

COUNCIL18 July 2024
6.00 - 11.55 pm

Present: Councillors Baigent, Bennett, Bick, Bird, Blackburn-Horgan, Carling, Clough, Dryden, Flaubert, Gawthrope Wood, Gilderdale, Glasberg, Griffin, Hauk, Holloway, Hossain, Lee, Lokhmotova, Martinelli, McPherson, Moore, Nestor, Payne, Porrer, Pounds, Robertson, Smart, A. Smith, S. Smith, Swift, Thittala, Thornburrow, Todd-Jones, Tong and Young

Also present (virtually) Councillor: Davey

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**24/57/CNL Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held at 11am and 11.05am on 23 May 2024 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

24/58/CNL Mayor's announcements

Apologies were received from Councillors Ashton, Howard, Sheil and Wade. Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Smart.

It was noted that Councillor Davey was attending the meeting virtually by MS Teams, which meant he could participate in debates but could not vote on any of the agenda items.

Mayor's Announcements

Congratulations were given to Councillor Carling following his election as MP for North West Cambridgeshire. The Mayor also wished to note the hard work undertaken by Councillor Tong and Councillor Payne with their election campaigns.

The Mayor reiterated the call for an immediate ceasefire in the Middle East and a return of the hostages. He called on leaders across the world to champion peace in this region to save lives and put an end to the bloodshed and negotiate with all parties to come to an amicable settlement of the issue and urged the international leadership to take the lead to resolve the conflict.

The Mayor had attended a number of events across the city which included the Mott Sermon and the Midsummer Fair. Members were reminded that the Harvest Festival would be taking place on the 6 of October 2024.

The Mayor also exercised his discretion to move item 6a – Recommendation from the Employment (Senior Officer) Committee to the end of the agenda as there was the potential for the item to be considered in exempt session.

24/59/CNL Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor Bennett	24/69/CNL	Personal: Was a landlord.
Councillor Glasberg	24/69/CNL	Personal: Had a property which is rented.
Councillor Baigent	All	Personal: Member of Cambridge Cycling Campaign.
Councillor Tong	All	Personal: Member of Cambridge Cycling Campaign.
Councillor S. Smith	24/69/CNL	Personal: Had an interest in a rented property.
Councillor Hossain	24/69/CNL	Personal: Was a landlord with a property outside the city council boundary.
Councillor Bick	24/69/CNL	Personal: Had an interest in a rented property.
Councillor A.Smith	All	Personal: Member of Cambridge Cycling Campaign.
Councillor Glasberg	All	Personal: Member of Cambridge Cycling Campaign.

24/60/CNL Public questions time

Members of the public asked a number of questions, as set out below.

Question 1

Question on behalf of council tax payers and leaseholders of Parkside Place Cambridge for the meeting of Cambridge City Council in the

Council Chamber, The Guildhall Cambridge on Thursday 18th July 2024 at 6pm.**Background**

Parkside Place is an estate developed in 2012/2013 in the centre of Cambridge by Grosvenor Developments Ltd, a company that is part of Grosvenor Estates, the family company of the Duke of Westminster. The development is a mixed development comprising private apartments, Affordable Housing Units (AFUs) and **Cambridge Fire Station**. In gaining planning consent for the development, Grosvenor entered into a S106 agreement with Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and The Fire Authority. Under this agreement Grosvenor were obliged to ensure that the service charges of the AFUs did not increase annually by a figure in excess of retail price index (RPI).

Grosvenor, by seemingly calculated alteration of the final leases entered into with the residential leaseholders and the Fire Authority, (without any transparency or prior agreement), placed the obligation to pay any excess charge over RPI for the AFUs on the residential leaseholders and the Fire Authority.

To date the excess service charges for the AFUs amounts to over £320,000 of which in excess of £50,000 has been borne by the Fire Authority and therefore charged to council tax payers under the precept. Residential leaseholders are taking legal action against Grosvenor - quite clearly a civil matter. The question below is raised by council tax payers in relation to the burden of additional costs on the Fire Authority.

