> <p>Testing of the control environment, and compliance testing of data, has been completed. There are no major risks arising.</p> <p>The Council is consulting with the trade and public on proposed changes to the Cambridge taxi licensing policy.</p>
Key Performance Indicators / Balanced Scorecard	<p><b>Assurance:</b>            Current:            Previous:</p> <p><b>Actions:</b>            Critical            High            Medium            Low</p>	New review	<p>The audit is currently at draft report stage, and we are agreeing the management action plan.</p> <p>Testing of the control environment, and compliance testing of data, has been completed. There are no major risks arising.</p>

### Other assurance and consultancy work

Below is a summary of other work completed to date, from the current year and internal audit plan. These have already been reported to the Civic Affairs Committee, will be used to inform the annual opinion, and further information can be read in the previous committee reports.

Assurance		Actions	
System reviewed	Date reported:	Assurance / Status:	Significant Actions
Annual Internal Audit Opinion	July 2019	Completed	None
Public Sector Internal Audit Standards	July 2019	Completed	None
National Fraud Initiative	July 2019	Ongoing	None

## **Counter fraud and corruption update**

8. The Council participates in a national data matching service known as the National Fraud Initiative (NFI), which is run by the Cabinet Office. Data is extracted from Council systems for processing and matching. It flags up inconsistencies in data that may indicate fraud and error, helping councils to complete proactive investigation. Nationally it is estimated that this work has identified £1.69 billion of local authority fraud, errors and overpayments since 1996. Historically this process has not identified significant fraud and error at Cambridge City Council, and this provides assurance that internal controls continue to operate effectively. Work has commenced on reviewing the current matches and will continue throughout the year. Any significant matters arising in terms of fraud and error will be reported, and there are no matters arising at this time.
9. The Council regularly reviews its counter fraud framework, and this is reported to the Civic Affairs Committee. The most recent review identified an opportunity to improve our communications and we have refreshed our internal web-pages. This is helping us to proactively promote counter fraud awareness, and develop a library of topical risks, so that we can educate colleagues and help mitigate fraud risks.

## **Other audit and assurance activity**

10. The Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) require that Internal Audit develops and maintains a quality assurance and improvement programme that covers all aspects of the Internal Audit activity. External assessments must be conducted at least once every five years by a qualified, independent assessor. In 2018 CIPFA independently verified that we "**Generally Conform**" with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS) and the accompanying Local Government Application Note (LGAN). We completed an annual internal review which provides assurance that we continue to meet the standards.
11. We have provided advice and consultancy and completed some special investigations. A contingency resource is included within our plan to manage a reasonable amount of unplanned work.
12. We contributed to the review of the Annual Governance Statement, and the Local Code of Governance, which accompanies the Statement of Accounts. The draft version was reported to the Civic

Affairs committee at the previous meeting, and the final version will accompany the Statement of Accounts.

# Appendix B – Glossary of terms

## Assurance ratings

Internal Audit provides management and Members with a statement of assurance on each area audited. This is also used by the Head of Shared Internal Audit to form an overall opinion on the control environment operating across the Council, including risk management, control and governance, and this informs the Annual Governance Statement (AGS).

Term	Description
<b>Full Assurance</b>	Controls are in place to ensure the achievement of service objectives and good corporate governance, and to protect the Authority against significant foreseeable risks.
<b>Reasonable Assurance</b>	Controls exist to enable the achievement of service objectives and good corporate governance and mitigate against significant foreseeable risks. However, occasional instances of failure to comply with control process were identified and/or opportunities still exist to mitigate further against potential risks.
<b>Limited Assurance</b>	Controls are in place and to varying degrees are complied with, however, there are gaps in the process which leave the service exposed to risks. Therefore, there is a need to introduce additional controls and/or improve compliance with existing ones, to reduce the risk exposure for the Authority.
<b>No Assurance</b>	Controls are considered to be insufficient, with the absence of at least one critical control mechanism. There is also a need to improve compliance with existing controls, and errors and omissions have been detected. Failure to improve controls leaves the Authority exposed to significant risk, which could lead to major financial loss, embarrassment, or failure to achieve key service objectives.

## Organisational impact

The overall impact may be reported to help provide some context to the level of residual risk. For example, if no controls have been implemented in a system it would have no assurance, but this may be immaterial to the organisation. Equally a system may be operating effectively and have full assurance, but if a risk materialised it may have a major impact to the organisation.

Term	Description
<b>Major</b>	The risks associated with the system are significant. If the risk materialises it would have a major impact upon the organisation.
<b>Moderate</b>	The risks associated with the system are medium. If the risk materialises it would have a moderate impact upon the organisation.
<b>Minor</b>	The risks associated with the system are low. If the risks materialises it would have a minor impact on the organisation.

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## Item

### Review of Polling Districts, Polling Places and Polling Stations

**To:**

Civic Affairs Committee      9 October 2019

**Report by:**

Antoinette Jackson, Electoral Registration Officer

Tel: 01223 457001      Email: [antoinette.jackson@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:antoinette.jackson@cambridge.gov.uk)

**Wards affected:**

All wards

## 1. Introduction / Executive Summary

1.1. Under the Electoral Administration Act 2013 a review of polling districts, polling places and polling stations must be conducted every five years. The next compulsory review must be completed by 31 January 2020.

1.2. The review is further necessary due to changes in the city ward boundaries that take effect at the next city council elections in May 2020.

**1.3. Definition of terms:**

- A polling district is a geographical area created by the subdivision of a parliamentary constituency. In practice, the same polling district boundaries are used at all elections.
- A polling place is the building or area in which a polling station is situated.

- A polling station is the room or area within the polling place where voting takes place. Unlike polling districts and polling places, which are set by the local authority, the (Acting) Returning Officer for the election selects polling stations.
- 1.4. Each local authority in Great Britain is responsible for reviewing polling districts and polling places in its area. The Civic Affairs Committee is delegated this function.
  - 1.5. Changes to the polling district boundaries will come into force at the next publication of the register of electors, scheduled for 1 December 2019. However, if any election is called before that date then the publication will be delayed to 3 February 2020 and the new polling district boundaries will come into effect on that date instead.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1. To approve the changes to polling districts in Cambridge as laid out in the attached maps at Appendix A.
- 2.2. That the polling place for each polling district is the polling district boundary, unless otherwise stated in Appendix B.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1. The last polling district review was conducted in 2017 as an interim review following changes made by the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) to the Cambridgeshire county division boundaries.
- 3.2. The changes made by the LGBCE to the county division areas mean that the 12 divisions are no longer coterminous with the 14 city wards.
- 3.3. A review of the current polling district arrangements commenced on 16 July 2019, with a seven-week consultation period that ended on 4 September 2019.
- 3.4. As is required the Acting Returning Officer for South Cambridgeshire District Council was consulted on that part of the city that sits within the South Cambridgeshire Parliamentary Constituency, i.e. Queen Edith's city ward. They are content with the current polling station arrangements.

3.5. The consultation was published on the council website and comments were sought from the following:

- Elected representatives
- Electors
- Acting Returning Officer for South Cambridgeshire DC (for Queen Edith's ward only)
- Interested persons and bodies with expertise in relation to access to premises or facilities for disabled people.

3.6. 11 responses were received to the consultation as follows, and summarised by ward:

Ward	Comments	Response
Abbey	Retain current polling stations. - Cambridge Labour Party	All the current polling stations will be retained under the proposed scheme.  Polling district ADJ has been created following the inclusion of St. Matthew's Gardens into Abbey Ward after the LGBCE review. The River Lane Centre will accommodate ACA and ADJ under the proposed scheme.
Arbury	Create a new polling district Garden Walk and Bateson Road. Possibly look at Chesterton Community College. Retain Good Shepherd Church Hall for BAB. Use St. Augustine's Church for CAB if Mayfield School is not an option, or Good Shepherd	A new polling district (BDF) has been created for the Garden Walk and Bateson Road area which is now in Arbury Ward and Chesterton Division. This area is near St. Luke's Church which will be designated at the polling place for BDF.

	<p>Church if it needs to be in the Ward. - Cambridge Labour Party</p>	<p>CAB no longer exists as this area, formerly in Castle Ward, is now in Arbury Ward forming part of a new polling district BCB. Roseford Chapel, Perse Way will be explored as a possible new polling place to accommodate BCB.</p>
Castle	<p>Retain current polling stations while exploring Storey's Field Centre for Eddington. - Cambridge Labour Party</p> <p>Recommendation for residents in Storey's Way to be moved into CEI to allow nearby electors to vote at the Seminar Rooms in Churchill College. - Hugh Taylor</p>	<p>The polling scheme has been revised so that Storey's Field Centre could be used to site a polling station for the residents in Eddington (CAC).</p> <p>Polling district CEI falls into Castle Ward and Newnham Division. Residents in Storey's Way are in Castle Ward, but also Castle Division. A polling district cannot contain multiple electoral areas, therefore CEI cannot be expanded in this way. A new polling district has been created which will allow nearby residents to use the Seminar Rooms.</p>
Cherry Hinton	To balance the electorate to allow St. Philip Howard Church	As Cherry Hinton Ward is no longer coterminous with the

	<p>to be used as a polling place for nearby residents. - Cambridge Labour Party</p>	<p>county division, an additional polling district has been created which will allow residents near St. Philip Howard Church to vote here. St. Philip Howard Church will accommodate both DCD and DDK.</p>
Coleridge	<p>Retain current polling stations. - Cambridge Labour Party</p>	<p>All existing polling stations in Coleridge Ward will be retained under the proposed scheme.</p>
East Chesterton	<p>Move polling station for FAF to St. Andrew's Hall which is far more accessible and central to the polling district. - Cambridge Labour Party</p>	<p>St. Andrew's Hall will be explored as a possible polling place, subject to availability.</p>
King's Hedges	<p>Retain Arbury Community Centre and North Arbury Chapel. Continue use of Arbury Court Library for what is currently polling district NDG. - Cambridge Labour Party.</p>	<p>Both Arbury Community Centre and North Arbury Chapel will be retained under the proposed scheme.</p> <p>Polling district NDG, formerly in West Chesterton Ward, is now in King's Hedges and forms part of GCG. The proposed scheme will use Arbury Community Centre for GCG.</p> <p>Polling district NDG</p>

		has been deleted under the proposed scheme.  New polling district GAB will use Arbury Court Library under the proposed scheme.
Market	Retain current polling stations. - Cambridge Labour Party	All existing polling stations in Market Ward will be retained under the proposed scheme.
Newnham	Retain current polling stations. - Cambridge Labour Party	All existing polling stations in Newnham Ward will be retained under the proposed scheme.
Petersfield	St. Matthew's Gardens, New Street and the top of York Street to use the same polling station as ACA. - Cambridge Labour Party	As above, polling district ADJ which covers this area will use The River Centre as its polling place.
Queen Edith's	Request to relocate from St. James Church in Queen Edith's Ward due to lack of provision for tellers. - John Beresford  Commented that St. John the Evangelist and St. James Church are in excellent locations in Queen Edith's Ward. - Chris Rand	There are a limited number of venues in Queen Edith's Ward to use as a polling place. St. James Church is in a convenient location for the local electorate. Not all polling places in Cambridge are large enough to accommodate tellers. Accessibility and convenience to electors take priority in choosing a polling

		<p>place.</p> <p>St. John the Evangelist and St. James Church will continue to be used under the proposed polling scheme.</p>
Romsey	<p>Confirmed Ross Street Community Centre is suitable as a polling station. - Allan Brigham</p> <p>Retain current polling stations. - Cambridge Labour Party</p>	<p>All existing polling stations in Romsey Ward will be retained under the proposed scheme.</p>
Trumpington	<p>Comments and suggestions were received for the polling arrangements in Trumpington Ward from Cambridge Labour Party, James Herns and Philippa Slatter.</p> <p>The consensus agreed that an additional polling station at the new Clay Farm Centre to accommodate the growing population of Trumpington Ward would be desirable.</p> <p>Considerations were made with regards to proximity of the Centre to the electorate in the</p>	<p>In addition to Trumpington Village Hall, the Clay Farm Centre will be used as polling station under the new polling scheme, as has always been the intent.</p> <p>The polling districts in Trumpington Ward have been revised to allow for this to happen, taking into consideration the comments received regarding accessibility and convenience to the local residents.</p> <p>Warding arrangements falls outside the scope of the polling district</p>

	<p>new Trumpington development and accessibility of the Centre by car, public transport, cycling or on foot.</p> <p>A suggestion had been received to split Trumpington Ward into two separate wards with councillors for each new ward. - Andrew Conway Morris.</p>	review.
West Chesterton	<p>Use St. Laurence's Catholic Church for NCF. To use Milton Road Library rather than the Polonia Club for location and accessibility. For the same reasons, use St. Luke's instead of the New Chesterton Institute. Magdalene College and Magdalene Street to use Castle Street Methodist Church. – Cambridge Labour Party</p> <p>The Parish Room, St. Laurence's Catholic Church location is very satisfactory with good accessibility. - Sasha Wilson</p>	<p>The proposed scheme will continue to use St. Laurence's Catholic church for polling district NCF. Milton Road Library will also be explored to accommodate polling district NAB.</p> <p>The New Chesterton Institute will continue to be used as a polling place to accommodate NBC as well as the Polonia Club for NDF as the proposed scheme as they are located within their suggested polling districts. Access arrangements will be reviewed, and alterations explored.</p>

		Polling district NEH has been created for Magdalene College, Magdalene Street and part of Northampton Street. Castle Street Methodist Church is the proposed location for this polling district under the scheme.
--	--	---

- 3.7. There are currently 45 polling districts within the Cambridge city area. The movement of ward boundaries has necessitated the creation of new polling districts, to fall in line with existing county division and the 2020 city ward boundaries. The new scheme has 52 polling districts in total, so an increase of seven from the current arrangements.
- 3.8. The creation of new polling districts means that some electors will be allocated to different polling stations. These electors will be provided with additional information, during the issue of poll cards, to alert them to the new location of their allocated station.
- 3.9. The allocation of polling stations are at the discretion of the Returning Officer. The attached list at Appendix B shows the proposed polling station, however these may change if venue availability changes.
- 3.10. The proposed polling districts, associated polling stations and a breakdown of their city wards/county divisions are shown at appendix B. Also included are estimated property and electorate figures for the new polling districts.

## 4. Implications

### a) Financial Implications

Due to the increase in number of polling districts there will be an impact on costs of polling stations (i.e. premise hire and staffing) at a poll.

### b) Staffing Implications

No impact.

### c) Equality and Poverty Implications

An EqIA for elections is in place.

**d) Environmental Implications**

No impact.

**e) Procurement Implications**

No impact.

**f) Community Safety Implications**

No impact.

## **5. Consultation and communication considerations**

- 5.1. As indicated above (paragraph 3) public notice of the review was given and stakeholders informed of the consultation period. Information was provided on the consultation page of the city council website.

## **6. Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

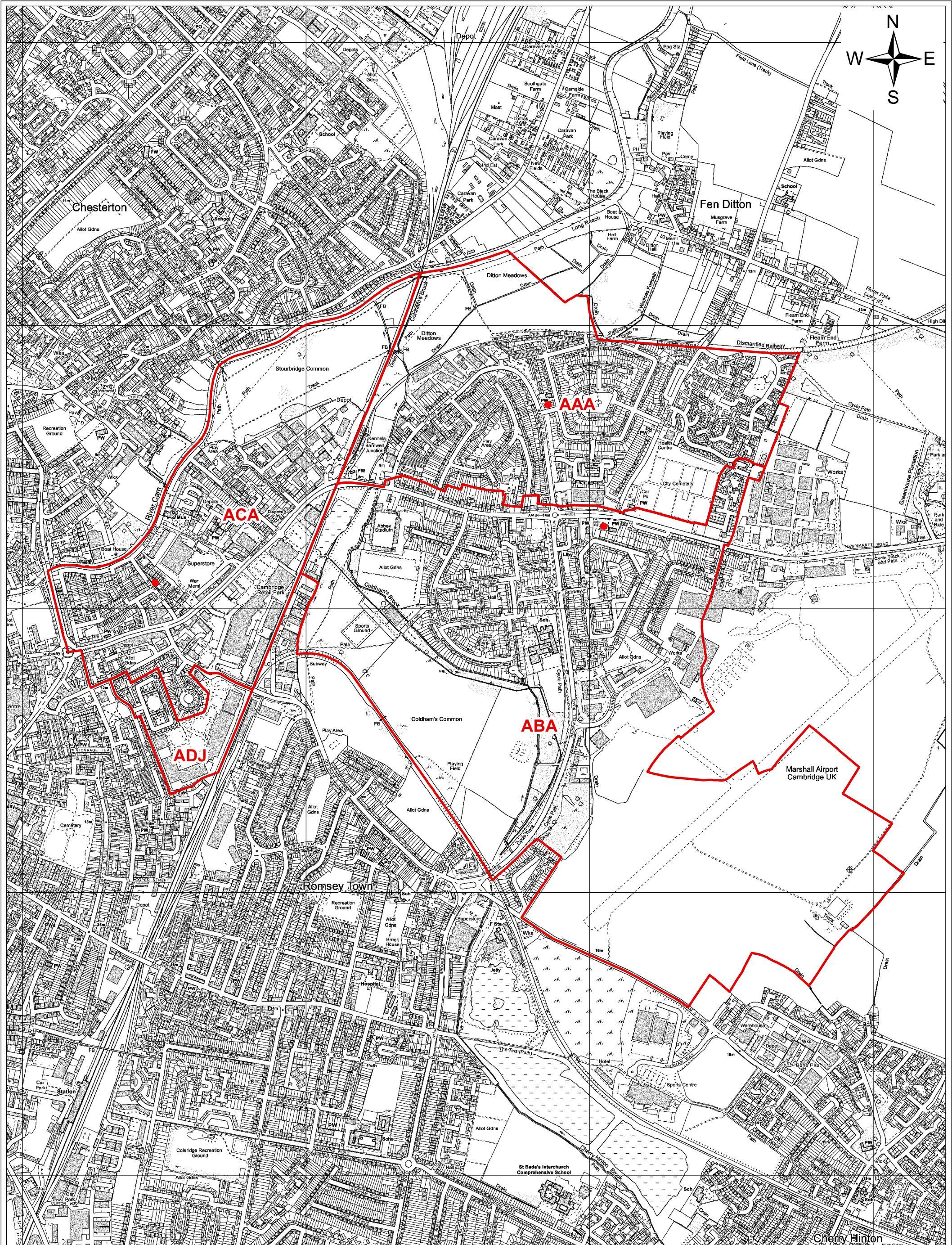
- Electoral Commission Polling District Review Guidance (published July 2019)
- LGBCE Final Recommendations for Cambridge City Council (published 5 February 2019)

## **7. Appendices**

- Appendix A – Maps of proposed polling districts
- Appendix B – Proposed polling district scheme, including statistics and polling stations

## **8. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Vicky Breading, Electoral Services Manager, tel: 01223 457057, e-mail: [Vicky.breading@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:Vicky.breading@cambridge.gov.uk)

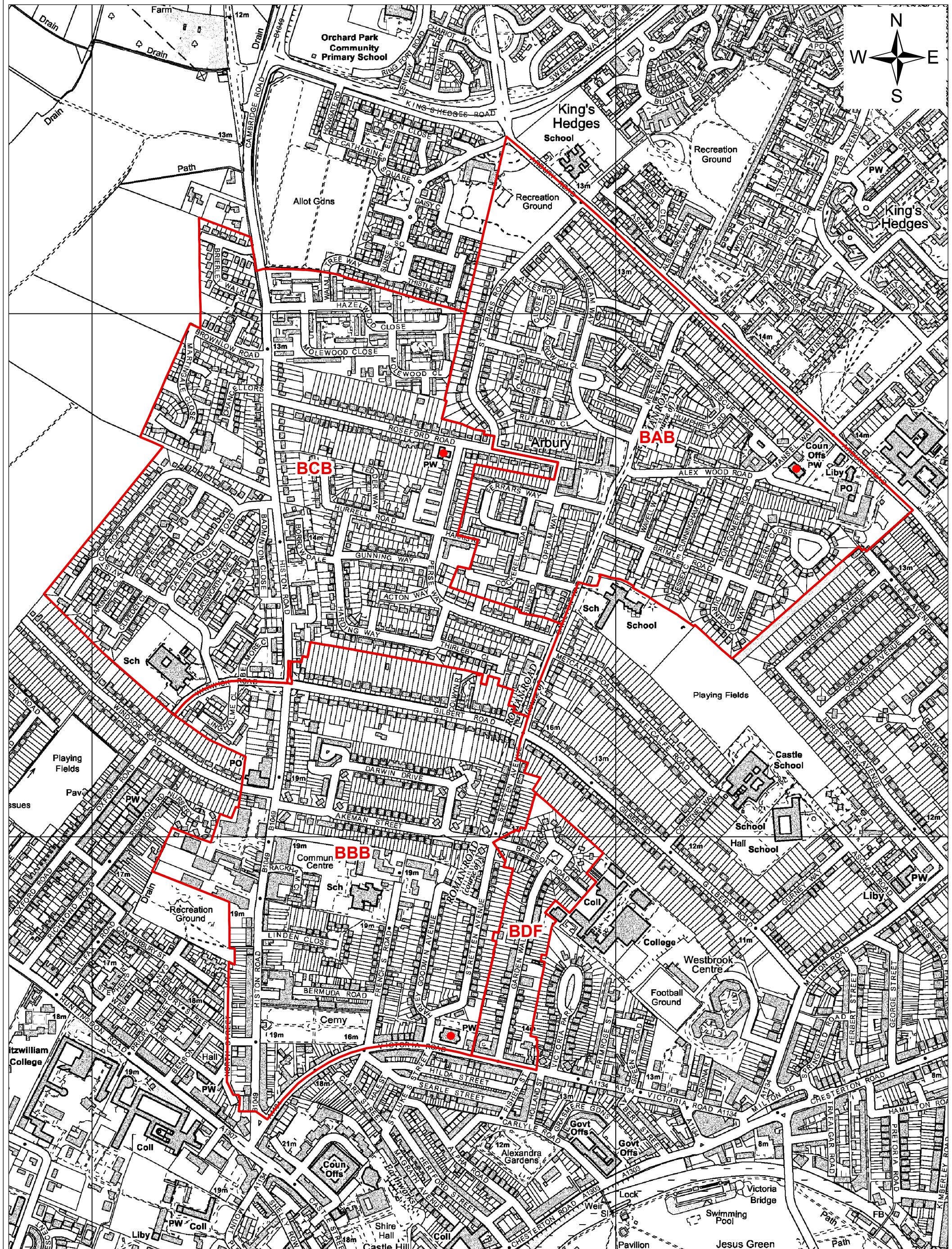


## Abbey Ward with New Polling Districts

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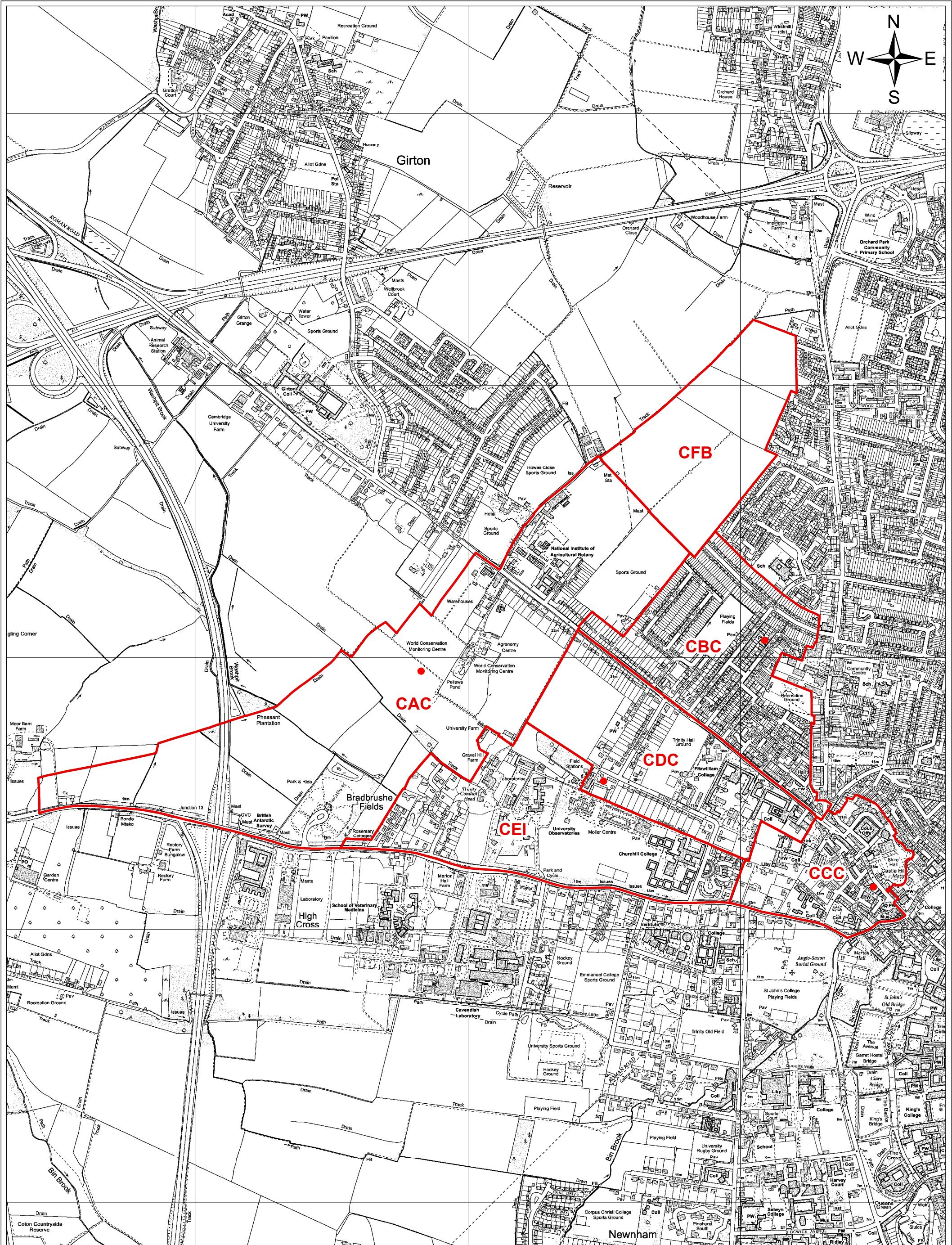
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# Arbury Ward with New Polling Districts

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## Castle Ward with New Polling Districts

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## Cherry Hinton Ward with New Polling Districts

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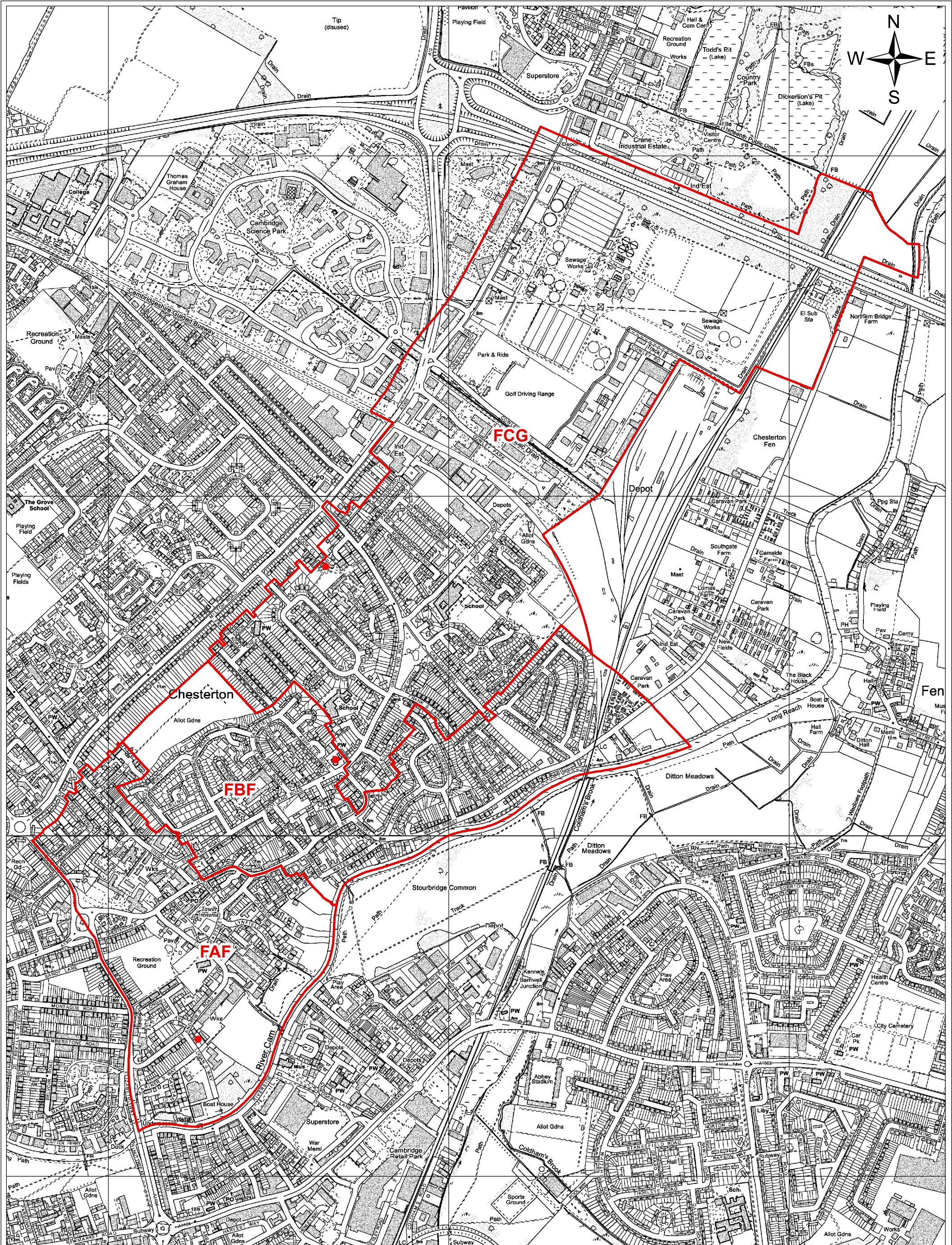


## Coleridge Ward with New Polling Districts

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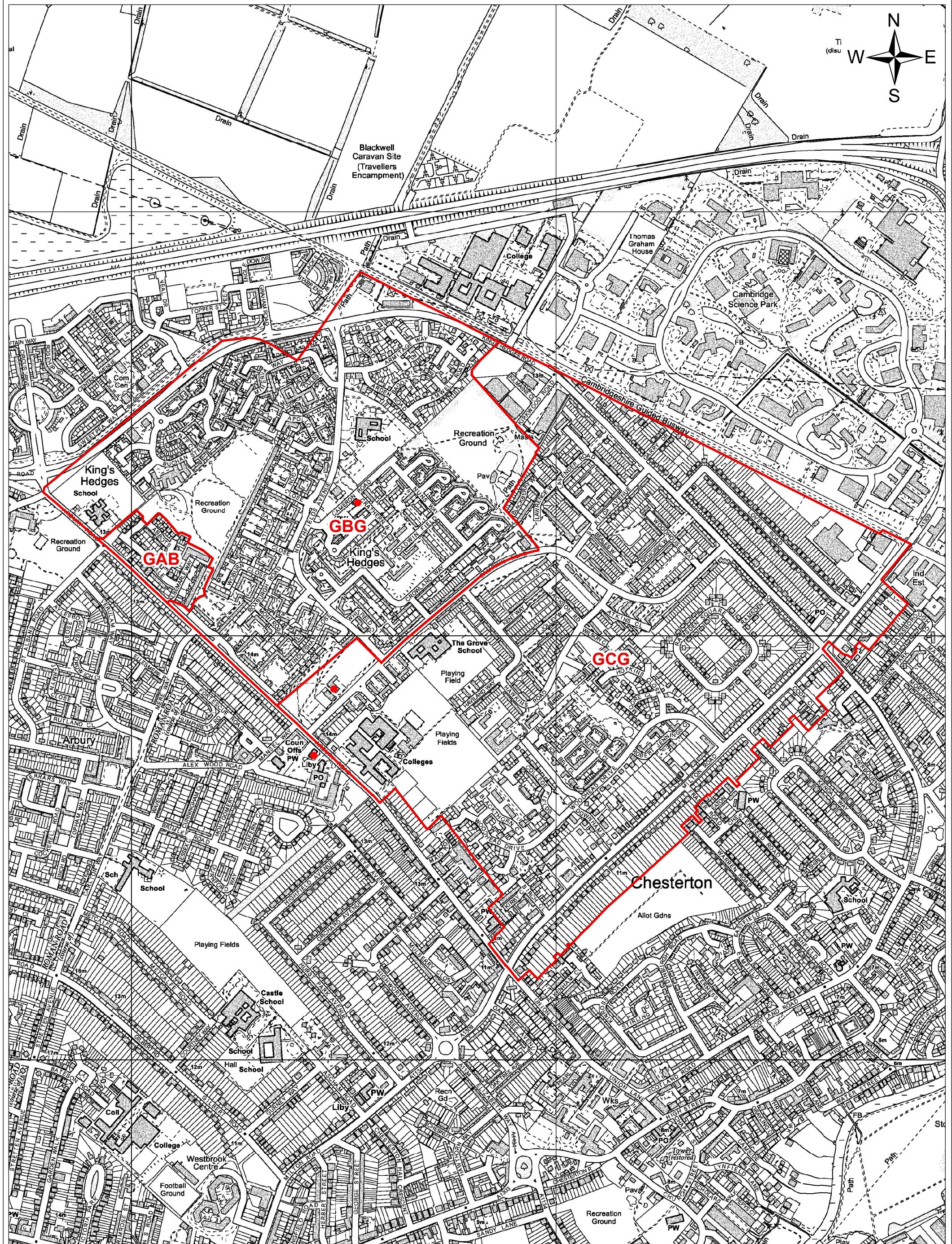


## East Chesterton Ward with New Polling Districts

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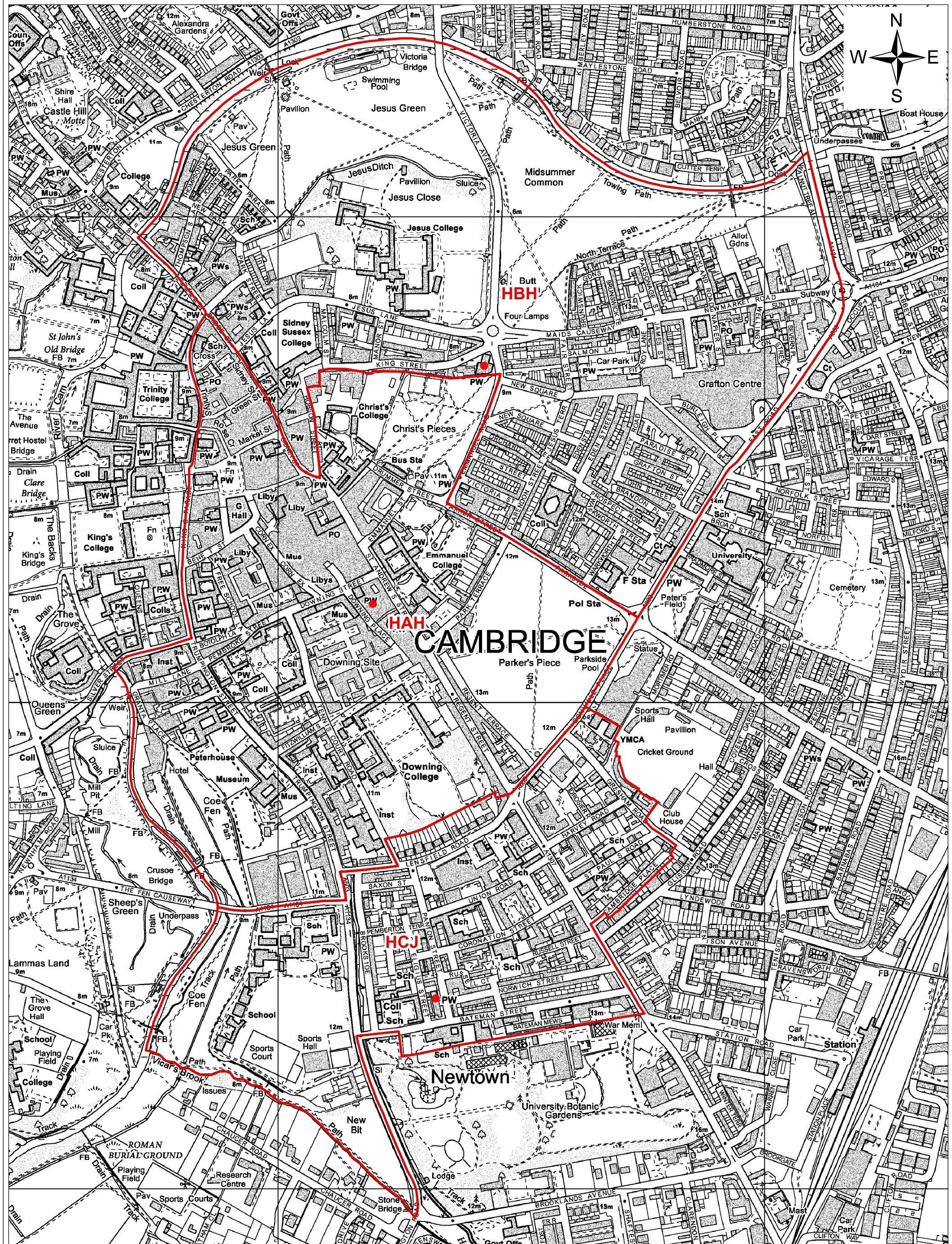


## Kings Hedges Ward with New Polling Districts

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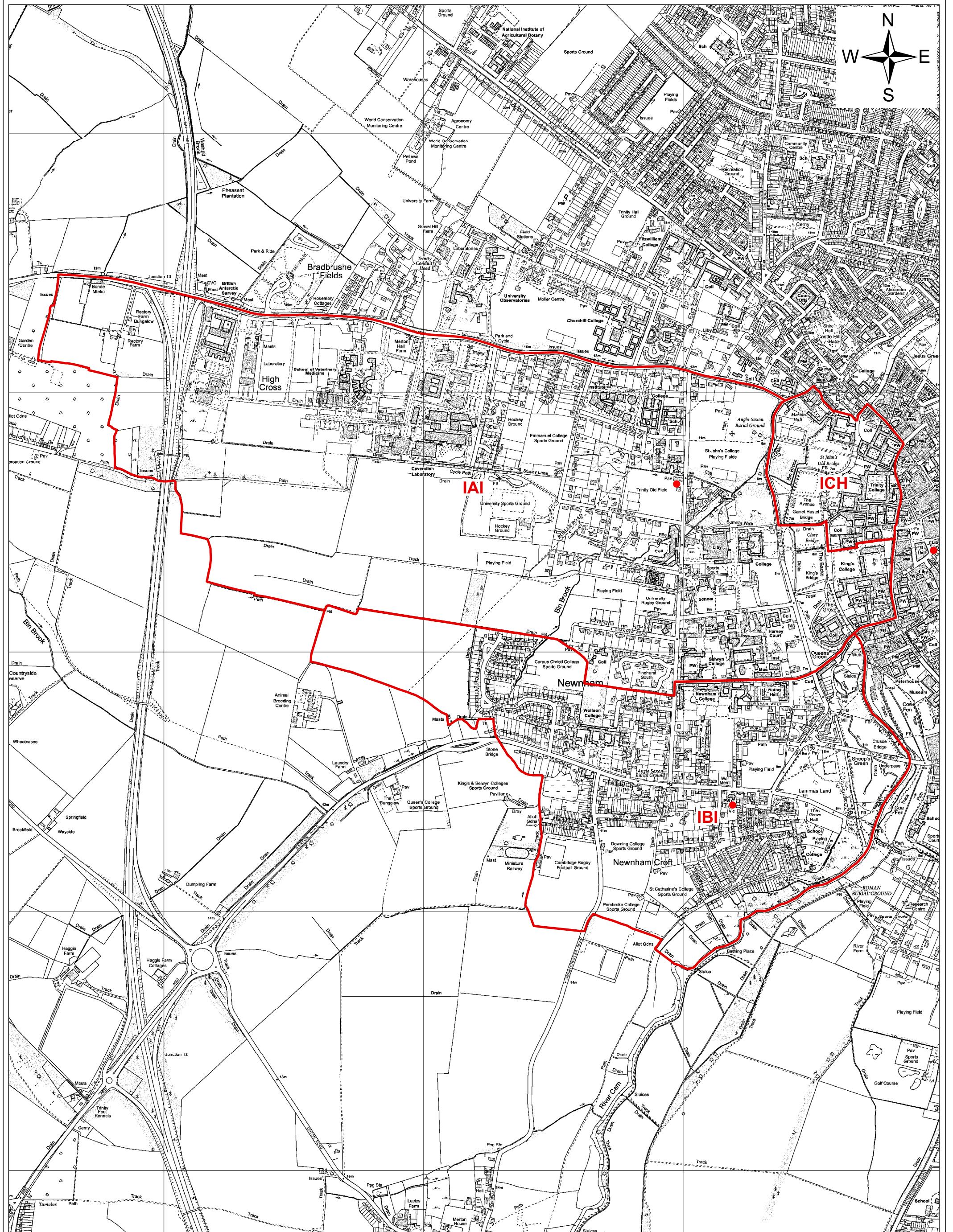
## Market Ward with New Polling Districts

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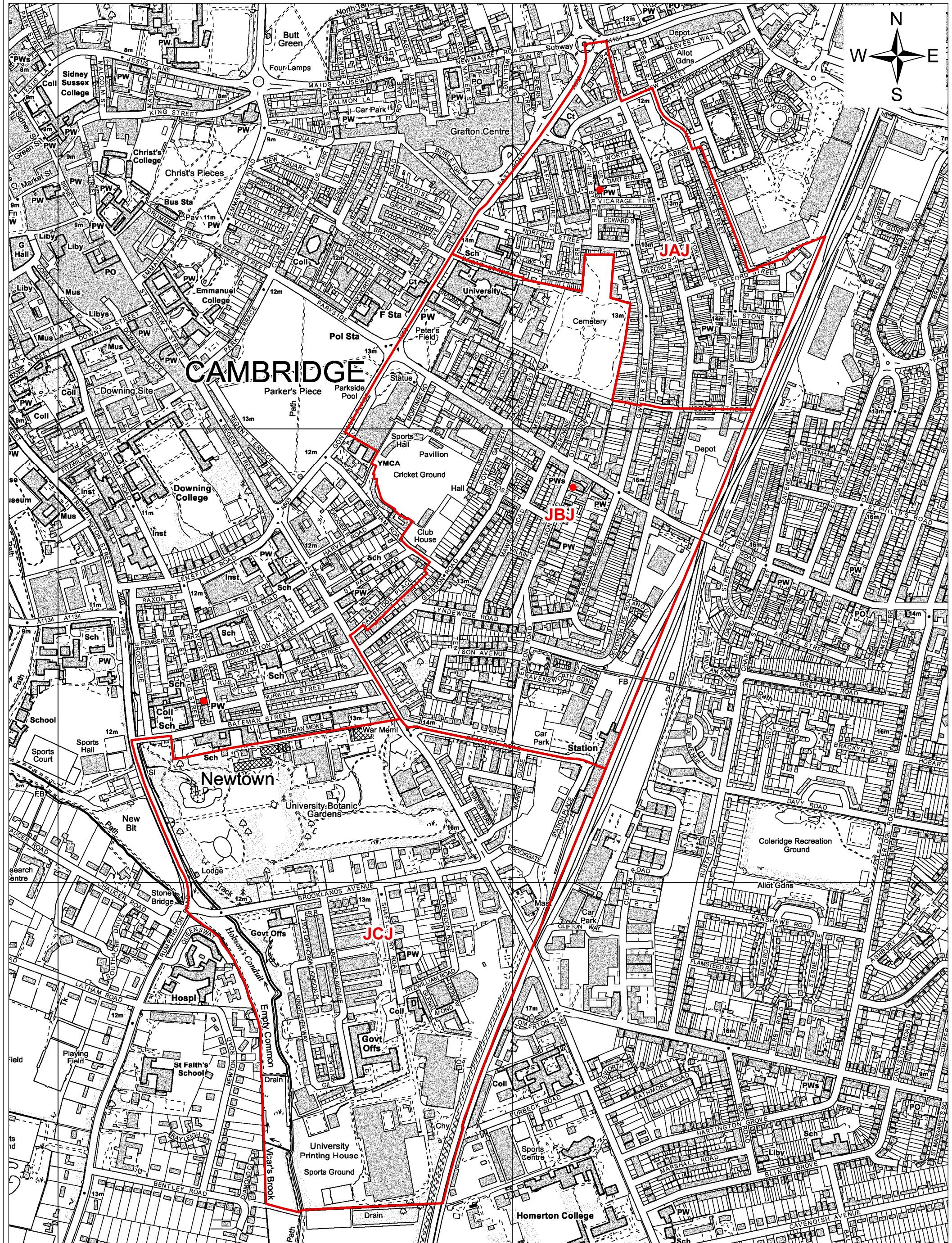
## Newnham Ward with New Polling Districts