The Question

- a) Does the council feel it appropriate for council tax payers to bear part of the costs of a developer's obligation under a S106 agreement. (£50,000 to date and increasing annually)**
- b) If it is felt that this is inappropriate behaviour by the developer, will the council make representations to Grosvenor on behalf of council tax payers.**
- c) Should Grosvenor feel that there is no obligation to recompense the Fire Authority and therefore council tax payers, will the council acknowledge that this behaviour should be taken into account in any**

future planning application by Grosvenor Estates or their subsidiary companies.

Connected questions were placed before the Fire Authority at their meeting on June 20th 2024 at Shire Hall. The Chief Fire Officer has indicated that legal advice is being taken on their position.

The Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure responded on behalf of the Leader:

- i. The council notes that the questions relate to the burden of additional costs on the Fire Authority and that the Chief Fire Officer in a meeting on 20 June 2024 indicated they may be seeking legal advice on their position.
- ii. The Section 106 agreement offered some protection to occupiers of affordable dwellings (capped to the retail price index 'RPI') but did not offer any protection to third parties and it was not the place of a planning obligation to offer such protection.
- iii. The service charge to non-affordable leaseholders was a civil legal dispute and was not controlled through the planning permission. It was not for the Local Planning Authority to intervene in this matter notwithstanding how the charge may have been derived.
- iv. There is no identifiable planning breach.
- v. Had been contacted on numerous occasions by groups of residents regarding leaseholders and service charges. Noted the new Government had included a Draft Leasehold and Commonhold Reform Bill. Hoped the injustice of leasehold estates would end soon.

Supplementary question:

- i. Agreed the developer had satisfied the terms of the Section 106 Agreement in that they had satisfied the issue of making certain that the affordable housing units did not pay service charges that went up in excess of the RPI.
- ii. However, the obligation had been moved to other parties; one being the leaseholders of Parkside Place, which was a civil issue. Legal issues were on-going with the developer regarding this.
- iii. The Fire Authority was the other party that the liability had been moved to and they had incurred £50,000 of additional costs, which was passed onto council taxpayers under the precept.

- iv. Whilst they accepted that the developer had not breached the terms of the Section 106 Agreement, they had transferred their obligation to other parties.

The Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure responded:

- i. Noted the comments which had been made by the public speaker. The Leader would note the comments. It may be necessary to speak with the Fire Authority to get further information and to see whether the Council is able to respond more comprehensively.

Question 2

The Federation of Cambridge Residents Associations would like to ask the following question at the Full Council meeting, 18 July.

Question

The Federation of Cambridge Residents Associations (FeCRA) shares the concerns of experts that Cambridge will soon run out of water

The East of England is low-lying, and one of the driest places in the UK. Water sources are under pressure meaning people, plants and animals are competing for the same precious resources. With climate change, drought is set to become more common amid hotter, drier summers, and intense rainfall events more frequent.

Many residents are very concerned about this and about the impact on the Cam chalk streams and the wildlife that depends on them.

Several solutions have been put forward including new reservoirs, water transfer pipelines and stringent water efficiency measures but these steps are urgently needed in any case to ensure there will be enough water for existing users and the developments that already have planning permission.

Cambridge's MP Daniel Zeichner Minister of State at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is on public record as saying that growth in this region can't wait for reservoirs but the Environment Agency has objected to developments such as Bourn and Darwin Green on the grounds that they are not sustainable because there is not enough water.

Our petition to the Environment Agency supports these objections and asks that they continue to protect the environment by opposing major developments in this region until there is clear evidence that there is enough water to support them.

It has now been signed by almost 1000 residents - will the Council back the petition and ensure sufficient water can be provided **before** planning approval is given to further large-scale developments?

<https://www.change.org/p/save-our-chalk-streams-petition-to-the-environment-agency>

Chair, FeCRA

www.fecra.org.uk

www.facebook.com/CambridgeRAs

www.twitter.com/fecra2

The Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure responded:

- i. The Council is concerned about the water environment, and the effects of climate change. There had been record breaking hot summers and long periods of heavy sustained rainfall. The Council had been pressing the Government, water companies and other agencies to take action since issues regarding water supply came to light.
- ii. A level of assurance had been requested with regards to determinations of planning applications. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the Development or Local Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It is the Council's job to weigh up a range of issues

- and the merits of each application, giving appropriate weight to any Environment Agency objection alongside other factors.
- iii. Each planning application must be considered on its merits. It would not be appropriate or consistent with the requirements of the planning process to adopt a single position for all proposed development in the city.
 - iv. The Council would press for the resolution of water needs as a priority and to keep residents and councillors informed of any progress.