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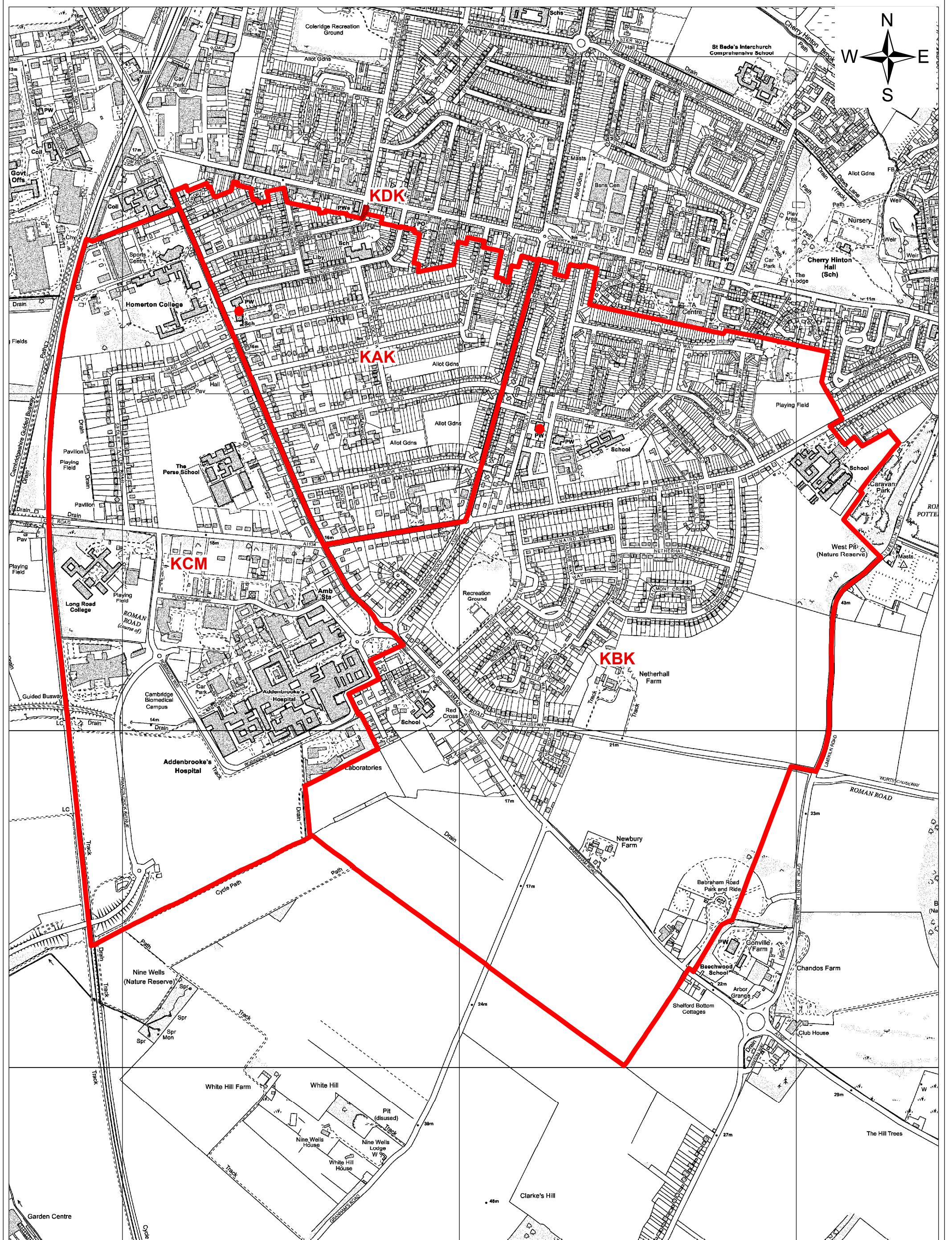
## Petersfield Ward with New Polling Districts

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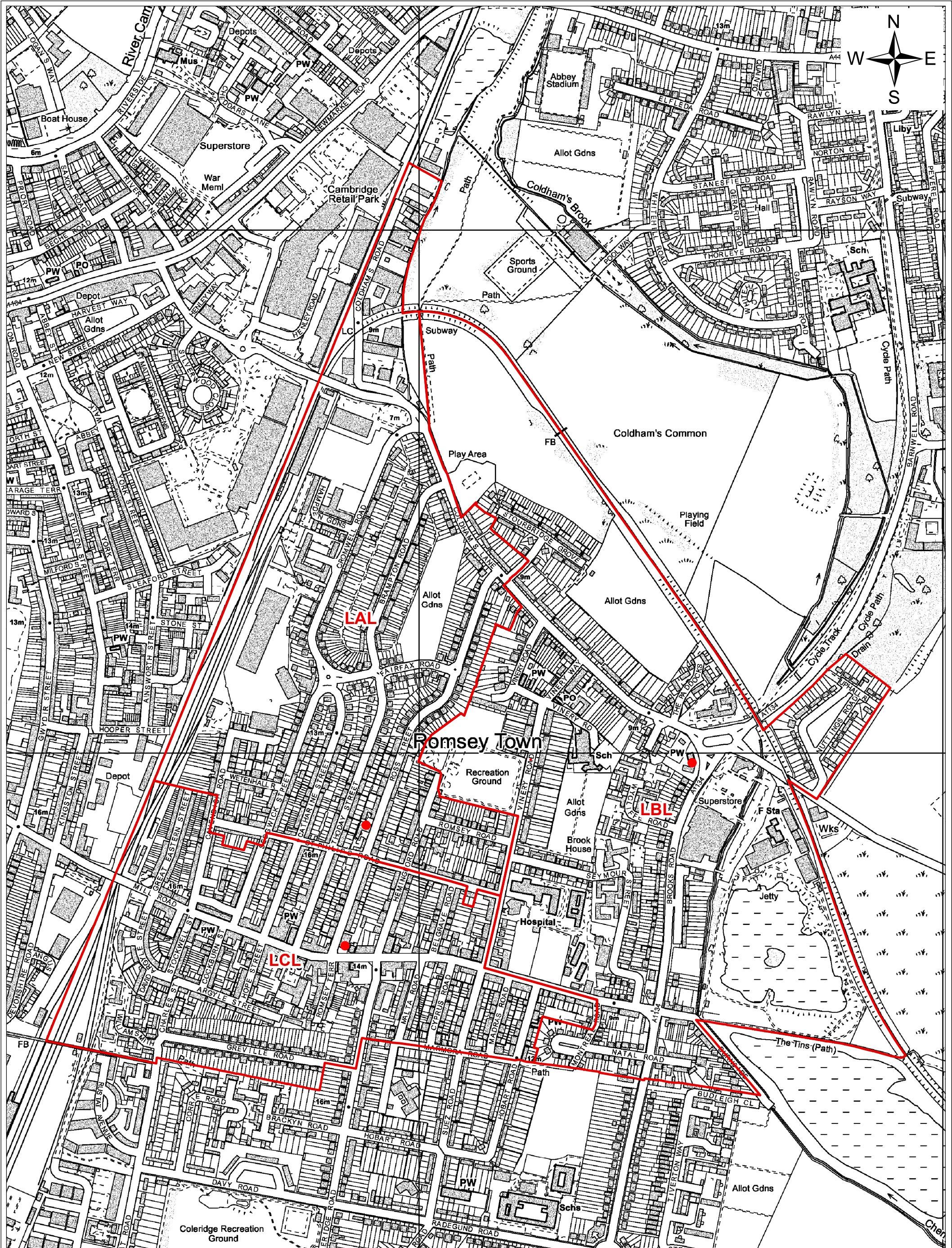


## Queen Ediths Ward with New Polling Districts

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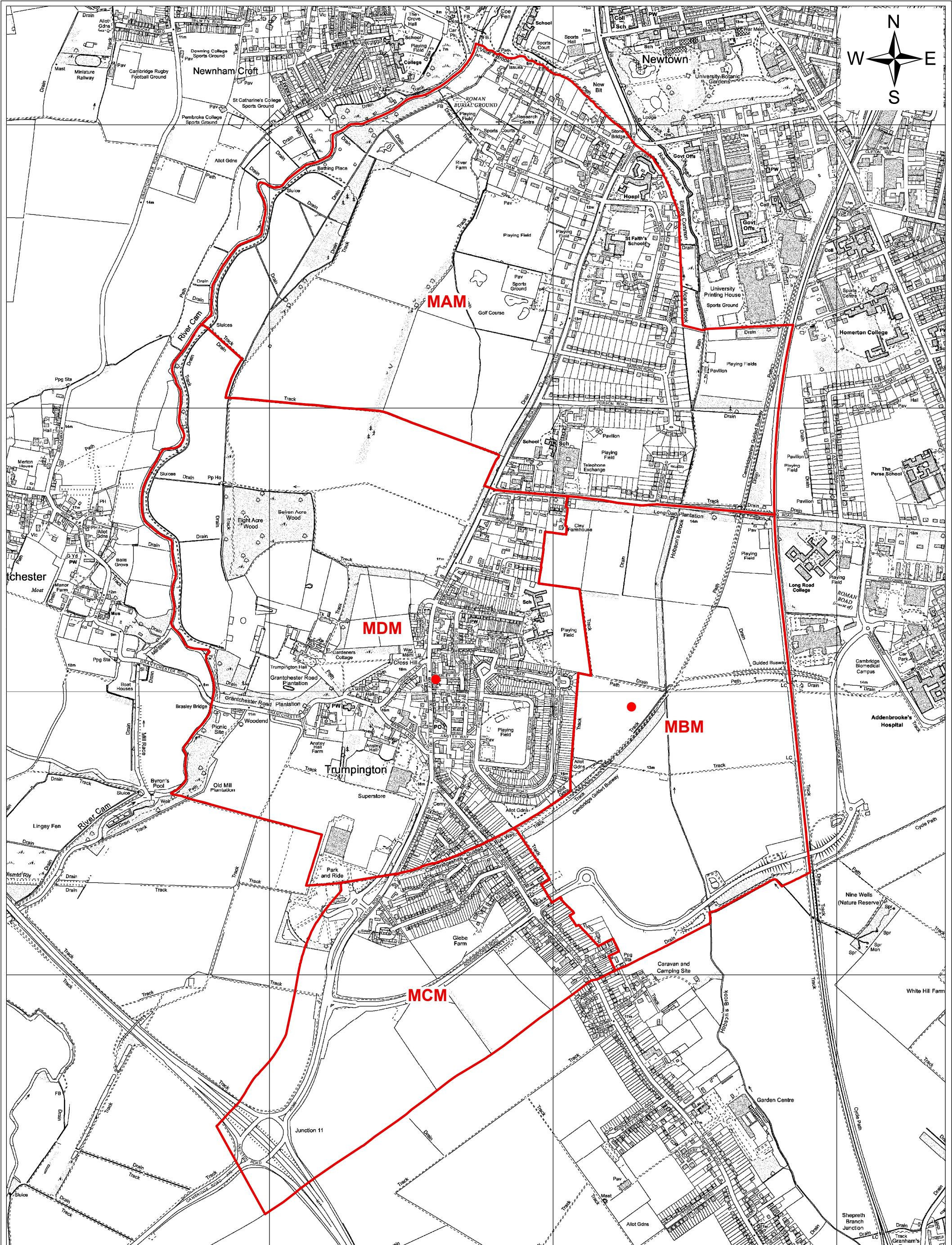


## Romsey Ward with New Polling Districts

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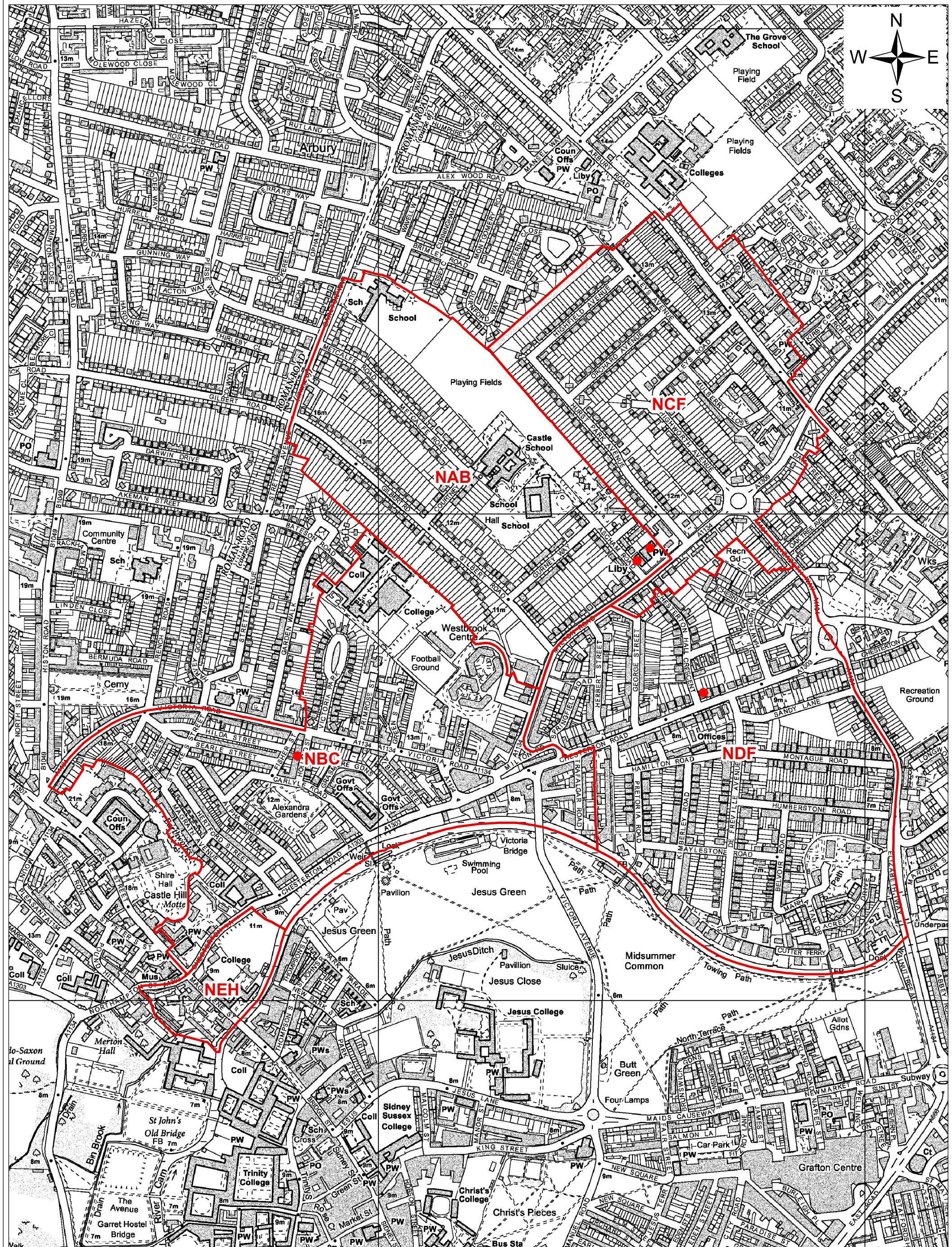
## Trumpington Ward with New Polling Districts

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## West Chesterton Ward with New Polling Districts

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City Ward	County Division	Proposed Polling District	Proposed Polling Place	Estimated Properties	Estimated Electorate	Proposed Polling Station
Abbey	Abbey	AAA	AAA	1,769	2,809	Barnwell Baptist Church, Howard Road
		ABA	ABA	1,321	2,205	East Barnwell Community Centre, Newmarket Road
		ACA	ACA	1,404	1,822	The River Lane Community Room, 50 River Lane
	Petersfield	ADJ	ADJ & ACA	230	283	
Arbury	Arbury	BAB	BAB	1,337	2,052	Good Shepherd Church Hall, Mansel Way
		BBB	BBB	1,251	1,937	St. Lukes Church Centre, Victoria Road
		BCB	BCB	1,400	2,191	Roseford Chapel, Perse Way (TBC)
	East Chesterton	BDF	BDF & BBB	264	353	St. Lukes Church Centre, Victoria Road
Castle	Castle	CAC	CAC	1,307	744	Storey's Field Centre, Eddington Avenue (TBC)
		CBC	CBC	1,208	1,815	St. Augustine's Church, Richmond Road
		CCC	CCC	737	489	Castle Street Methodist Church, Castle Street
		CDC	CDC	149	788	Seminar Rooms 3 & 4, Churchill College, Storey's Way
	Newnham	CEI	CEI & CDC	150	374	Seminar Rooms 3 & 4, Churchill College, Storey's Way
	Arbury	CFB	CFB	0	0	Library at Darwin Green Development (TBC)
Cherry Hinton	Cherry Hinton	DAD	DAD	1,225	2,020	St. Andrew's Church Centre, Coldhams Lane
		DBD	DBD	1,812	3,049	Cherry Hinton Village Leisure Centre, Colville Road (double station)
		DCD	DCD	559	795	St. Philip Howard Church Centre, Walpole Road
	Queen Edith's	DDK	DDK & DCD	283	470	
Coleridge	Cherry Hinton	EAD	EAD	1,465	2,413	St. Thomas' Church Hall, Ancaster Way
	Queen Edith's	EBK	EBK	1,450	1,673	Lichfield Hall, Lichfield Road
	Romsey	ECL	ECL	1,490	2,284	St. Martin's Church Hall, Suez Road
	Queen Edith's	EDK*	EBK	2	4	Lichfield Hall, Lichfield Road
East Chesterton	Chesterton	FAF	FAF	1,328	1,846	St. Andrew's Hall, St. Andrew's Road (TBC)
		FBF	FBF	1,694	2,558	Chesterton Methodist Church, Green End Road
	King's Hedges	FCG	FCG	1,259	2,127	Brown's Field Youth and Community Centre, 31a Green End Road
King's Hedges	Arbury	GAB	GAB & BAB	149	188	Arbury Court Library
	King's Hedges	GBG	GBG	1,885	2,835	North Arbury Chapel, Cameron Road (double station)
		GCG	GCG	2,392	3,698	Arbury Community Centre, Campkin Road (double station)
Market	Market	HAH	HAH	366	2,075	St. Columba's Church Hall, Downing Street
		HBH	HBH	2,344	3,243	The Nave, Wesley Methodist Church, King Street (double station)
	Petersfield	HCJ	HCJ	972	1,237	Christian Science Church, 58 Panton Street
Newnham	Newnham	IAI	IAI	838	2,422	Trinity Old Field Pavilion, Grange Road
		IBI	IBI	1,360	2,527	St. Mark's Community Centre, Barton Road
	Market	ICH	ICH & HAH	44	1,045	Fisher Hall, Guildhall Place
Petersfield	Petersfield	JAJ	JAJ	1,564	2,112	St. Matthew's Church Hall, St. Matthew's Street
		JBJ	JBJ	1,982	2,921	The Salvation Army Hall, Tenison Road (double station)
		JCJ	JCJ	1,817	1,761	Location not yet identified
Queen Edith's	Queen Edith's	KAK	KAK	1,266	2,254	The Wilkinson Room, St. John the Evangelist, Hills Road
		KBK	KBK	2,038	3,337	St. James Church, Wulfstan Way (double station)
	Market	KCM	KCM	1,183	911	The Wilkinson Room, St. John the Evangelist, Hills Road
	Queen Edith's	KDK	KDK	5	8	Location not yet identified
Romsey	Romsey	LAL	LAL	1,507	2,450	Ross Street Community Centre, Ross Street
		LBL	LBL	991	1,482	The C3 Centre, 2 Brooks Road
		LCL	LCL	1,854	2,612	Romsey Mill, Hemingford Road
Trumpington	Trumpington	MAM	MAM & MDM	618	912	Trumpington Village Hall, High Street, Trumpington
		MBM	MBM	1,958	2,460	The Clay Farm Centre, Hobson Square (TBC)
		MCM	MCM & MBM	670	1,039	
		MDM	MDM	1,711	2,402	Trumpington Village Hall, High Street, Trumpington
West Chesterton	Arbury	NAB	NAB	325	650	Milton Road Library, Ascham Road
	Castle	NBC	NBC	1,585	1,934	New Chesterton Institute, Holland Street
	Chesterton	NCF	NCF & NAB	786	1,339	The Parish Room, St. Laurence's Catholic Church, 91 Milton Road
	Chesterton	NDF	NDF	1,702	2,282	Polonia Club, Chesterton Road
	Market	NEH	NEH & CCC	16	245	Castle Street Methodist Church, Castle Street

\* EDK cannot be merged with any other PD in Coleridge as it remains in the South Cambridgeshire parliamentary constituency

Indicates the polling place is outside of the polling district

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Item

## ANNUAL COMPLAINTS AND FEEDBACK REPORT 2018-19

**To:**

Civic Affairs Committee

**Report by:**

Customer Services

**Wards affected:**

None directly affected

### 1. Introduction / Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report introduces the Annual Complaints Report 2018-19, which provides an analysis of the complaints and compliments received by the Council during 2018-19 under the Corporate Complaints, Compliments and Comments procedure.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Annual Report is to identify topics and trends in relation to complaints; identify areas of organisational learning that have taken place over the past year as a result of the complaints received and make further recommendations based on trend data to improve services.
- 1.3 The Annual Report also highlights those areas of good practice within the Council and seeks to identify themes and trends in relation to comments made by members of the public so that the Council can also take action where appropriate to improve services
- 1.4 This report also proposes changes to the complaints process to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the overall process by

removing the third stage. Analysis of the impact of the third stage, and comparison with similar councils has suggested that this stage is not adding sufficient value to justify its cost, and is at times creating a lack of clarity, as well as a further demand on officer capacity which the outcomes do not seem to merit.

- 1.5 This report also recommends amending the Committee's Terms of Reference so that the Annual Complaints Report can be brought to the same committee for scrutiny (Strategy & Resources scrutiny committee) as the Council's Annual performance report and financial reports, giving a fully rounded view of the council's performance in each year to councilors and the public in one place at one time.

## **2. Recommendations**

### **2.1 Civic Affairs to:**

- i. Consider the draft Annual Complaints Report for 2018-19, and approve for publication on the Council's website.
- ii. Agree to amend the Civic Affairs Committee's Terms of Reference as explained in paras 3.6 – 3.12 below and set out in Appendix C.
- iii. Agree to remove Stage 3 from the Council's complaints procedure from 1 April 2020 as explained in paras 3.13 – 3.23 below.

## **3. Background**

### **Annual Complaints Report**

- 3.1 The City Council has been recording information about complaints for the last 14 years and trend data is included in the report from 2016 onwards. In 2018-19 we received 1161 complaints compared with 698 in the previous year. There were various reasons for the increase, and each Head of Service provides a commentary explaining what steps are being taken to address complaints and improve complaint handling, as well as providing context on the volumes of customer interactions and other factors, in the service-by-service section of the Annual Complaints Report.
- 3.2 Three complaints were upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman from a total of 13 enquiries. The number upheld, and the number of enquiries to the Ombudsman is comparable to other similar local authorities.

3.3 The report includes:

- A summary of complaints received, their trends and action taken
- Details of compliments and comments
- Details of complaints investigated by the Independent Complaints Investigator
- Details of complaints escalated to the Local Government Ombudsman
- Details of complaints relating to conduct of councillors

- 3.4 As well as complaints we also receive many positive comments about the Council's services and staff. A section on compliments is included in the report because knowing where things are working well and are appreciated is as important as knowing where things are not working well. We also monitor performance against the objectives and indicators in the Council's corporate plan. This performance data is summarised in the Council's [Annual Report](#).
- 3.5 Subject to approval by Civic Affairs on the 9<sup>th</sup> October, officers will finalise and publish the report on the Council's website with hard copies being made available on request.

**Streamlining reporting on Council performance & complaints**

- 3.6 In recent years, the Annual Complaints Report has come to Civic Affairs Committee in October, whilst the Council's Annual Report against its Corporate Plan, and the annual Financial Outturn reports are reported to the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee in the June/July cycle.
- 3.7 This approach does not allow a coherent/holistic scrutiny or understanding of the Council's overall performance. The interplay between achievement of objectives, financial spend, and complaints has not been brought together in one place for councilors, public or press to see in the round.
- 3.8 Officers recommend that in future all three reports are brought to the same committee at the same time. This would allow a more holistic approach to scrutiny of the council's overall performance in any given year, and remove the current practice of that review being carried out over a number of months, across different committees.
- 3.9 The principle of this streamlining was agreed by the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee, and by the Leader, at that committee's meeting on 1 July 2019.

- 3.10 This report proposes that all three reports be brought to Strategy & Resources scrutiny committee (or its successor) in future years.
- 3.11 The Annual Complaints Report (and any subsequent supplementary update required following publication of the LGO's annual letter each summer) would still be shared with members of Civic Affairs Committee each year to ensure they retain oversight in particular of complaints referred to the Local Government Ombudsman.
- 3.12 The Terms of Reference for Civic Affairs Committee include reference to the Annual Complaints Report. Therefore, CAC is recommended to amend its Terms of Reference to reflect the proposed change. [see appendix C for detail of the wording to be deleted].

### Rationalising the Complaints Process – removing stage 3

- 3.13 The Council currently has a three stage complaints process:
  - **Stage 1 – Complaints being made for the first time** - if a member of the public makes a complaint about a Council service, it will be investigated and responded to in the first instance by a service expert or manager within 10 days.
  - **Stage 2 – Internal Review** - if the complainant is dissatisfied with the response to their complaint or the way in which the complaint has been handled, and they want their complaint to be considered further, the Head of the relevant Council service will investigate and respond to the complaint.
  - **Stage 3 – Independent Investigation** – if the complainant is unsatisfied with the outcome of Stage Two and wishes to take their complaint further, they can request that the complaint is investigated by the Council's Independent Complaints Investigator (ICI). For a number of years the Council has had a contract with an external contractor to fulfil the role of the ICI.
- 3.14 In recent years it has become increasingly difficult to find providers willing and able to deliver the ICI service. This is in part due to it being a novel role, which almost no other council has.
- 3.15 This has prompted officers to review the effectiveness of this stage of our process. This third stage is intended to resolve complaints cases and obviate the need for complainants to take their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO).

- 3.16 However, the evidence that officers have gathered, including analysis of a number of case studies of Cambridge City Council complaints in recent years, suggests that Stage 3 does not appear to fulfil this intended function consistently. Rather, it can sometimes add a time-consuming stage which can repeat or duplicate work required at earlier stages and/or once the LGO takes up a case.
- 3.17 To test our thinking, officers have also held discussions with counterparts in councils serving four comparable cities (Oxford, Norwich, Ipswich & Exeter). The data and feedback gathered further suggested that the third stage does not reduce the number of complaints made to the LGO; nor does it significantly reduce the number of complaints that are upheld by the LGO.
- 3.18 One council used to have a 3 stage process, but moved to a 2-stage process following a LEAN review in 2012/13. Subsequent LGO reports on complaints have not made any specific recommendations to improve that council's complaints process.
- 3.19 Officers therefore believe that stage 3 is not currently achieving the intended purpose of reducing the number of complaints being escalated to the LGO, and are recommending that the stage be discontinued from the City Council's complaints process.
- 3.20 To ensure that complainants did not lose any benefit from removing stage three (and noting that the ICI has on occasion recommended further remedy), we would seek to ensure that more complaints were resolved more satisfactorily at stage one and two.
- 3.21 This would be achieved through a programme of training in complaints handling for officers dealing with complaints in those services that tend to receive most complaints. We would plan to take up the LGO's offer of training, as well as using peer learning between services (some of which have invested significant time and resource in improving their complaint handling in recent years).
- 3.22 Heads of Service will be accountable for the quality of responses to complaints, including signing off stage two responses. We will consider whether additional quality assurance steps need to be put in place to ensure that complainants receive a response which appropriately addresses their complaint.

- 3.23 Officers propose to introduce this change from the start of the new financial & reporting year, on 1 April 2020. This would allow time to revise the internal guidance and external communications, to carry out a programme of training and to ensure that the data for whole years reflected consistent processes.

## **4. Implications**

### **(a) Financial Implications**

*Page: 6*

The time and resources spent on responding to complaints is a not insignificant cost to the Council. Our aim is to get things right first time as often as we can, for the good of residents and for the Council.

Removing Stage 3 will save the Council the money that has been spent on the Independents Complaints Investigator (approx. £15,000 pa), although this has not been the primary consideration in the officer recommendation.

### **(b) Staffing Implications**

Staff who deal with customer complaints will be provided with additional training as a result of the issues raised in this report, to help ensure that they are equipped to give customers a more satisfactory response more frequently at an earlier stage in the complaints process.

Removing Stage 3 should reduce the total amount of senior officer time spent in the review process, whilst the training that will be provided should ensure that the overall experience for customers is improved.

### **(c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

Analysis and action taken as a result of complaints has an important role to play in ensuring that our services are accessible to all those who wish or need to use them and, that as far as possible, we are able to respond flexibly to the differing needs of our citizens and visitors. An updated EQIA assessment was completed in August 2019, and is attached at Appendix D.

### **(d) Environmental Implications**

None

### **(e) Procurement Implications**

None. Removing Stage 3 of the complaints process will remove the need to procure Independent Complaints Investigator services.

#### **(f) Community Safety Implications**

None

### **5. Consultation and communication considerations**

None

### **6. Background papers**

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

- (a) Departmental Quarterly Monitoring Reports 2018-19
- (b) Annual Complaints Report 2017-18
- (c) Annual Complaints Report 2016-17

### **7. Appendices**

- (a) Draft Annual Complaints Report 2018/19
- (b) Number of complaints by service in last three years
- (c) Proposed change to the Terms of Reference to Civic Affairs Committee as described in the Council's constitution
- (d) Equalities Impact Assessment

### **8. Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Tony Stead, Business and Development Manager, tel: 01223 - 457501, email: [Tony.Stead@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:Tony.Stead@cambridge.gov.uk).

## **Appendix A**



# **Cambridge City Council**

**Annual Customer Complaints and  
Feedback Report  
2018-19**

Cambridge City Council's Annual Complaints Report	<b>3</b>
Our Complaints Procedure	<b>3</b>
Complaints & Compliments to the City Council in 2018-19	<b>4</b>
How complaints were received	<b>9</b>
GovMetric - Customer Feedback System	<b>11</b>
Service Complaint Trends and Feedback	<b>14</b>
Independent Complaints Investigator	<b>27</b>
Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)	<b>34</b>
Complaints under the Councillors' Code of Conduct	<b>34</b>
Appendix 1 – 3 year service analysis	<b>36</b>

# CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL'S ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT

Each year we publish our Annual Complaints Report, which gives an overview of the complaints the Council has received and how we have dealt with them.

Cambridge City Council welcomes customer feedback, to help us to identify and address problems for customers, and to improve our services. This report shows how we have increased customer feedback about services and how we are responding to complaints.

## Why we produce this report

- To learn from our mistakes so that we can improve our services.
- To encourage people who have cause to complain to make comments and suggestions to help us make these improvements.
- To show how we've responded to complaints and what we've done to try to put things right.
- To publicise and explain our complaints process.

## Our Complaints Procedure

### What is a complaint?

A complaint can be wide ranging, but can be defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with the service provided, or lack of action by the Council, or its staff. This can include failure to achieve specific standards of service.

It should be highlighted that issues bought to the Council for the first time are dealt with as a request for service and so are not processed as a formal complaint. However service requests can then translate into a stage 1 complaint if the customer is further dissatisfied with how their request has been dealt with. This may occur from delays in response or dissatisfaction with staff behaviour or policies.

Customers complain to the Council if they:

- Are unhappy about something we have or haven't done.
- Are not satisfied with the way a member of staff has treated them.
- Are not happy with the way a councillor has treated them.

Cambridge City Council currently has a three stage complaints process:

**Stage One:** A complaint that has been made for the first time. The case is allocated to a service manager to investigate and respond to the complainant.

**Stage Two:** Internal review of a complaint where the complainant is unsatisfied with the response to their complaint or the way in which the complaint has been handled, and they wish for their complaint to be considered further.

**Stage Three:** Review by an Independent Complaints Investigator, where the complainant remains unsatisfied with the internal process and wish to take their complaint further.

The **Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)** is the final stage – the LGO requires that the person affected must have gone through our complaints process before going to the Ombudsman.

DRAFT

## **Complaints & Compliments to the City Council in 2018-19**

Cambridge City Council welcomes feedback from customers, so that we can address immediate issues, and can learn from complaints in order to improve our services. In 2018-19, total recorded complaints rose 463 from 698 to 1161. In the same time period we received 148 compliments. The increase in the number of complaints was caused by a variety of factors, and a detailed commentary from the Head of Service, setting out what is being done to address complaints and / or improve complaint handling is included in the service-by-service sections on pages 12-22.

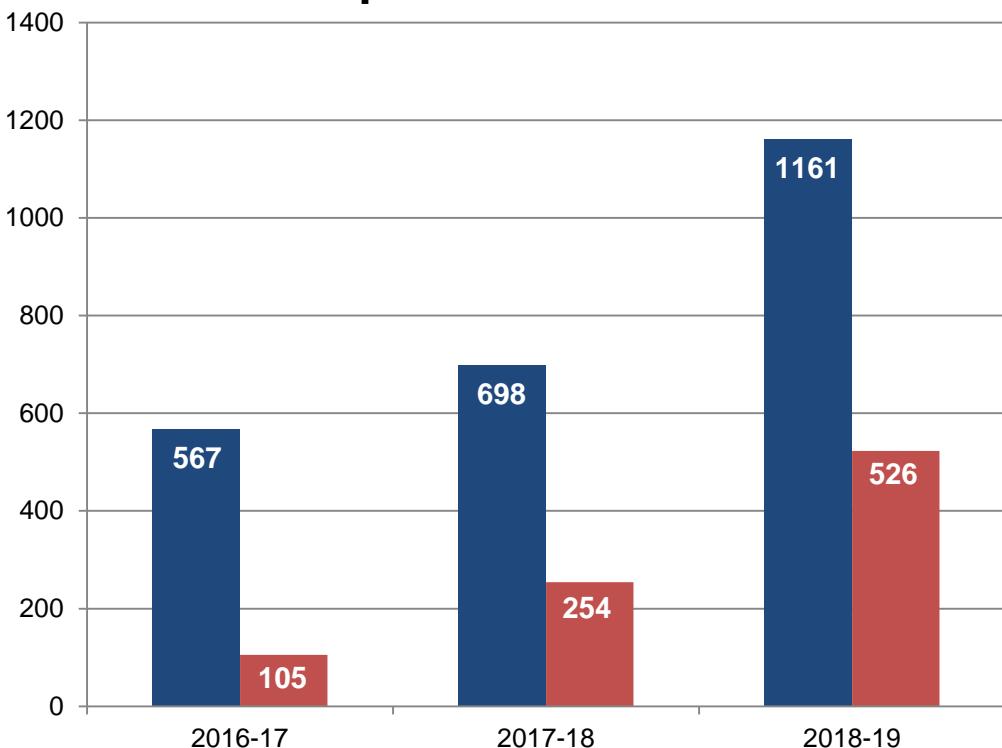
In seeking feedback, we have also received over 14700 comments via GovMetric, a customer satisfaction rating system. In April 2018 and January 2019, Cambridge City Council appeared in the top 10 for positive feedback across 70-plus councils who use GovMetric. To put these figures in context, during 2018/19 over 250,000 telephone and electronic contacts were received and over 55,000 face to face visits were recorded at the Customer Service Centre.

The City Council's performance overall can be more fully understood by reading this report alongside the Annual Report on the Corporate Plan 2018-19, and the financial out-turn reports that were presented to the Strategy & Resources scrutiny committee on 1 July 2019.

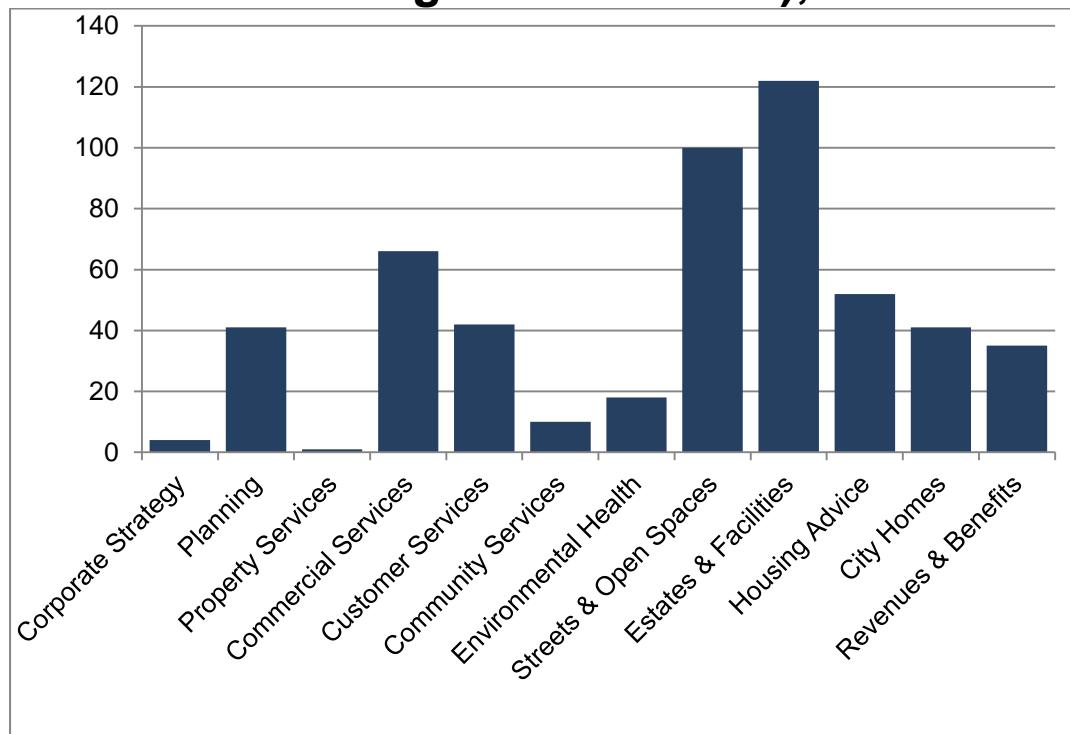
### **Complaints**

We received 1161 complaints in 2018-19. This was an increase of 463 (34%) on the number received in the previous year as can be seen in the table below. The waste service receives significantly more complaints than other services, and so the number of complaints are shown in table 1, in order to make table 2 easier to read. Please see the Head of Service commentaries on pages 12-22 for a fuller explanation of how services are responding to these complaints.

## Total number of annual complaints, and complaints for Waste Service



## Number of complaints by council service (not including Waste Service), 2018/19



In 2018-19, Waste Services continued to have the highest amount of recorded complaints, with 526 (45% of total council complaints). This is an increase of 272 from the 254 (35%) in 2017-18. The increased number of recorded waste complaints during 2018/19 arose primarily from a change in the way that customer comments relating to waste are recorded combined with a change to the policy regarding missed bins (rather than any actual deterioration in service). Complaints are now recorded consistently within the corporate complaints tracker, whereas they previously may have been resolved informally by phone calls to service managers. We saw a spike in the number of complaints received both when this change was introduced, and similarly when the changes to the winter garden waste collection policy was approved and implemented.

It is worth noting that the waste service in the city has far more interactions with customers than any other service, making around 14,600 collections each working day, or about 3.8 million in the year. While we would prefer to deliver a service that did not lead to any complaints, the 523 complaints for the year need to be seen in this context. A fuller commentary on complaints against the Waste service is provided by the Head of Service on pages 12-13.

The number of stage 2 complaints across the Council also increased, from 38 in 2017/18 to 91 in 2018/19. Of the 91 stage two complaints, 31 were for Waste. Of these, 18 related to missed bins, and were escalated because customers did not feel their case was resolved successfully at stage 1.

Other services with a number of Stage 2 complaints were Planning and Housing, as well as Multi-Service complaints. Complaints in these areas tend to be more complex than others due to the nature of the services or depth of investigation required, so this may explain why these service areas have higher numbers of stage 2 complaints than others.

### **Independent Complaints Investigator (ICI)**

1 Stage 3 (ICI) Complaint was carried forward from 2016-17. 24 new complaints were submitted to the ICI in 2018-19. Of these complaints, 24 were investigated. Five were upheld, seven were partially upheld and eight were not upheld.

See page 23 for more detail.

### **Local Government Ombudsman (LGO)**

13 complaints were reported to the Local Government Ombudsman in 2018-19. Of these, three complaints were upheld.

### **Changes and improvements to recording, reporting and monitoring**

The City Council has worked hard to understand the reasons for the complaints, and has taken action to prevent the poor service that triggered those complaints from being repeated. Following feedback and a review of our complaints process we have changed the way we record and monitor complaints, compliments and comments.

The Lead Complaints Officer in the Customer Service Business & Development team reviews data on a monthly and quarterly basis to establish themes and trends. This data and analysis is shared with Directors and Heads of Service to help them understand what the service needs to do to improve or change service arrangements or practices to prevent a reoccurrence of a complaint.

In addition to these monthly reports, the Senior Management Team monitors performance management across the Council with the aid of the corporate balanced score card, quarterly complaints reports, and senior management meetings. Each quarter services provide performance data against around 40 corporate indicators. This provides a snapshot of how the Council is performing in key service areas including complaints.

Particular attention is focused on reducing identifying and addressing any recurrent causes of customer complaints, and on reducing the number of complaints being escalated to the independent complaints investigator because they haven't been dealt with satisfactorily at the earlier stages.

The Business & Development team has also undertaken continuous improvement work with the Complaints Tracker system. This includes a new auto-triage feature which ensures owners are allocated automatically by a customer choosing their own service. This eliminated the amount of manual work going into processing

complaints, and has freed up the Complaints Admin staff to complete more recording of information.

The team has also been working on refreshing staff knowledge of the complaints process and system by attending service team meetings or scheduling separate training sessions. The team is currently working with Policy and Performance Officers in services to widen the selection of resolution themes available to make reporting more useful to Heads of Service, and to add more value to their monthly and quarterly reports.

Following discussion at Civic Affairs Committee in 2018, we extended our target response period to ten working days to align with the target in our shared service partner authorities. Moving forward, with the implementation of other ICT based projects, there is a piece of work ongoing to investigate whether Complaints Tracker can be integrated with the new online customer portal. This is expected to be complete in 2019-20

## How complaints were received

Year	Face to Face %	Letter %	Email and Web %	Telephone %	Other (Comment Cards) %
2018-19	2	2	80	14	2
2017-18	2	3	86	6	3
2016-17	3	7	82	6	2

The majority of complaints were received in writing, predominantly via customers submitting their complaints themselves. 62% of complaints were logged by members of the public using the web form to report directly into Tracker.