Supplementary Question:

- i. Concerns about water had been raised with councillors since 2014/15.
- ii. The proposed new Fen Reservoir would not provide water to supercharge Greater Cambridge. Cambridge Water had said the proposed new reservoir would provide only half the water supply needed based on building 46,000 new homes by 2050 across the whole area (figures taken from the current draft Water Resources Management Plan).
- iii. Residents had been informed that the Director of Planning had approved plans for the West Cambridge site. Asked on what grounds the Director had done so. The Director had cited a significant amount of activity associated with water issues in Greater Cambridge last year and said that legal advice had been taken.
- iv. Questioned where the evidence was to back the Director's decision.

The Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure responded:

- i. The City Council was involved in the refusal of two planning applications based on the Environment Agency's objections regarding water. One planning application was the Brookgate development at North Cambridge Station and the other was the Darwin Green planning application. Both decisions were appealed and were subsequently determined by the Secretary of State. The appeal decision and the Secretary of State's decision about giving consent to those applications became a material consideration. The Officer's recommendation had been approved by Committee. There were outstanding Section 106 Agreement issues which took some time. Based on the Secretary of

State and appeal decisions for the above referenced applications, was the reason why the application was processed.

Question 3

We are residents of Scholars Court, a block of council flats that rely on communal heating and hot water provided by Switch2. Since the construction of these flats, Switch2 has been our sole provider. Recently, Switch2 has notified us of an immediate doubling of their charges, which is placing significant financial strain on many vulnerable tenants.

Could the City Council review this situation and consider finding a more affordable alternative provider for our communal heating and hot water services?

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.

The Executive Councillor for Housing responded:

- i. Scholars Court is a block of flats that the Council leases and is managed by Carter Jonas. The Council are not involved in setting the charges for the communal heating system.
- ii. Similar increases in charges were seen in other blocks of flats across the city with communal heating last year and also saw energy costs increase significantly for communal heating and lighting across the council's blocks of flat
- iii. The Housing Team would make contact with Carter Jonas to find out more about the increase and why the charges were increasing now and request that this is communicated with all residents.
- iv. If anyone experiences financial hardship, the council offered financial inclusion support to tenants, and this could be accessed via their Housing Officer.

Question 4

For how much longer will the Council fail to deliver on its promise to provide this marginal, but very real, community with a safe, legal place to stop?

Why do I have to continue to ask the same question and receive the same irrelevant answer from a Council, which, like the election result, has had an overall Labour majority for several years, yet has failed to come up with a tiny plot of ground – the size of a football pitch – for a transit site? This is much more than an oversight. It is a blatant example of discrimination towards a protected ethnic minority, clearly expressed in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010¹. Provisions of the Police Act 2022 further victimised this community but resulted, on the 14/5/24, with an issuance by the High Court of a declaration of incompatibility finding that provisions in the Police Act unlawfully discriminate against Gypsies and Travellers.² The decision was based on the lack of authorised transit site provision on which they could camp lawfully. The Council have protested that they await the second of two GTANAs, which have taken over 4 years and counting to produce and are, in any event, totally immaterial to the issue of transit sites. On the same day as I was raising this question at the May full council meeting, Council enforcement officers were threatening Travellers with eviction notices at an unauthorised encampment at Arbury Town Park³. The Council state they do needs assessments, while ignoring the pre-eminent ‘need’ of this community — their deep-seated cultural way of life. They travel and leave a very light footprint on the landscape, while holding on to their abiding belief in their right to roam. They may have ‘need’ of social support when they stop, but to focus on this is a racist endeavour. Like all other citizens, they have a human right to a home or place to stop, just as the Council have a duty to advance equality of opportunity; foster good relations and remove and minimise disadvantages.