## Compliments

2018-19	148
2017-18	147
2016-17	146

In 2018-19 compliments have stayed at a similar level to previous years. The Council received 148 compliments across all services via Complaints Tracker. As with

previous years, Customer Services and Streets & Open Spaces received the highest amount of compliments, with the majority relating to helpful staff members

We also received 7734 positive comments through GovMetric, our customer satisfaction rating system. Authorities who adopt GovMetric are benchmarked against each other to compare monthly performance. In April 2018 and January 2019 Cambridge City Council appeared in the top 10 for telephone and face to face contact, from the 70-plus councils using GovMetric.

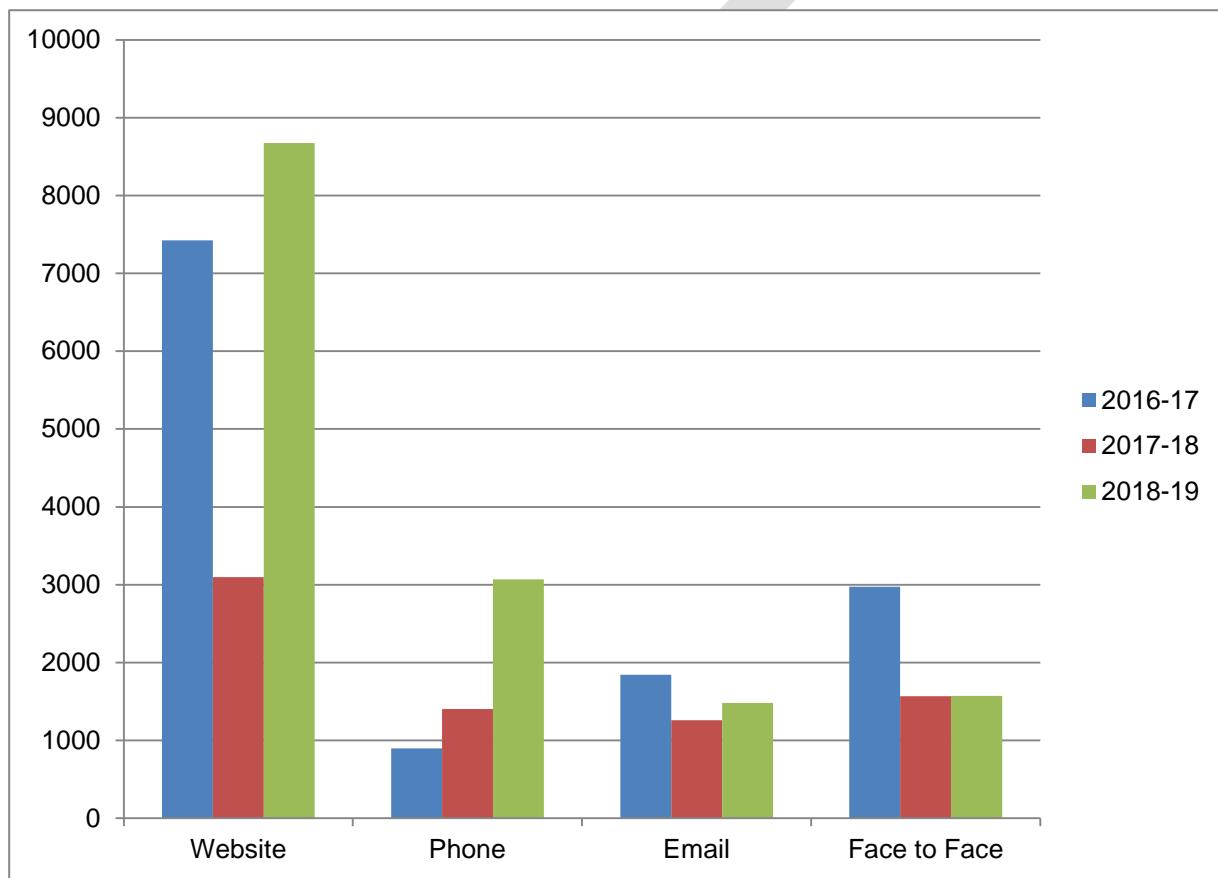
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## GovMetric - Customer Feedback System

GovMetric is a customer feedback tool which allows us to monitor feedback and measure improvement. Customers are able to select service areas/departments, give ratings of good, average or poor and give more specific detail about their experiences if they wish.

The tool allows us to record how the feedback was received: we currently use GovMetric to monitor feedback from the website, face to face visits in Mandela House reception and via service e-mails and incoming calls to Mandela House.

### Total Feedback via GovMetric, by channel, 2016-2019



Channel	Year	Total	Good %	Average %	Poor %
Phone	2018-19	3067	88%	9%	3%
	2017-18	1405	82%	12%	6%
	2016-17	898	76%	16%	8%
Face to Face	2018-19	1572	81%	8%	11%
	2017-18	1567	76%	10%	14%
	2016-17	2974	73%	10%	16%
Email	2018-19	1482	49%	21%	30%
	2017-18	1259	57%	16%	27%
	2016-17	1843	58%	15%	27%

## **Feedback received via the Customer Service Centre**

With regard to phone contacts, in 2018-19 the volume of feedback received from Govmetric increased significantly in the contact centre due to a refocus within Customer Services. 88% of customers rated the service they had received from the advisor as good, demonstrating that customers appreciate the service they are receiving.

Automatic reports go to individual advisors showing the number of positive feedback results they have achieved, and these are well received by the team. We continue to publicise the performance of the whole team on communications boards within the centre and we have set an objective for each advisor to encourage three customers per day to give feedback. This approach has proved effective with the results shown above and we have also been in the top ten of all 70+ local authorities which are benchmarked by Govmetric in during 2018/19.

The feedback we receive from face to face enquiries also shows that customers value our service, with 81% of customers rating the service as good.

Feedback on email communications has remained consistent with 2018-19 performance with a slight increase in numbers of customers giving feedback.

A high proportion of the e-mail contacts rated as “poor” were in relation to the Homelink service. They were concerned primarily with delays in responses, or with the actual decision conveyed in the e-mail regarding housing allocations, rather than with the quality, or accuracy of the contact *per se*.

## **Feedback received via the web site**

Channel	Date	Total	Good %	Average %	Poor %
Web	2018-19	8674	35%	14%	51%
	2017-18	3099	38%	15%	47%
	2016-17	7425	47%	18%	35%

There has been a significant increase in feedback via the web from last year. We cannot confirm exactly why this is, but following the previous changes made to the placement of the smileys (to a more prominent position on the page), we can assume that customers are now finding these again and so are using them more.

Many of the comments received via the website relate not to the website itself, but to customers' experience of other aspects of Council services.

The web team check Govmetric comments, and where possible make content amends to the website to help customers find information more easily, as well as

fixing broken links (although this is mainly done now from SitelImprove which sends us regular reports).

From recent feedback, the webteam have contacted services about improving information on pages, for example with regards to more information on taxi licensing and accessible vehicles, and better information on HIA grants and information for private tenants.

As with previous years, a number of negative comments relate to not being able to speak to advisors immediately and/or not finding phone numbers. We direct customers to our self-service (online) contact channels in the first instance, but do now (in response to feedback) provide the main Customer Service Centre number in the “contact us” information on the website. As customers become more familiar with our online channels (and as these become more user-friendly, for instance through the roll-out of the ‘MyCambridge’ portal), we would hope these kind of complaints will reduce over time.

Additionally, many customers tend to use the Govmetric on the web to relay a grievance about their overall customer experience, or about a specific service (e.g. to report noise issues or missed bins), rather than using it to comment on the website itself.

## Service Complaint Trends and Feedback

Each council department is asked to review the complaints and compliments it receives on a quarterly basis. This enables services to identify if there are any trends in the types of complaint being made or the services that complaints are being made about. As a result, changes are made to services and how they are provided.

Pages 10-17 detail comments from Services on actions they have taken to prevent complaints by improving or changing their service as a result of the feedback received in 2018/19. The total in the first column is the sum of Stage 1, 2 and ICI complaints.

### Waste Services

Waste	Total Complaints	No. of Stage 2 Complaints	No. of ICI Complaints	Complaints in Target	No. of Multi-Service Complaints	No. of compliments
2018-19	526	31	1	69%	14	9
2017-18	254	11	-	51%	7	3
2016-17	105	2	-	71%		8

#### Resolution Theme

Waste services – Missed Bin – 59%

Waste services- Bin Positioning – 12%

Waste services – Crew driver attitude – 7%

#### ***Service comments from Trevor Nicoll, Head of Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service:***

The Shared Waste Service undertakes in the region 675,000 collections per month, collecting 3 bins per household per fortnight, or approximately 316,300 bin collections per month within the City. The service has increased the number of successful collections to over 99.8%.

In 2018-19, the service recorded 6,234 bins that were not collected on schedule for various reasons – two thirds of these are outside the control of the service such as blocked roads, vehicle breakdowns, or issues where the bin has not been put out for collection. However, these are normally collected within 24 hours.

Of these, 2,754 were reported to the Council and dealt with appropriately as “service requests”.

This number of missed bins was down from 28,963 recorded in 2017-18. However, the number of recorded complaints rose from 254 in 2017-18 to 526 in 2018-19.

The increased number of recorded complaints for the service during 2018/19 arose primarily from a change in the way that complaints relating to waste are now more

consistently recorded in the corporate complaints tracking system (and customer comments in the Waste service's own "Yotta" management system), combined with a change to the policy regarding missed bins and winter garden waste collection; they do not, in my view, represent a deterioration in service performance.

Essentially, customer complaints and comments are now consistently captured in the corporate complaints tracker, rather than the previous situation of complaints and comments sometimes being addressed through e-mails and phone contacts with managers in the waste service, and therefore not formally recorded. This more consistent and coherent approach allows managers to see missed bin and other management data in one place, so that any emerging trends, or problems with repeatedly missed bins, become more apparent and can be more easily addressed.

In the three months prior April to June, an average of 19 customer complaints per month and a total of 57 were recorded as complaints. At the start of July a new management system called Yotta was implemented for the recording and categorizing of problems raised by customers by all routes. At the same time, new policies were implemented regarding the service returning to collect missed bins. In the three months of July to September immediately after, an average of 51 customer complaints per month and a total of 153 were recorded as complaints.

The more than doubling of recorded waste complaints in the nine months from July to the end of the reporting year (compared to the first three months) was largely due to that change in the way complaints are recorded, alongside several seasonal service issues and the impacts of specific changes to policies. In particular, customers are now required to report missed bins in a 24 hour window, rather than up to three days later, in order for missed bins to be collected. Complaints about this change of policy are included in the total number of complaints, as are complaints about the change to green waste collection (moving to a monthly collection rather than fortnightly during the winter months).

Complaints are currently running at around two per working day, out of 14,600 bins collected each day. Given that some complaints are generated by circumstances beyond our control, I would anticipate this level of complaints may continue. The service remains committed to responding to complaints on time and to a satisfactory standard, and to reducing the number of complaints as far as possible.

## Estates & Facilities

Estates & Facilities	Total Complaints	No. of Stage 2 Complaints	No. of ICI Complaints	Complaints in Target	No. of Multi-Service Complaints	No. of compliments
2018-19	124	8	2	58%	28	6
2017-18	89	4	1	43%	11	4
2016-17	86	4	-	62%		2

### Resolution Theme

Estates & Facilities – Delayed Repairs – 41%

General- Individual complaint – no evident trend – 20%

Estates & Facilities- Quality of repairs – 13%

### *Service comments from Lynn Thomas, Head of Estates & Facilities*

Over the 2018/19 financial year, as a service, we completed 15,300 responsive repair jobs and carried out planned work to the value of just over £7.4 million. While there has been an increase in the number of complaints relating to the service this year, this number still represents a relatively low proportion (less than 0.8%) of our responsive repair jobs for tenants. We have improved the proportion of complaints responded to within the target timescale this year, but are determined to do much better in 2019/20 and beyond.

We are making every effort to improve the quality and efficiency of our responses to resolve complaints effectively. Part of this process is to implement a project plan in three phases. During the first phase we held training provided by the Local Government Ombudsman, with the objective to improve the investigation techniques and quality of responses by the complaint handlers, particularly as more complaints have escalated to stage 2 and on to the independent complaint investigator.

Phase 2 has been a combination of training on the complaints tracker system and detailed analysis of why the target dates were missed on cases that were not responded to on time.

We are now starting the third phase where we are analysing the 122 complaints received and looking at what the root cause and themes were. Where the service delivery may have failed we are reviewing our processes and procedures to see where improvements may be made.

The highest proportion of the root cause of the complaints received by Estates and Facilities were delays and/or service failure (combined 43%) and poor communication 16%.

I am conducting a service review which will look at the current appointment system, the waiting time experienced by tenants and the efficient deployment of work to operatives to improve their productivity and reduce fuel consumption.

The Council is currently updating and improving the housing management system and mobile working IT systems. As part of this project we are reviewing the processes and procedures behind this - one of the aims will be to improve communication with tenants and other departments within the Council.

## Environmental Services

Environmental Services	Total Complaints	No. of Stage 2 Complaints	No. of ICI Complaints	Complaints in Target	No. of Multi-Service Complaints	No. of compliments
<b>2018-19</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>30</b>
<i>Environmental Health</i>	18	2	2	39%	4	1
<i>Streets &amp; Open Spaces</i>	100	2	4	59%	11	29
<b>2017-18</b>						
<i>Environmental Health</i>	16	4	3	36%	2	-
<i>Streets &amp; Open Spaces</i>	62	5	-	56%	8	54
<b>2016-17</b>						
<i>Environmental Health</i>	22	2	-	59%	-	2
<i>Streets &amp; Open Spaces</i>	77	7	2	73%	-	36

### Resolution Theme

General- Individual complaint- no evident trend – 42%

General- Decision – 9%

General- Staff Conduct/advice given – 9%

### *Service comments from Joel Carre, Head of Environmental Services*

**Streets and Open Spaces** employs 130 frontline staff and is responsible for managing the city's streets, parks and open spaces, including public tree stock (c240,000), play areas (c80) and public toilets (20); and providing daily street cleansing, grounds maintenance and enforcement services.

Of the 100 service complaints received in 2018/19, there was no evident trend to be found. However, in terms of volume, the three highest areas of service complaint related to street cleansing (42); environmental enforcement (16) and public toilets (10). The remaining 32 complaints covered a cross-section of other service areas.

Street cleansing is a 365 day a year, city wide operation, where, on a daily basis, the team empties c1,000 public litter bins, cleans the city's streets and pavements and picks up litter on the city's 300 hectares of parks and green space. Given the scale of this operation; and with a population of c130,000 residents and a historic city core that attracts 8 million visitors a year, the number of street cleansing related complaints (42, equating to fewer than one per week) is not considered high.

In addition to the universal service demand, Streets and Open Spaces went through an operational restructure, which saw it move from a city wide to a four area-based management structure; and investing in new digital technology in 2019/20 to enable customers to report public realm issues and view delivery performance online in real time. These changes should enable us to deliver a better and more efficient service going forward

In 2018/19, the street enforcement team undertook 2,000 enforcement investigations and issued 662 fixed penalty notices, including 392 for littering and 71 for small scale fly tipping. Given the scale of the operation, the number of complaints (16, or less than 1%) is not considered high.

The third highest area of complaint (10) related to the city's public toilets. A large number of the city's 20 public toilet facilities are in older buildings, which require major capital investment and suffer from regular acts of vandalism. A number of complaints related to the condition of the toilets in Silver Street, which are the subject of a £500,000 capital investment to be undertaken in 2019/20. Other complaints related to Cherry Hinton Hall and Lion Yard toilets, which between them, required £20,000 (of the public toilet maintenance budget (£30,000)) to be spent on repairs arising from vandalism.

## **Environmental Health**

Environmental Health complaint figures have remained broadly the same since last year, with a total of 18 in 2018/19; and 16 in 2017/18. This is a low figure, given the high volume of enforcement and licensing cases (c4,000) managed in 2018/19, and reflects the consistently high level of customer service provided by the team. There was no evident trend to the complaints received.

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## **Housing Services**

Housing Services 2018-19	Total Complaints	No. of Stage 2 Complaints	No. of ICI Complaints	Complaints in Target	No. of Multi-Service Complaints	No. of compliments
<b>2018-19</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>21</b>
<i>Housing Advice</i>	<b>53</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>City Homes</i>	<b>41</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>

<i>Supported Housing</i>	<b>6</b>	-	-	<b>100%</b>	-	<b>15</b>
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<b>2017-18</b>						
<i>Housing Advice</i>	24	1	2	73%	6	2
<i>City Homes</i>	67	2	3	64%	6	8
<i>Supported Housing</i>	2	-	-	100%	-	9

<b>2016-17</b>						
<i>Housing Advice</i>	40	3	1	92%	-	5
<i>City Homes</i>	79	1	1	88%	-	18

#### Resolution Theme

General- Individual Complaint – no evident trend 22%

Housing Advice – Home link housing application processing – 17%

Housing Advice – Homelessness/ Banding Decision – 17%

#### *Service comments from **David Greening, Head of Housing:***

Housing Services continue to be concerned about the continued presence of a strong theme around Home-Link processing. The backlog of applications accrued, as outlined in last year's report, was sufficiently reduced by January 2019 to bring response times in line with our 28 day target. However, following a change of IT system in February/March 2019 response times are once again outside of target; this will be a key focus in the first half of 2019-20.

Decisions and policy complaints still continue to feature heavily as a root cause of complaints in 2018-19. The Housing Service has been reviewing a large number of its policies with 16 revised policies and procedures approved at Housing Scrutiny Committee in January 2019.

A further set will be revised and put before committee for approval in 2019-20. One of the key drivers for the review was to ensure that our policies offer greater clarity to customers and that a rationale is present, enabling policies to be applied consistently.

For the Housing Advice Service and City Homes, two front line services attracting the highest level of complaints across Housing Services, there are inbuilt review mechanisms in place to enable these services to identify themes and areas for continuous improvement.

The Housing Advice Service runs a quarterly desk-top review which identifies themes and particular cases where the response to the customer fell short. Conclusions and recommendations are made which may include specific staff training, changes to policy, promotion of service standards and so on. For City

Homes a new monthly complaints resolution meeting has been established with housing officers to ensure the service is learning the lessons from complaints and feeding these into a continuous improvement process.

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## Customer Services

Customer Services	Total Complaints	No. of Stage 2 Complaints	No. of ICI Complaints	Complaints in Target	No. of Multi-Service Complaints	No. of compliments
2018-19	43	1	1	91%	38	58
2017-18	36	-	-	88%	11	30
2016-17	32	1	-	84%		31

### Resolution Theme

General – Individual complaint- no evident trend – 33%

General – Staff Conduct/advice given – 29%

Customer service- automated telephone system (inform 360) – 12%

*Service Comments from Clarissa Norman, Customer Services Operations Manager*

In 2018-2019 Customer services handled in excess of 300,000 contacts via telephone, email and face to face and received 42 complaints. Complaints therefore equates to 0.014% of contacts received. We also received 58 compliments through tracker and 7,734 positive comments through Govmetric which equates to 2.6% of contacts – far more than the number of complaints received.

The key root cause themes of the complaints received for Customer Services are, service failure 26%, poor communication 24% and staff conduct 21 %.

Reviewing the complaints received highlighted that customers sometimes call to chase up a previous request. At this point in the contacts where complaints were received, customer services were either unable to establish the status of the request from service areas, or where they were, customers were unhappy with the update. Where the advisor is unable to resolve the issue, this has led to multi-service complaints being logged about the customer service received and the service failure which prompted the initial contact.

When this was recognised, a number of actions were taken, briefings took place in team meetings to highlight the number of complaints being received and the reasons for them, a re-education of the customer service role and the role complaints take in service improvement was given and individually advisors were coached on when to offer complaints as a mechanism for customers to have their query resolved. Since these actions were taken the number of complaints with this as the root cause have decreased.

Liaison with service areas to improve communications is something which happens routinely, however as a result of the complaints we have received, specific actions have been put in place to enable customer services to update customers effectively.

In terms of staff conduct, the % of complaints where this was the root cause has decreased from 38% in 2017-2018 to 21% in 2019. The decrease seen in the last year is positive and reflects the interventions taken and the targeted coaching which is done with the team. Performance management action plans have been put in place where a trend was established and all targets have been met as a result of these.

## Commercial Services

Commercial Services	Total Complaints	No. of Stage 2 Complaints	No. of ICI Complaints	Complaints in Target	No. of Multi-Service Complaints	No. of compliments
<b>2018-19</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>7</b>	-	<b>99%</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
Parking Services	62	1	-	98%	4	3
Bereavement Services	3	-	-	100%	-	1
Strategic Procurement	1	-	-	100%	-	-
<b>2017-18</b>						
Parking Services	36	1	-	69%	-	5
Bereavement Services	2	1	-	100%	-	2
Strategic Procurement	-	-	-	-	-	1
<b>2016-17</b>						
Parking Services	12	-	-	92%	-	3
Bereavement Services	1	-	-	100%	-	-

### Resolution Theme

Parking Services – Car Parking Charges – 34%

Other – 20%

Parking Services – Car Park Machines – 11%

General – Staff Conduct/advice given – 7%

Parking Services- Homeless related – 7%

General- Individual complaint – no evident trend – 5%

### ***Service comments from James Elms, Head of Commercial Services:***

The feedback that Commercial Services has gained from its customers has allowed the teams to relook at their operations.

The past year has seen the circa 2,000,000 customers at the car parks become accustomed to new contactless payment system, a new pay-by-phone provider and a tariff that has been designed to reduce congestion during the busy morning rush hour.

Parking services have reviewed the design and wording on the payment signs making the tariffs easier to understand at a glance, the sign boards for ShopMobility parking have been repositioned to help direct non-ShopMobility users away from the entrance dedicated for users of that service.

The Bereavement Service has completed in the region of 2,000+ services with mourners having to deal with some very difficult traffic conditions on the A14 to visit the crematorium. The payment process at Bereavement Services has been redesigned, reducing the time customers are waiting, putting in place a process that is robust, managed and timely.

The garage at Waterbeach has continued to grow its private customer base gaining 95.7% on the Good Garage Scheme. The garage has redesigned its waiting area providing more room and better seating for customers.

## Revenues & Benefits

Revenues & Benefits	Total Complaints	No. of Stage 2 Complaints	No. of ICI Complaints	Complaints in Target	No. of Multi-Service Complaints	No. of compliments
2018-19	35	1	1	97%	13	15
2017-18	41	1	2	85%	-	8
2016-17	35	1	-	94%	-	26

### Resolution Themes

Council Tax- Decision Notice Content/Administration – 49%

General – Individual complaint – no evident trend – 17%

Other- 9%

General – Delayed/no response – 9%

Customer Service- Automated Telephone System (Inform 360) – 6%

Benefits – Decision Notice Content/ Administration- 6%

### *Service comments from Alison Cole, Head of Revenues & Benefits:*

During the year we issued approximately 150,000 documents in relation to Council Tax and Business Rates administration, which includes bills, reminders, final notices and summonses for court action (approximately £74.6m of council tax collected from 57,800 council tax properties and £111.8m of business rates from 4,500 businesses).

For Housing Benefit administration we sent approximately 50,000 letters and documents and approximately 10,000 documents for overpayment recovery. We paid almost £42m during 2018/19 in housing benefit and council tax support to over 8,100 households.

Given the sheer volume of documents issued, with a high number of these in pursuance of non-payment of either Council Tax, Business rates or Housing Benefit repayments due to the Council, the number of complaints remains consistently low and is a testimony to the sensitive way the team handles this area of work.

We continue to consider smarter and faster ways of working with the intention of providing the most streamlined service possible, thereby reducing avoidable contacts by the customer.

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## Community Services

Community Services	Total Complaints	No. of Stage 2 Complaints	No. of ICI Complaints	Complaints in Target	No. of Multi-Service Complaints	No. of compliments
2018-19	10	1	-	50%	8	10
2017-18	11	1	1	70%	2	27
2016-17	23	7	-	87%	-	15

### Resolution Theme

General – Individual complaint – no evident trend – 70%

General – Delayed/ No response – 10%

General – Comment – 10%

General – Service Request/ Not a complaint – 10%

This service has not been reported on in detail due to a low volume of complaints.

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## Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service

Planning	Total Complaints	No. of Stage 2 Complaints	No. of ICI Complaints	Complaints in Target	No. of Multi-Service Complaints	No. of compliments
2018-19	41	7	6	49%	1	-
2017-18	15	1	5	46%	1	-
2016-17	36	3	1	81%	-	1

### Resolution Themes

General- Individual complaint- No evident trend- 45%

General – Delayed/no response – 18%

General – Staff Conduct/advice given – 13%

Equality & Diversity – 5%

*Service comments from **Sharon Brown, Assistant Director of Delivery***

There was a significant increase in the number of planning service complaints in 2018-19 (41) compared to the previous year to 2017/2018 which had a very low number of complaints overall (15). The total number of complaints received is, however, more comparable to the number received the previous year in 2016/17 (36).

The number of Stage 2 complaints has also risen (7) compared to the two previous years (1 and 3 respectively) as well as the number of ICI complaints (6) compared to the two previous years (5 and 1 respectively).

The complaints relate to a range of issues, including the processes that the Council followed in reaching its planning decision, to dissatisfaction with planning outcomes and the responsiveness of the enforcement process as well as levels of communication and responsiveness between the service and citizens of the City. The shared planning service project is seeking to improve the resilience of the City Planning capability but remains an ongoing process which this year has resulted in a greater degree of staff turnover than in previous years as the service re-structures and re-organises itself for the future.

In response to these issues, the Planning Service is implementing new policies and processes, is investing in its recruitment offer and online information services and is investing further in planning enforcement. The service is also reviewing its training to include dedicated training on effective complaint management and avoiding actions that lead to complaints through improved analysis of areas for improvement.

It should be noted that the City Council receives over a thousand planning applications annually and the number of complaints therefore needs be seen within this overall context.

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## Multi-Service Complaints

Multi Service Complaints	Total Complaints	No. of Stage 2 Complaints	No. of ICI Complaints	Complaints in Target
2018-19	83	12	3	67%
2017-18	32	5	2	41%

Multi-Service complaints tend to be more complex and involve more officer time to investigate, which could explain the low number of complaints responded to within target. We will renew our efforts to ensure that such complaints are handled more promptly in future years.

The most common areas involved in multi-service complaints are Estates & Facilities (28), and Customer Services (38). This is to be expected as Estates & Facilities can often involve officers from the Housing service if the complaints concern decisions made by that service. Customer Services, as the first point of contact, can also be expected to be involved in multi-service complaints.

When a multi-service complaint is allocated, all Heads of Service involved are contacted to establish a lead officer who will then co-ordinate an investigation and response, including input from all relevant services involved.

Of the multi-service complaints that went to stage three, one case involving Human Resources and Streets & Open Spaces was not investigated as the nature of the complaint was outside of the ICI remit. The complainant was advised of this, and provided with alternate routes to further escalate their complaint should they so wish. One case involving Streets & Open Spaces, Safer Communities and Environmental Health was partially upheld, see page 26 for details.

## **Non-Cambridge City Council**

In addition to the complaints received for City Council services, 174 complaints were raised by customers for authorities or services not provided by the City Council.

In an effort to reduce this number and signpost the customer to the correct authority first time, we are working closely with the Complaints Tracker development team to provide guidance text on the complaints submission page.

This text will address the most common Non-CCC issues and where to register these complaints. The most common Non-CCC complaints are about Highways, Bus services and Parking tickets.

## **Other Complaints**

In 2018-19, several services were not reported on in detail due to a low number of cases. These were:

- ICT – one Stage 1 complaint
- Building Control – two Stage 1 complaints and one stage two complaint
- Housing Development Agency – one Stage 1 complaints
- Corporate Strategy – one Stage 1 complaint
- Democratic Services – one Stage 1 complaint
- Corporate Marketing – one Stage 1 complaint
- Commercial Property – one stage 1 complaint

## **Independent Complaints Investigator (ICI)**

24 new complaints were submitted to the ICI in 2018-19. Of these complaints, 4 are pending resolution as they are still being investigated at year end. 24 were investigated, 5 were upheld and 7 were partially upheld. 8 were not upheld. One complainant escalated three different complaints to the ICI, none of which were upheld.

<b>Upheld and partially upheld Stage 3 complaints in 2018-19</b>	
<b>Service</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Planning	Upheld
Planning	Upheld
Planning	Upheld
Property Services	Partially upheld
Multi-Service Complaint	Partially upheld
Housing Advice	Partially upheld
Waste	Upheld
Housing Advice	Partially upheld
Estates & Facilities	Partially upheld
Revenues & Benefits	Upheld
Customer Services	Partially upheld
City Homes	Partially upheld

### **ICI Complaints received between 2016 – 2018-19**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Partially upheld</b>	<b>Upheld</b>
<b>2018-19</b>	7	5
<b>2017-18</b>	1* + 7	1
<b>2016-17</b>	1* + 2	1* + 3

\*Complaints carried over from the previous year

# **ICI Complaint Service Feedback**

Pages 24-25 detail comments from Services on actions they have taken to prevent, improve or change as a result of the ICI feedback received in 2018-19

## **Upheled ICI Complaints**

### **Revenues & Benefits**

#### **Decision – Upheld**

##### **Complaint Overview**

A customer called the Customer Service Centre on more than one occasion to question their Council Tax refund. They were given different information on each call and the refund was not processed by the target date given.

##### **ICI Suggested Way Forward**

- For the City Council to send a written apology in plain English recognizing the offence that had been caused to the customer. The written apology should include reassurance that the complainants future dealings with the Revenues & Benefits department will not be affected by the complaint, and all future dealings will be courteous and professional.

##### **ICI Learning points and Recommendations**

- The City Council formally write to the customer in terms which recognise and apologise for faults which have led to various poor communications in the case, and caused the customer evident anxiety.
- City Council makes payment of £100 to cover the additional time and trouble the customer had at stages 1 and 2 as their concerns were not addressed correctly until the ICI stage.

##### **Actions taken in response to feedback**

- Issues around communication and explaining information to customers clearly was addressed within team meetings to ensure accuracy and consistency.
- A cheque was raised for the £100 compensation recommendation, and a letter of apology was sent to the complainant.

### **Planning**

#### **Decision – All three complaints were upheld**

##### **Complaint Overview**

This summary covers three complaints submitted about the same issue by two separate complainants.

Customers were not initially informed of a neighbours planning application, and were not kept informed of any developments within the case. The complainants also believed that the applicant made an amendment to the application without neighbour consultation.

## **ICI Suggested Way Forward**

The Planning Department reviews its processes for publicising planning applications and managing the consultation process to ensure that, on a case to case basis, there is consideration of the most effective processes to ensure that those who need to know, or have an interest in knowing, are engaged with.

## **ICI Learning points and Recommendations**

- The issue around emergency access to the complainants' street needs to be resolved through the ongoing wider complaint investigation associated with the development in question.
- There should be further consideration of the processes for providing notification of, and opportunities to consult on amendments to planning applications.

## **Actions taken in response to feedback**

The issue around emergency access to the complainants' street was clarified through a subsequent planning application which was approved at Planning Committee in September 2019. It was resolved through consultation with the Fire Service which clarified what the emergency access provisions would be in the event of a fire. The Planning Service also commissioned its own survey of the area to determine the width of the road at the present time. The revised application approved at Planning Committee, if implemented, would result in an increased road width in the narrowest part from 3m to 3.7 metres.

We were not able to accommodate all of the ICI recommendations in terms of suggested changes to consultation processes on planning applications. This was in respect of researching the owners of properties and consulting them on each individual planning application, rather than addressing letters to occupiers as is current practice. The suggested change would not be practical and is not consistent with national practice. The Council's approach is compliant with legal requirements in terms of publicity for planning applications. However, the Planning Service is undertaking a wider review of its processes as part of the new ICT and process alignment work for the Shared Service. This will include a general review of consultation processes and letters.

## **Waste**

### **Decision – Upheld**

#### **Complaint Overview**

A customer had seen a decline in service from the waste team as there was an ongoing problem with collection of blue recycling bins despite being on an assisted collection service. The customer had a letter to say that the data for the collect and return service was being updated, but their bin continued to be missed.

### **ICI Suggested Way Forward**

- For the City Council to send a written apology in plain English recognising the failure of the service on this occasion. This letter should also recognise the time and trouble that the customer endured in trying to resolve the matter.

### **ICI Learning points and Recommendations**

- City Council makes payment of £100 to cover the additional time and trouble the customer had at stages 1 and 2 as their concerns were not addressed correctly until the ICI stage.
- That the City Council recognises the faults in this case and considers reviewing the management processes that are in place to ensure that they are sufficiently robust to ensure that services provided by the domestic waste team are capable of effectively remedying service collection failures.

### **Actions taken in response to feedback**

Following this complaint, an apology along with payment of £100 was issued to the customer. The service also took on board the ICI recommendation and carried out a review of the process for assisted bin collections.

## **Partially Upheld ICI Complaints**

### **Housing Advice 25/10/18**

#### ***Complaint: Home-Link banding decision***

Escalated to ICI as complainant believed that the Council was ignoring part of the Home-Link application form, and that they did have a valid local connection to the City.

- ICI recognised that there had been a breakdown in communication between the Housing Advice team and the applicant, which the Council had already apologised for.
- In regards to the upheld elements of this complaint, the ICI made recommendations that the Council consider incorporating a function to alert applicants when they no longer meet a banding criteria, consider moving question six of the Home-Link application to page one. Also to review the complainants application and move the customer to Band B. Furthermore the ICI recommended a review of the current Letting's policy and to carry out an EQIA of the Home-Link application process.
- Following the report, the complainants application was reviewed and they were re-banded into Band B. The other recommendations would be subject to agreement from the rest of the sub-region, so the City Council do not have full control to implement these recommendations. However, a review of the sub-regional lettings policy is scheduled for later in 2019.

### **Customer Services 11/12/18**

#### ***Complaint: Staff Conduct***

Complainant believed that their original request for service was not processed and led to the situation with their overflow pipe getting worse. The complainant also believed that the numerous advisors they spoke to were rude and unhelpful.

- ICI recognised that there had been a delay in escalating the issue, and that the calls with advisors could have been handled better by one advisor. An apology was sent by the Head of Customer Services, and 1-2-1 coaching was carried out with the staff member.

### **City Homes 06/01/19**

#### ***Complaint: Neighbour Dispute issues***

Complainant was unsatisfied the Council's ability to find a practical solution to an ongoing dispute with their neighbour, and the Council should accept responsibility for the neighbour feeding wildlife.

- ICI recognised that the Council had attempted to rectify the dispute, but the measures put in place were not effective in doing so. ICI recommended a way forward, and a monitoring period to enable a City Homes manager to review the issues raised.
- Following the ICI recommendations decoys were installed at both the complainants and their neighbours property in an attempt to deter the wildlife. The housing officer for the area visited weekly for a period of four weeks to

monitor the situation. Following an emergency referral to the Tenancy Enforcement Panel, the case was referred to the ASB team to take the lead on a further investigation

### **Property Services 18/05/18**

#### ***Complaint: Discrimination against type of business***

Complainant did not feel that the Council acted fairly in determining their application for their business venture into one of the Council commercial units.

- ICI partially upheld the complaint and felt that personal opinions did enter into the decision rationale. Recommendations were made to pay £250 compensation and issue a letter of apology, including reassurance that any further correspondence would adhere to the Equalities Act 2010.
- Following the upheld elements of this complaint, all recommendations from the ICI were carried out by the service.

### **Multi-Service (Housing, Safer Communities) 12/07/18**

#### ***Complaint: Failure to manage customer expectations***

Complainant was unhappy that they had been offered a Council property which neighboured a property with a history of anti-social behaviour. The complainant was not informed of this prior to moving in, or being offered the property.

- ICI report recommendations state that City Council consider reviewing its risk assessment processes of tenancy lettings, and write to the complainant to acknowledge that a mistake was made. The ICI also made a recommendation of compensation in respect of the partially upheld complaint.
- A letter of apology was sent to the complainant regarding the impact of their neighbours behaviour. City Homes reviewed their procedures and included a risk assessment as part of any referrals to the Tenancy Enforcement Panel. Compensation was agreed with the tenant and offered, but it was later refused, and the complainant escalated their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman, and the Local Government Ombudsman. Their complaint was upheld by both.

### **Estates & Facilities 17/09/18**

#### ***Complaint: Council not carrying out adaptions to property***

Complainant escalated to ICI as they had requested disabled adaption work was carried out to their property, and the Council had not permitted this work. Complainant did not feel that the Council explained why we were unwilling to support and fund these adaptions, and that all available Occupational Health and medical assessments were not considered.

- ICI found that the rationale behind the decision had not been articulated to the customer. The decision did not specifically address why the proposed adaptions were rejected. The ICI found that the officer who made the decision had not been kept up to date with new medical information, so was not at

fault. ICI recommended that Head of Estates and Facilities review the decision.

- Following the ICI recommendations, all Managers were retrained by the LGO in complaints handling, and further support was given to the Adaption Officer in handling responses to complaints. The complainant was offered the chance to meet with Senior Managers, and a review of the policy was carried out.

## **Housing Advice 01/10/18**

### ***Complaint: Housing application processing***

This complaint was escalated to Stage 3 as they believed they had not been treated fairly by the Home-Link bidding process. The complainant felt that as they had friends in similar situations who had been housed, that they should also be housed by the City Council. The complainant was also not happy with the wording of the decision letter. The complainant made further reference to comments made by a Customer Service Advisor and a Housing Advisor.

- ICI recommended a letter of apology for the comments made within the decision letter and ensure that Housing Advice Officers and Customer Service Advisors are aware of the impact of their comments.
- A Senior Manager from the Housing Advice team wrote to the complainant to apologise for the comments made by the Customer Service Advisor, and the style and tone of part of the email from the Housing Advisor. This was also followed up with both officers to make sure they were aware of the impact of their comments.

## Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

If customers are not satisfied with the way their complaint has been handled they can contact the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's office. The LGSCO investigates complaints of injustice arising from maladministration by local authorities and other bodies. In 2018-19 the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman received 13 enquiries and complaints relating to Cambridge City Council. As a result of the LGO's detailed investigations, three were upheld.

Department	No of Complaints Received	Decision
Housing	4	1 Incomplete/Invalid 1 Referred back for local resolution 2 Advice given
Revenues & Benefits	2	1 Closed after initial enquiries 1 Referred back for local resolution
Highways & Transport	1	1 Referred back for local resolution
Corporate & Other Services	1	1 Referred back for local resolution
Environmental Services & Public Protection & Regulation	2	<b>1 Upheld</b> 1 Closed after initial enquiries
Planning & Development	3	<b>2 Upheld</b> 1 Closed after initial enquiries
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3 Upheld</b>

### Yearly comparison 2015 – 18

Year	Total Enquiries Received	Change
2018-19	13	-32%
2017-18	19	+11%
2016-17	17	+6%

### Complaints under the Councillors' Code of Conduct

Councillors must adhere to the Council's Code of Conduct whenever they are conducting Council business, representing the Council or conducting the business of the office to which they were elected. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to ensure high standards of ethics and conduct are maintained and that councillors

treat everybody in an equal capacity and with respect, ensuring at all times that the integrity of the Council is not compromised in any way.

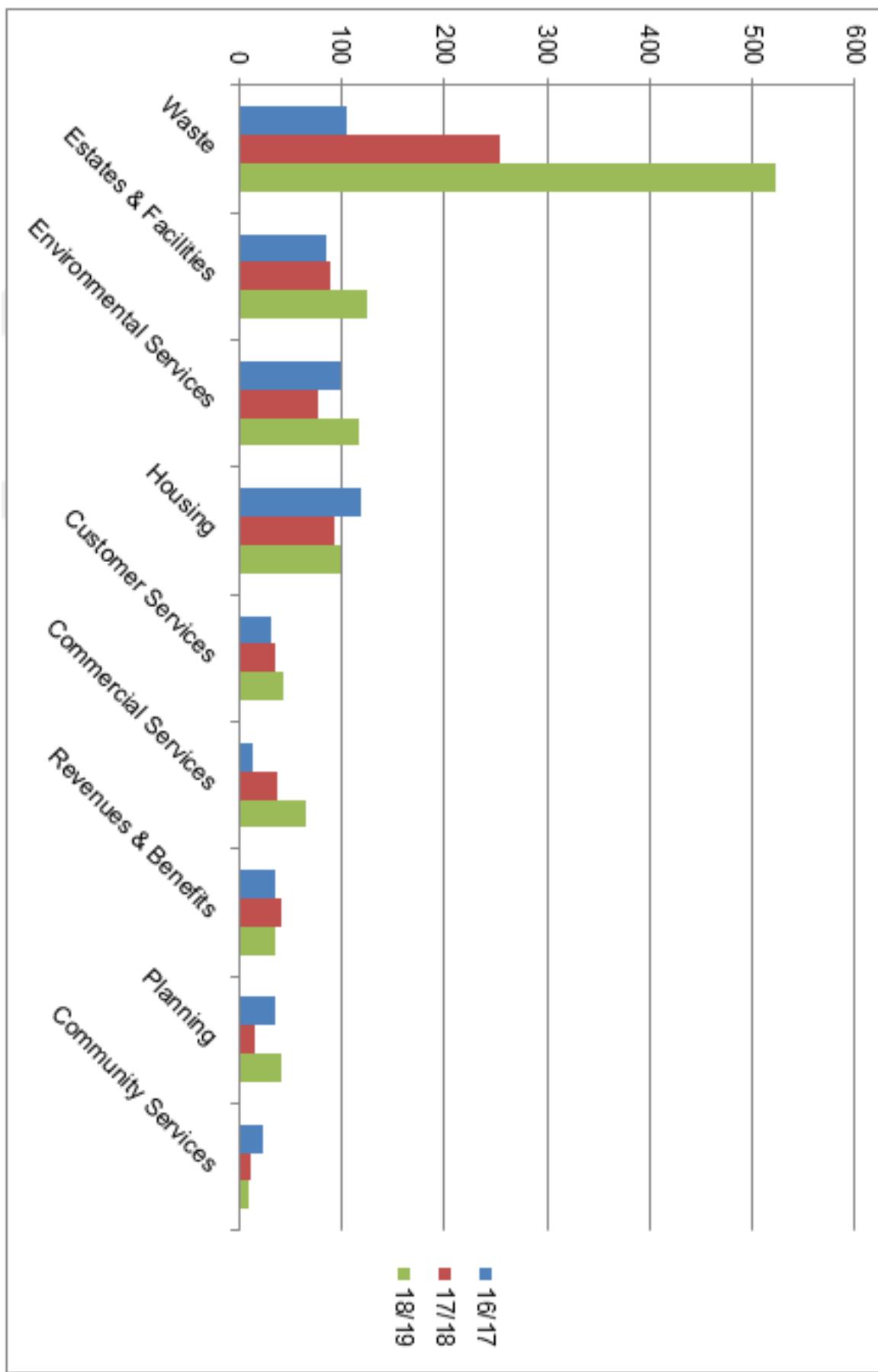
Complaints about councillors are considered initially by the Council's Monitoring Officer (who is also the Head of Legal Practice). When the Monitoring Officer receives a complaint about breach of the Code of Conduct, they consult one of two "Independent Persons" appointed by the Council. The role of the "Independent Persons" is to introduce external scrutiny of the complaints process. The Monitoring Officer can respond to a complaint, can commission a formal investigation or can refer it for consideration by the Council's Standards Sub-Committee. The Council's Standards Sub-Committee is made up of three Councillors.

During 2018-19, the Council received two complaints about the conduct of Councillors.

Both complaints involved the conduct of a Councillor at a Committee meeting but in neither case was it the opinion of the Monitoring Officer or Independent Person that there had been a breach of the Member Code of Conduct. Both complaints were therefore dismissed.