For how much longer will the Council fail to deliver on its promise to provide this marginal, but very real, community with a safe, legal transit site?

Notes

1 Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 stated 14 years ago that public bodies should have regard to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; foster good relations; to remove and minimise disadvantages suffered by those due to their protected characteristics; and to encourage them to participate in public life.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/>

2 <https://www.judiciary.uk/judgments/smith-v-secretary-of-state-for-the-home-department/>

3 [Travellers asked to leave 'unauthorised encampment' at Cambridge park](#)

The Deputy Leader responded on behalf of the Executive Councillor for Communities:

- i. It was unfair to say that the Executive Councillor for Communities and the Council hadn't been working on this issue or taking it seriously.
- ii. If the answer was to simply find a plot of land, this opportunity would have already been taken up. Multiple areas had been considered for temporary sites, but these had not been found to be suitable.
- iii. It was not just a City Council issue and needed to work with partners South Cambridgeshire District Council and the County Council who were essential in the process.
- iv. The Executive Councillor for Communities was now part of the GRT Steering Group which had previously been set up by Councillor Healy. Had been pushing for details of the GTANA report including costings, remit, scope and details of its commission.
- v. City Council Officer capacity was being reviewed to ensure they could give as much help as possible.
- vi. The Executive Councillor had communicated with officers that this issue was urgent.
- vii. Noted that this was also a planning issue and the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure had been pushing for the new draft Local Plan to identify sites before the Local Plan went out for consultation in 2025.
- viii. The July Strategic Steering Group was unfortunately unable to meet and would need to be rescheduled for the autumn. The Group would look at the Needs Assessment.
- ix. It was important that community groups and stakeholders were able to input into the next steps regarding the Needs Assessment. The GRT Liaison Officer had started work on this and believed the public speaker had been approached about this.

Supplementary question:

- i. Noted that it was not simply about finding a plot of land, it was also about attitudes towards the GRT community. Not having stopping places / transit sites severely affected the GRT community.
- ii. Noted that Cambridge City had never had traveller sites but that sites existed on the borders of the city. People had sought to obtain planning permission for sites where they reside for several years without success.
- iii. Asked for an explanation why sites had been found to be unsuitable.
- iv. Had been waiting for a GTANA for 4 years. Noted the current GTANA was the second GTANA and was irrelevant to the issue of transit site provision. Transit sites were the ones which caused problems with community relations.
- v. Felt the Council was evading the issue.

The Deputy Leader advised that the Executive Councillor for Communities would be better placed to respond to the issues raised and the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure could also liaise with the public speaker outside of the meeting.

Question 5

Motion 8e calls for the city council:

"To adopt the Vision statement which positions the Council as a place maker, convenor and community facilitator as well as playing a core role in providing public services"

With the above in mind:

What discussions will the council have with partner organisations to organise, co-ordinate, and sequence consultation events for future proposals that affect the future of our city and beyond, and what actions could the council take including but not limited to:

- A shared single meetings/consultations calendar for public sector organisations (such as local councils which can scrape calendar data)
- Annual 'societies fairs' similar to the students unions freshers fairs for societies

- civic education for adults mindful of some of the questions that were put to the general election candidates that indicated a collective lack of knowledge on how our city functions and malfunctions
- Developer-funded events that bring together multiple proposals for residents to look at in the round rather than piecemeal and at short notice as at present.

The Deputy Leader responded:

- i. Thanked the public speaker for all they did to share knowledge about local democracy / governance and the rich history of Cambridge.
- ii. Agreed consultation with residents was important.
- iii. Acknowledged the complex structure of local government in Cambridgeshire.
- iv. Had attended a Cambridge BID board meeting that day, which had been looking at freight and deliveries coming into and out of Cambridge and also the Civic Quarter proposals. Had not thought that these issues would overlap however when the Board was discussing these issues a lot of interesting points were raised about both issues.
- v. Wanted to highlight the work of Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service, who coordinated the online volunteering platform in the city; and who hosted events for charities.
- vi. Referred to a report on the Council agenda regarding the future of Area Committees. Which aimed to re-centre resident engagement with the democratic process.
- vii. It was important to hear what work would help to facilitate community dialogue. Some things were already taking place and could not commit to the actions suggested by the public speaker without considering funding, officer time and capacity etc.