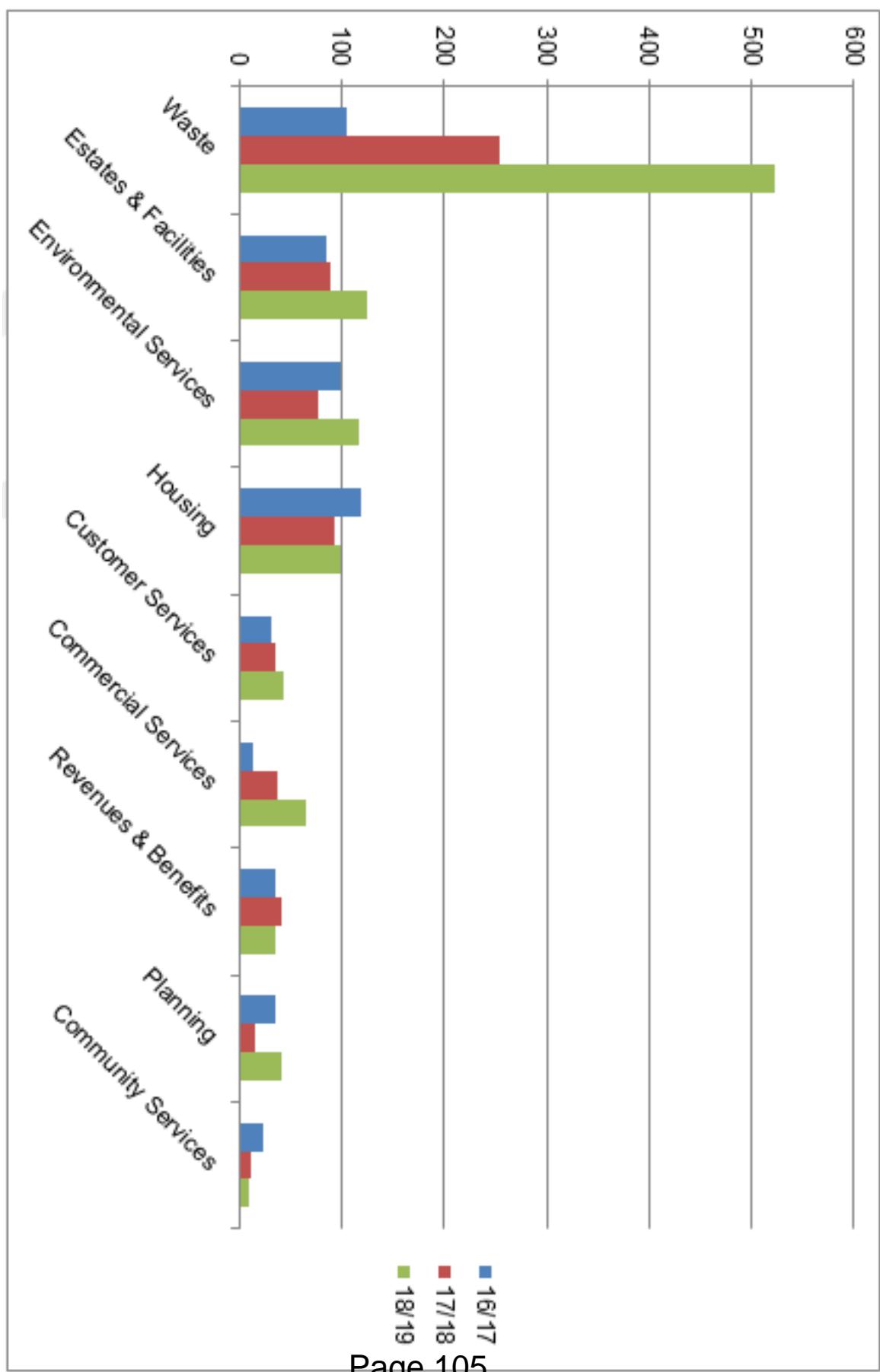
There were 4 complaints in 2016/17 and 2 complaints in 2017/18. To find out more about the Council's Code of Conduct visit our website or contact the Council's Monitoring Officer Tom Lewis [tom.lewis@3csharedservices.org](mailto:tom.lewis@3csharedservices.org)

## Appendix 1 - 3 Year Service Comparison



## Appendix B

### Number of complaints in last three years by service



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## **Appendix C**

### **Proposed change to the wording of the Terms of Reference of Civic Affairs Committee, as set out in the Constitution.**

Para 5.2 of Section 5 of Part 3 of the constitution sets out the functions of Civic Affairs Committee. It is proposed to delete the final sentence in the section under “Ethical Standards”, to enable the Annual Complaints Report to be reported to Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee.

#### **Ethical Standards**

To advise the Council and its committees as appropriate on the ethical framework within which councillors, co-opted members and officers should operate.

To advise the Council and its committees as appropriate on the ethical aspects

of the corporate governance framework within which councillors and officers should operate.

To promote a culture of openness, ready accountability and probity, in order to ensure the highest standards of conduct of councillors, co-opted members and officers.

~~To take an overview of complaints handling within the Council and of issues relating to the Local Government Ombudsman or Independent Complaints Investigator.~~

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## Agenda Item 9

## Agenda Item

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

**REPORT OF:** Information Governance Manager/DPO

**WARDS:** All

# **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION, DATA PROTECTION AND TRANSPARENCY: ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19**

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report provides Civic Affairs Committee with an annual report on performance and activity during 2018/19 on transparency issues, including: data protection; requests for information under Freedom of Information (FOI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR). In addition the report covers snap shots of projects the council is addressing in line with the Data Protection Act (DPA) and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018 Regulations.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Council needs to review the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations 2018 to ensure they align with current processes and procedures.

### **3. INFORMATION GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK**

- 3.1 Information Governance describes the holistic approach to managing information by implementing processes, roles and metrics to transform information into business assets. The purpose of the (IG) framework is to establish how the council will approach Information Governance. Information is a vital asset and needs to be managed securely by the council. Appropriate policies, guidance, accountability and structures must be in place to manage the council's information legally, securely and effectively in order to minimise risk to the public and staff and to protect its finances and assets. The IG Strategy and Framework describes the Council's approach to meeting its statutory

duties in relation to information governance, data protection and confidentiality.

## **4.0 DATA PROTECTION**

- 4.1 The Data Protection Act 2018 is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Data protection is primarily concerned with personal data about individuals rather than general information. The council has a diverse range of people services which relates to a significant volume of data. As service delivery evolves in the way the council is delivering its services this will have great impact on information governance arrangements. The council's challenge under the Data Protection Act 2018 is incorporating a streamlined process in relation to individual rights. These include the right to:

- Be informed about how your data is being used
- Access to personal data
- Have incorrect data updated
- Have data erased
- Stop or restrict the processing of your data
- Data portability (allowing you to get and reuse your data for different services)
- Object to how your data is processed in certain circumstances

## **5.0 PROJECTS AND NEW INITIATIVES**

- 5.1 All new projects are required to complete a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA), this is mandatory under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). The Council is aware of the new initiative and DPIAs are currently undertaken, but the process needs to be reviewed to ensure (DPIA) is done as part of the initial phase of a project to ensure risks are identified and taken into account before the problems become embedded in the design and causes higher costs due to making changes at a later stage.

## **6.0 POLICIES**

- 6.1 A policy data base has been established to track the status of policies and flag up when they are due for review. The data base Protocol Policy specialises in ICT policies.

- 6.2 The Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) reviewed the policies at the Information Security Group meeting (ISG). The policies below have now been approved and shared with all staff groups:
- Acceptable User policy
  - Information Security policy

- 6.3 A number of further policies will need to be reviewed to align with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

## **7.0 CYBER SECURITY/INFORMATION SECURITY**

- 7.1 The Council has continued to invest and develop further protection in Cyber and Information Security across a number of services over the past year. To achieve this council intends to attain Cyber Essentials Plus introduced by the UK government that aims to provide organisations with common Internet – based threats.

## **8.0 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION**

- 8.1 Published statistics have shown that nationally the number and complexity of Freedom of Information requests submitted to Local Authorities remains high and overall the amount of time consumed in administering the requests continues to increase. The Council continues to mirror the national picture with the volume of requests increasing.
- 8.2 Performance is monitored bi weekly and discussed in team meetings on how the Council can achieve 85% target set by the Information Commissioners Office (ICO).
- 8.3 However as request numbers continue to increase this places a greater challenge to remain compliant within statutory deadline of 20 working days.
- 8.4 The Council needs to develop and implement a process to publish a selection of questions and answers under Freedom of Information to potentially negate duplicate requests. In doing so, requesters can be referred to the website rather than responding to a request already published, therefore saving staff time and resources.

## **9.0 TRAINING**

- 9.1 To ensure organisational compliance with the law and relevant guidance relating to Information Governance (IG), staff must

receive appropriate training. Therefore, bi-annual IG training should be made mandatory for all staff. Staff IG training needs will be routinely assessed, monitored and adequately provided for. All new starters who manage confidential information, including councillors are expected to undertake bi-annual training on handling confidential information. The training covers data security, breaches and incidents, and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Completion of the training will be sufficient evidence of basic information governance training to handle confidential information. Ideally, the council should develop an (IG) training programme to establish a clear plan for (IG) tailored to specific staff groups or job roles. The plan will address how and when each staff group will be trained.

## **10.0 PERFORMANCE** (*refer to appendices (A-D)*)

- 10.1 Appendix B shows there has been year on year increase in the number of FOI request since 2013/2014 financial (reporting) year. To understand this more, for the year 2018/19 (April – March) the council received a total of 913 requests under FOI and EIR, representing a 3.8% increase in the number of requests received in the previous year. The number of requests received each year, has had a direct impact on the compliance response timeframe. As the numbers of requests have increased, the compliance timeframe has fallen short. This can also be explained by many factors and variables within the delivery of services. For example, during the same period, there have been fewer resources in dealing with requests compared to previous years. It is also important to note that the ICO target changed in 2016/2017 year to 90 from previously 85. Although this does not have a different effect on day to day activities, it does show an overall picture of shortfall in meeting the targets for services given. Appendix D shows the numbers and the percentages per service. In this appendix, there are four departments (environmental, planning, housing and revenues & benefits) with significant requests. Environmental services scores higher for example compared to other services. Again, this could be as a result of different factors pertaining to information or campaigns received from main stream media and social media. Appendix D highlights subject access as a predominant area of requests as it relates to information the council holds pertaining to Individuals.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

Senior managers have been consulted in the production of this report.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The Council takes transparency issues seriously and is broadly compliant with the legislation. A number of measures have been put in place to increase the Council's performance in these areas, and to reduce the risk of breaches in compliance with the legislation.

Officers will continue to review practice, learning from 3C ICT partners and others to strive to continually improve performance, serve residents better and reduce the council's exposure to risk.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

### **(a) Financial Implications**

No decisions with financial implications are proposed in this report.

### **(b) Staffing Implications**

Staff will continue to be supported to understand and meet their obligations regarding transparency issues, including through the roll-out of the new FoI tracking software.

### **(c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

This report does not propose decisions with equalities impacts, so an EqIA has not been produced.

### **(d) Environmental Implications**

No decisions with environmental implications are proposed in this report.

### **(e) Procurement**

n/a

### **(f) Consultation and communication**

As set in the body of the report, the need for vigilance and training on data protection and related matters has been communicated to managers and staff regularly.

### **(g) Community Safety**

n/a

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:** The following are the background papers that were used in the preparation of this report:

n/a

## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A** Service Analysis to include service response time

**Appendix B** Number of requests received by Cambridge City Council/  
percentage of FOI responses responded to within 20  
working days

**Appendix C** Number of requests received / percentage of requests  
received by Cambridge City Council

**Appendix D** Personal data and complaints handling

The author and contact officer for queries on the report is Information  
Governance Manager/DPO

Report file:

Date originated: 01 October 2019

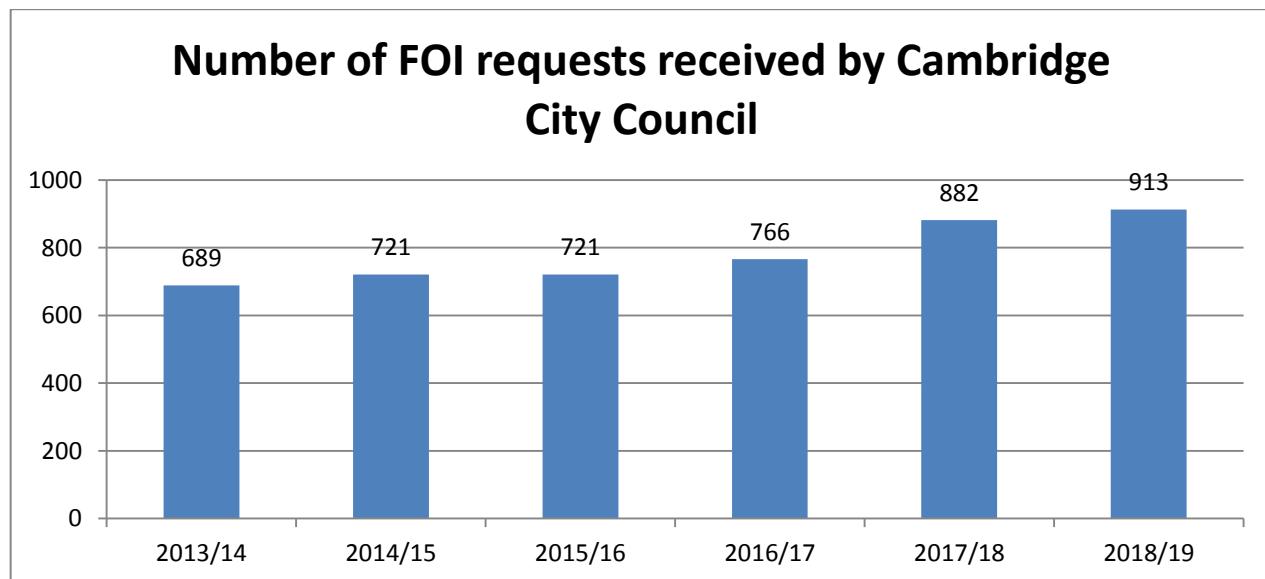
Date of last revision: 01 October 2019

## Appendix A

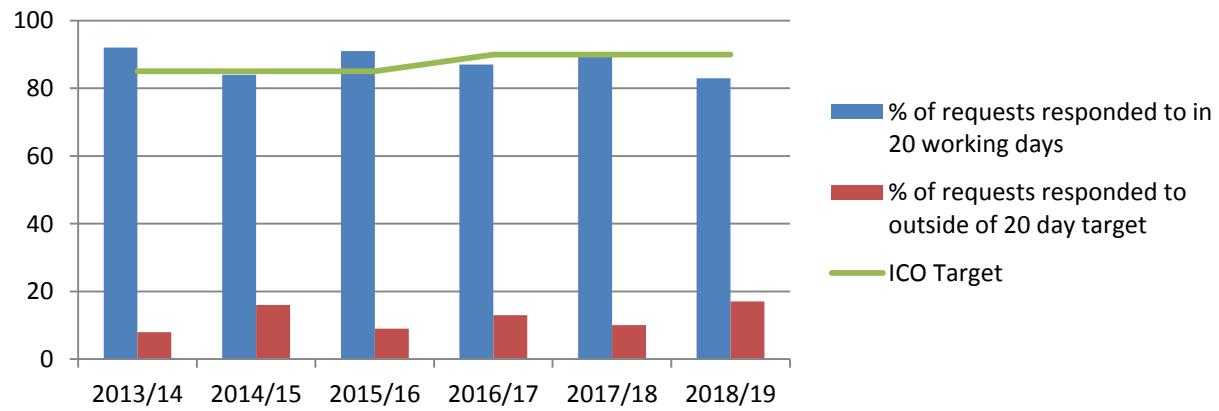
Service	Code	Received	Within 20 working days	% Within 20 working days	Average response time (working days)
<u>Building Control</u>	3CSS	2	1	50	21.5
<u>ICT</u>	3CSS	158	120	80	16.9
<u>Waste</u>	2CSS	9	6	67	19.9
<u>Legal</u>	3CSS	8	3	38	21.4
<u>CEX</u>	CCC	2	2	100	8.5
<u>Commercial Services</u>	CCC	45	38	84	11.1
<u>Community Services</u>	CCC	29	28	97	9.0
<u>Corporate Strategy</u>	CCC	43	29	67	14.6
<u>Environmental Services</u>	CCC	215	186	87	14.1
<u>Estates &amp; Facilities</u>	CCC	22	12	55	22.9
<u>Finance</u>	CCC	37	31	84	14.6
<u>Housing Development Agencies</u>	CCC	4	4	100	25.3
<u>Housing Services</u>	CCC	60	54	90	14.4
<u>HR</u>	CCC	25	18	72	18.2
<u>Planning</u>	CCC	135	116	86	14.5
<u>Property Services</u>	CCC	14	10	71	22.6
<u>Revenues &amp; Benefits</u>	CCC	93	86	92	12.7
<u>Transformation Office</u>	CCC	1	1	100	11.0
<u>Various</u>		19	10	53	30.2
		913	755	83	15.2

## Appendix B

Year	Number of requests	% of requests responded to in 20 working days	% of requests responded to outside of 20 day target	ICO Target
2013/14	689	92	8	85
2014/15	721	84	16	85
2015/16	721	91	9	85
2016/17	766	87	13	90
2017/18	882	90	10	90
2018/19	913	83	17	90



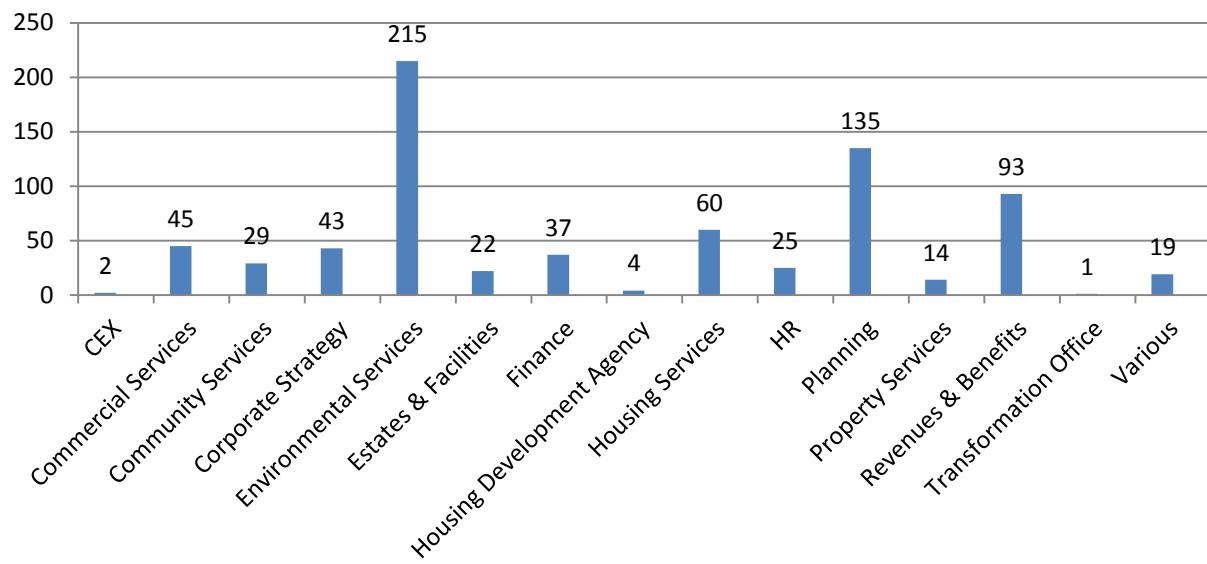
## Percentage of FOI responses responded to within 20 working days



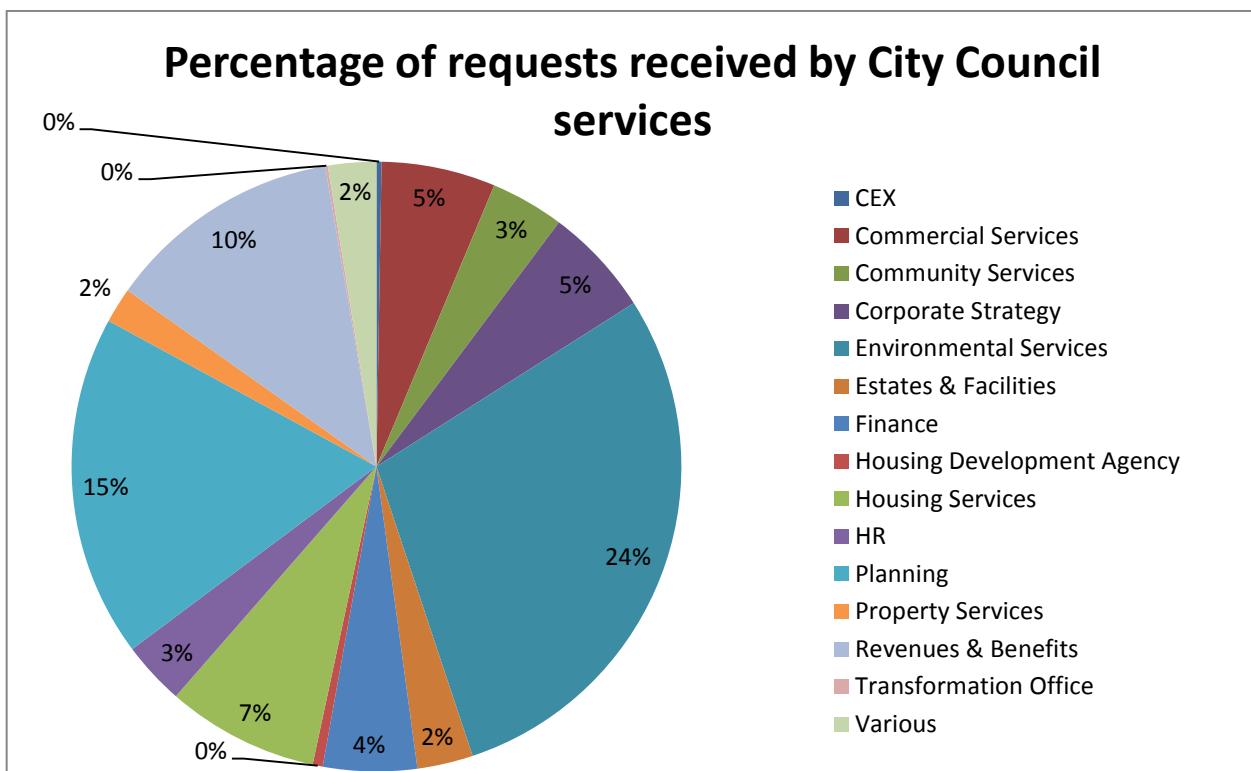
## Appendix C

	Number of requests	Percentage of requests
3CSS Building Control	2	0%
3CSS ICT	150	16%
2CSS Waste	9	1%
3CSS Legal	8	1%
CEX	2	0%
Commercial Services	45	5%
Community Services	29	3%
Corporate Strategy	43	5%
Environmental Services	215	24%
Estates & Facilities	22	2%
Finance	37	4%
Housing Development Agency	4	0%
Housing Services	60	7%
HR	25	3%
Planning	135	15%
Property Services	14	2%
Revenues & Benefits	93	10%
Transformation Office	1	0%
Various	19	2%
	913	

## Number of requests received by City Council Services

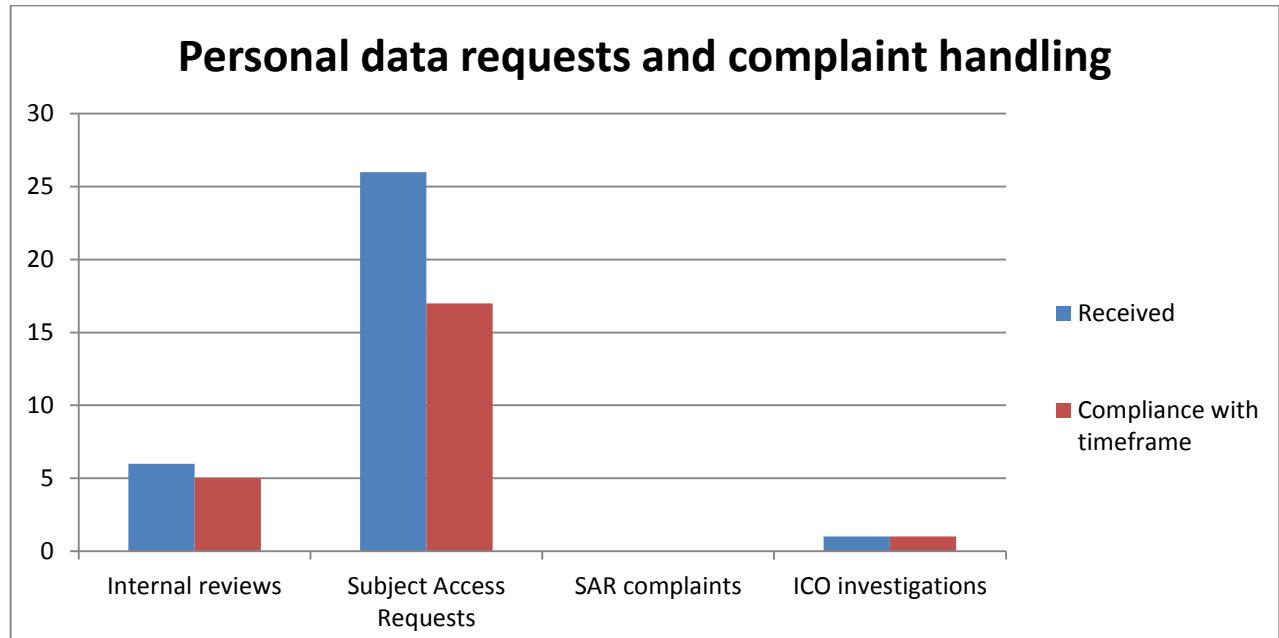


## Percentage of requests received by City Council services



## Appendix D

Other Requests		
	Received	Compliance with timeframe
Internal reviews	6	5
Subject Access Requests	26	17
SAR complaints	0	
ICO investigations	1	1





## Item

### PROXY VOTING AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

**To:**

Civic Affairs Committee 09/10/19

**Report by:**

Gary Clift, Democratic Services Manager

Tel: 01223 - 457011 Email: gary.clift@cambridge.gov.uk

**Wards affected:**

None directly affected

## 1. Introduction / Executive Summary

At the last Committee (19/23/CIV) Councillor Katie Porrer submitted a written request for officers to investigate this issue of proxy voting at local authority committee meetings. This report answers that request.

## 2. Recommendations

To ask the Chief Executive to write to the Local Government Association requesting that it raises with Government the equality issue raised in this report and whether it should consider introducing this for local government meetings.

## 3. Background

3.1 Cllr Porrer submitted a written request to the Committee requesting that officers investigate whether proxy voting for members on parental leave would be possible for council meetings. Her request stated that as a council committed to equality of opportunity and one which wishes to encourage a diversity of candidates and councillors, committee is asked

to investigate amending its own regulations to accommodate a similar procedure for voting at council when a member is on parental leave.

- 3.2 UK parliament passed a pilot scheme, running for twelve months, allowing members on parental leave to cast a proxy vote: <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/commons/proxy-voting-scheme/> (see also Appendix). It is understood that this has been done by a change to the House of Commons Standing Orders (not legislation).

- 3.3 Officers have investigated the matter and the relevant legislation is the Local Government Act 1972 schedule 12 which states:

“39(1) Subject to the provisions of any enactment (including any enactment in this Act) all questions coming or arising before a local authority shall be decided by a majority of the members of the authority present and voting thereon at a meeting of the authority.”

It is also the case, for the avoidance of doubt, that there is no common law right to vote by proxy (Harben v Philips 1883).

A local authority cannot alone create a procedure to allow proxy voting at any of its meetings, it would be unlawful to do so.

- 3.4 However, in the knowledge that the House of Commons is permitting a proxy system, albeit a trial, this Committee may wish to request that the Chief Executive raises the matter with the Local Government Association to highlight the equalities issue for Council meetings.

#### **4. Implications**

**a) Financial Implications-none**

**b) Equality and Poverty Implications**

There is an on-going debate about how the institutions of central and local government are geared up for a truly equal and diverse representative democracy.

**c) Environmental Implications-none**

**d) Procurement Implications-none**

**e) Community Safety Implications-none**

#### **5. Appendix-UK Parliament trial proxy voting scheme.**

# Scheme on proxy voting for use under para (4) of Resolution of 28 January 2019

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## **A. Eligibility**

1. Proxy voting shall be available to new mothers, new fathers and adoptive parents.
2. A Member shall demonstrate eligibility for the scheme by producing the following documents to the Speaker:
  - A certificate of pregnancy from a registered practitioner, midwife or health visitor, or
  - A ‘matching certificate’ from a registered adoption agency.
3. The production of such a certificate shall be a sufficient requirement to register for the scheme, and no further validation shall be required.
4. It shall not be compulsory to take up eligibility for the scheme.
5. The entitlement to a proxy vote, and to its use, is personal to the eligible Member.

## **B. Duration**

6. The maximum duration of the dispensation to vote by proxy shall be as follows:
  - Six months for the biological mother of a baby, or for the primary or single adopter of a baby or child
  - Two weeks for the biological father of a baby, the partner of the person giving birth or the second adopter of a baby or child.
7. Any period of absence taken by a mother or primary adopter shall start at or before the due date or adoption date and should be taken as a continuous period of up to six months, including periods when the House is adjourned, prorogued or dissolved.
8. The absence claimed by the father, partner or second adopter shall be taken in one continuous period of two weeks.
9. A Member eligible for the scheme shall specify in writing to the Speaker the dates on which the absence shall begin and end, subject to the maximum durations set out in the scheme. During that period the Member shall be entitled to cast a vote by proxy.

10. If the specified start (or end) date of absence given is not a sitting day, the period of entitlement shall begin (or end) when the Speaker takes the Chair on the next sitting day.

11. Where it is certified that a Member is unable, because of pregnancy, to travel to Westminster by air, the maximum period may be extended by no more than four weeks, to include the period before the due date where travel to Westminster is not possible.

**C. Designation of proxy**

12. When specifying the dates of absence, the Member eligible for proxy voting shall name the Member who has agreed to carry her or his proxy vote, thereby vouching that an agreement has been entered into.

13. A Member shall be free to choose any other Member of the House who is eligible to vote in divisions to act as a proxy.

**D. Publishing the arrangement**

14. On receipt of the specified information the Speaker shall issue a certificate, and cause it to be entered in the Votes and Proceedings.

**E. Varying the arrangement**

15. A Member who wishes to change the Member who is their proxy, to end their period of proxy voting earlier than originally notified, or to cast a vote in person on a specific item of business, shall give written notice to the Speaker as early as possible, and at the very latest by the scheduled rise of the House on the sitting day before the change is to take effect.

16. The Speaker shall issue a new certificate if required under paragraph 15 above, which shall appear in the Votes and Proceedings on the day that it is issued.

17. Changes of proxy made for a specified period shall take effect when the Speaker takes the Chair on the first sitting day specified, and shall end when the House rises on the last sitting day specified.

**F. Exercising the proxy vote**

18. A Member eligible to vote by proxy must agree with the Member nominated as their proxy when the proxy vote will be cast and how it will be exercised.

19. A proxy vote may be cast according to the provisions of temporary Standing Order (Voting by proxy for parental absence).

20. A Member designated as a proxy will be expected to act in strict accordance with the instruction given by the absent Member.

21. A Member designated as a proxy may cast their own vote in one lobby and the proxy vote in the other, and may cast a proxy vote without casting their own vote at all.
22. A Member registered as voting by proxy who wishes to vote in person shall be entitled to do so, provided that the Speaker has been notified by the end of the previous sitting day that the proxy arrangement is to be suspended. (see para 15)
23. In divisions in legislative grand committees, a Member who is not a member of the committee shall be entitled to enter a division lobby to cast a proxy vote for a committee member.

**G. *Recording a proxy vote in a division in the House or Committee of the whole House***

24. A Member casting a proxy vote in a division shall inform the Division Clerk at the appropriate desk, and the tellers at the doors of the lobby.
25. At the same time the Member casting the proxy vote shall make it clear whether that Member is casting his or her own vote in the same lobby.
26. When listing the result of divisions, both online and in its printed edition, the Official Report (Hansard) shall note votes cast by proxy, including the Member who cast the proxy vote.
27. The record of a proxy vote shall be treated as part of the digital record of the Commons.





## Item

### Municipal Year 2020/21 (Indicative)

**To:**

Civic Affairs Committee 9/10/19

**Report by:**

Democratic Services Manager, Gary Clift

Tel: 01223 - 457011 Email: gary.clift@cambridge.gov.uk

**Wards affected:**

None directly affected

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The report seeks comments and approval of the Council's meeting calendar for the Municipal Year 2020/21 (indicative), plus two other meeting related decisions carried over from Committee (meeting on 13 May 2019).

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To comment on the meetings calendar 2020/21 and, if required, to delegate final approval to the Chief Executive in consultation with Group Leaders by the end of October.
- 2.2 To confirm cancellation of the April 2020 Council Meeting.
- 2.3 Agree the start time for the Annual Meeting of Council 2020 and if altering from the current time, request the Council to amend Council Procedure Rules.

## 3. Background

- 3.1 This committee sets the forward programme of dates for the Council and committee meetings, with Group Leaders having seen the draft

calendar for any prior comment. The four Area Committees agree dates at respective meetings in February-April each year.

- 3.2 The calendar avoids main school holidays and political party conferences where possible. Liaison with external partners is done so the calendar seeks to avoid date clashes wherever possible. Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committees have been scheduled in accordance with usual practice however given the Council is in the process of preparing a joint draft Local Plan with South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) some meetings may need to be rescheduled to align with SCDC's meetings as part of this process.

### **Council meeting April 2020**

- 3.3 At its meeting on 13 May 2019 (minute 19/17/CIV), Committee was requested to consider removing the April 2020 Council meeting from the calendar as there was no programmed business for decision either from the Executive or a regulatory committee. The Committee was of the view that it was too early to cancel and the matter should be re-considered at its October meeting. Officers confirm that there is still no business programmed and now seek the Committee's view.

### **Annual Meeting of the Council 28 May 2020**

- 3.4 At the meeting on 13 May, the timing of the Annual Meeting starting late morning was raised. Traditionally the Annual Meeting has met from 11am, and this is stated in Council Procedure Rules. It could be put that it is unreasonable to expect those with work or care responsibilities to take a full day off, and so soon after the intensive electoral period.
- 3.5 In changing the time of this particular meeting, consideration should be given to allowing adequate time for the ceremonial element of electing a new Mayor (and for them to enjoy the occasion with guests at a scheduled break in proceedings) and to have adequate time to complete any decisions required by the Council. Looking at past meetings, officers see no obvious barriers to moving the meeting to another time later in the day.

## **4. OPTIONS**

The Committee can suggest alternatives to the calendar proposed.

## **5. Implications**

**(a) Financial Implications - none**

**(b) Staffing Implications - none**

**(c) Equality and Poverty Implications**

The calendar spreads the meetings across days of the week (Monday-Thursday) and hours of the day. There are more meetings in the late afternoon/evening to suit current councillor preferences. The 2020/21 calendar avoids meetings in school holidays following the committee's earlier decision (19/17/CIV).

**(d) Environmental Implications - none**

**(e) Procurement Implications - none**

**(f) Community Safety Implications - none**

## **5. Consultation and communication considerations**

Group Leaders, the Monitoring Officer and s151 Officer have been consulted on the proposed calendar.

## **6. Background papers**

GCP, Combined Authority and SCDC and County Council draft meetings calendars and published meeting dates.

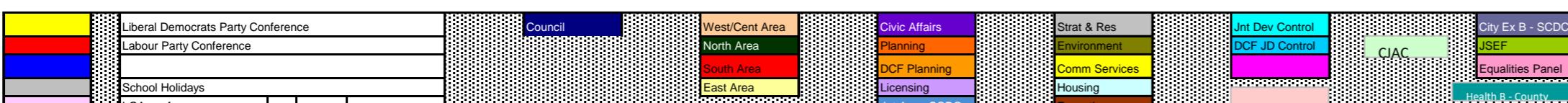
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# Cambridge City Council - Meeting Card - 2020/2021

2020												2021																										
Sat	May	Sun	Jun	Sat	July	Sun	Aug	Sat	Sep	Sun	Oct	Sat	Sep	Nov	Sun	Dec	Sat	Sun	Jan	Sat	Sun	Feb	Sat	Sun	Mar	Sat	Sun	Apr	Sat	Sun	May							
Mon		Tue					1		2			3	10am	Lic Sub			1		2	Mon	Tue	1	10am	Lic Sub	1	10am	Licensing B*			3	Bank holiday	Mon						
Tue							2		4			5	10am	Planning			1		3			2	5.00pm	JSEF			4			4		Tue						
Wed							3		1 10:00am Planning			5	10am	Planning			2		10am	Planning	Wed	3	10am	Planning			5			5		Wednesday						
Thur							4 GCP	Assembly	2 17:00pm Comm & Env			6	3.30pm	North Area			1	17:00pm	Comm & Env			3 7pm	East		Thur			4		Election		Thur						
Fri	1						5		7			8					4		2	17:00pm	Comm & Env			5			6			6			Fri					
Sat	2						6		8			9					3		7	5pm	Strat & Res			4			5			7			Sat					
Sun	3						7		9			10					4		8	10:00am	Licensing B			5			6			8			Sun					
Mon	3						8 10am	Lic Sub				9 5.00pm	Strat & Res				5		7	10am	Lic Sub	Mon		4	10:00am	Licensing B*			8 5pm			10		Mon				
Tue	5						9 10am	Planning				10 4.00pm	Equalities Panel				6		8	5:00pm	JSEF			7	10am	Planning			9 10am			11		Tue				
Wed	6						10					11 10am	DCF Planning**				7		9	10am	DCF Planning**			10			10 10am	DCF Planning**		12			12		Wednesday			
Thur	7	Elections					11 6.30pm	North				12 7pm	East				8		10	GCP	Board	Thur		7			11 7pm	WCAC		13			13		Thursday			
Fri	8	Bank Holiday					12		10			14					9		13	10am	Lic Sub			10			12			14			Fri					
Sat	9						13		11			15					10		14	12	Sat			13			15			Sat								
Sun	10						14		12			16					11		13	15	Sun			14			16			Sun								
Mon	11						15 10am	Lic Sub				17 10am	Lic Sub				14 10am	Lic Sub	16		14 10:00am	Licensing A*	Mon		11			15			17 10am	Lic Sub						
Tue	12						16					14 5.00pm	JSEF				15		17			15			16			18			Tue							
Wed	13						17 10.00am	DCF Planning**				15 10:30am	Jnt Dev Control				16 10.30am	Jnt Dev Control	14 10am		18 10:30am	Jnt Dev Control	Wed		13 10am			14 10:30am	Jnt Dev Control		19			Wednesday				
Thur	14						18 7.00pm	WCAC				16 6.00pm	Council				17 7pm	East	15		19 6.30pm	North		17			18 7pm	East Area		20			20		Thursday			
Fri	15						19		17			21					18		20	16	Sat			21			19			21			Fri					
Sat	16						20		18			22					19		21	17	Sun			20			22			Sat								
Sun	17						21		19			23					20		22	18				21			23			Sun								
Mon	18						22		20			10am	Lic Sub				24 10:00am	Licensing A*	21		19 10:00am	Licensing A*	Mon		18			22 10:00am	Full Licensing		19			24		Mon		
Tue	19						23 5:30pm	Housing				21					25		20	5:30pm	JSEF			23			24 5:30pm	P&T		25			25		Tue			
Wed	20						24 10:30am	Jnt Dev Control				22 5:30pm	Civic Affairs				23		24	10:30am	Jnt Dev Control		Wed	20 10:30am		24 10am	Planning		26			26		Wednesday				
Thur	21						25		23			27					24 5:30pm	Housing	22		26 6.00pm	Council		24			25 6pm			26 17:00pm	Comm & Env		27 11am			27		Thursday
Fri	22						26		24			28					25		27	23	Xmas			26			24			28			Fri					
Sat	23						27		25			29					26		28	24	Sat			27			25			Sat								
Sun	24						28		26			30					27		29	25	Sun			28			26			Sun								
Mon	25						Bank holiday		29			31					28		30	7pm	South			29			26			31		Bank Holiday	Mon					
Tue	26						30 5:30pm	P & T				28					29		30	5:30pm	P & T			30			27			28		Tue						
Wed	27						Comb Auth					29					30		31	6:00pm	Council			31			28 6:00pm	Civic Affairs		29			30		Wednesday			
Thur	28						11am	Council				30					29		31					28			29			30			Thur					
Fri	29											31												29									Fri					
Sat	30																							30									Sat					
Sun	31																							31									Sun					

\*\* Will take place in this week- before Planning and Licensing cycles commence to ensure new members have received training first.

## Key



\*Licensing Sub Committees meet when required to consider within 21 days applications or reviews of personal or premises licences \*\*Development Control Forums are held when a petition is received. The frequency varies by location.

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Item

## Flag flying protocol

**To:**

Civic Affairs Committee 09/10/19

**Report by:**

Democratic Services Manager, Gary Clift

Tel: 01223 - 457011 Email: gary.clift@cambridge.gov.uk

**Wards affected:**

None directly affected

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The report seeks the Committee's confirmation of the current flag flying protocol and is asked whether the Human Rights flag should be added to it.

### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To support flying the Human Rights flag on World Human Rights Day, 10 December and amend the flag flying protocol accordingly.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 The flags flown on the Guildhall building other than the city flag follow an agreed list, based on guidance for public buildings from central Government with local choice additions which have been requested by Group Leaders over time. The Council receives random requests to fly flags and it is helpful to have a clearly agreed protocol to guide decisions.

- 3.2 When it comes to flying the flag at half mast this is a matter for the Chief Executive, with guidance given from central government and if a local issue, in consultation when possible with the Leader of the Council. Most flag flying is in line with national guidance. Local additions are in bold text.

<b>Flag Flying (Union Flag unless specified)</b>	
<b>9 January</b>	Birthday of the Duchess of Cambridge
<b>20 January</b>	Birthday of the Countess of Wessex
<b>1 February</b>	<b>Rainbow Flag - For month of February except on days when Union flag is to be flown</b>
<b>6 February</b>	Her Majesty's Accession
<b>19 February</b>	Birthday of the Duke of York
<b>10 March</b>	Birthday of Earl of Wessex
<b>12 March</b>	Commonwealth Day
<b>21 April</b>	Birthday of Her Majesty the Queen
<b>23 April</b>	<b>St George's Flag</b>
<b>9 May</b>	<b>Europe Day (Europe Flag)</b>
<b>2 June</b>	Coronation Day
<b>10 June</b>	Birthday of the Duke of Edinburgh
<b>17 June</b>	Official celebration of Her Majesty's birthday
<b>21 June</b>	Birthday of the Duke of Cambridge
<b>23 June</b>	<b>Armed Forces Week - leave up all week to actual day 30 June</b>
<b>17 July</b>	Birthday of the Duchess of Cornwall
<b>15 August</b>	Birthday of the Princess Royal
<b>15 September</b>	Birthday of HRH Prince Harry
<b>21 October</b>	Trafalgar Day
<b>24 October</b>	<b>United Nations Day- (UN flag)</b>
<b>11 November</b>	Remembrance Day - Flags should be flown at full mast all day.
<b>14 November</b>	Birthday of the Prince of Wales
<b>20 November</b>	Her Majesty's Wedding Day

## **4. Implications**

- (a) Financial Implications - none**
- (b) Staffing Implications - none**
- (c) Equality and Poverty Implications - none**
- (d) Environmental Implications - none**
- (e) Procurement Implications - none**
- (f) Community Safety Implications - none**

The author and contact officer for queries on the report is Democratic Services Manager, Gary Clift 01223 457011, [gary.clift@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:gary.clift@cambridge.gov.uk)

Report file:

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