Supplementary question:

- i. Was one of the interviewees for the work being done looking at Area Committees. Commented that one of the issues with Area Committees was the inability to get decision makers responsible for commissioning GPs and dentists to meet and speak with residents about the shortages.
- ii. Had filmed 6 different hustings across Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire for the general election and it was evident from the questions put forward by members of the public that there was a lack of

knowledge about how the city functions / malfunctions ie: Daniel Zeichner was asked why he had not sorted out potholes.

- iii. Urged councillors to lobby the Mayor of the Combined Authority to ask what they could do to provide learning opportunities for democracy in civic education.
- iv. Referred to motion 8e on the agenda and hoped that by 2050 there would be a new university swimming pool and a new large concert hall venue.

The Deputy Leader responded:

- i. Was pleased to hear that the public speaker had been involved in the Area Committee review work.
- ii. Referred to a consultation currently taking place regarding the future of Local Government, which was open until 3 September 2024. [Project: Future of local government for Cambridge | Cambridge City Council](#)

Question 6

Developers are describing the lakes adjacent to Snakey Path and Cherry Hinton Brook as 'just amazing' but proposals for their opening as an urban country park, as part of the Mission Street science centre planning application mean they will soon become very ordinary. The lakes are a designated City Wildlife Site, home to chalk grassland wildflowers, orchids and numerous birds. But the plans include lakeside paving, unregulated access throughout much of the area, and three new access points via the Tins, a pedestrian and cycle path currently beset by many problems. Somewhat naively, the developers consider that the annual hot weather anti-social behaviour will be managed by 'passive surveillance'. Would Councillors consider delaying decisions about this component of the application until adequate consultation has been held with local residents and environmental groups, workable solutions developed for public access and health and safety issues, and mechanisms found to safeguard the important biodiversity of the area?

The Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure responded:

- i. The planning application included all three land components identified in Policy 16 of the Local Plan (including an Urban Country Park) and

- therefore any recommendation / decision to be made will be on the basis of compliance with the allocation.
- ii. The Applicant had recently submitted a Framework Management Plan (FMP) for the park, and this could be viewed on the Council's website. Neighbour notification letters had recently been issued by officers drawing attention to the FMP (amongst other amendments) and comments are invited.
 - iii. The purpose of the FMP is to set out broadly how ecological and access enhancement to both Parcels B and C was to be achieved and managed; the financial management arrangements; and the governance and decision-making structures to ensure the overall propositions remain sustainable into the longer term.
 - iv. The future governance/decision making structures would accommodate opportunities for a wide variety of stakeholders (including local interest groups) to become involved in the future delivery of the urban country park.
 - v. Any decision to delay the application would need to be made by the Case Officer. When an application is considered by the Planning Committee deferment could be considered if more information was required.

Supplementary question:

- i. Commented that their question didn't refer to the Finance and Management Plan (FMP) although residents were aware of it.
- ii. Noted that the consultation which had been announced was running during the summer holidays and was open until 15 August. This was inappropriate as many residents wouldn't receive their notification about this until they returned from holiday.
- iii. The FMP was based on the current proposals for the three parcels. Had concerns with parcels B and C. Did not think these were in line with the Local Plan.
- iv. Parcels B and C represented an opportunity for new open space and areas for biodiversity protection. The current proposals would lead to a loss of biodiversity.
- v. The City Wildlife Ecologist and other wildlife experts had pointed out the conflict between the proposals for recreation in parcel C and the closure of parcel B to recreation which was contrary to what was in the Local Plan. This was why a delay had been requested.

The Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure responded:

- i. Would raise concerns regarding the consultation dates with officers.

- ii. Suggested that comments on the planning application should be submitted through the Planning Portal.

24/61/CNL To consider the recommendations of the Executive for adoption

24/62/CNL Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Outturn Report 2023/24 (Executive Councillor for Housing)

Resolved (by 22 votes to 0 with 14 abstentions) to:

- i. Approve carry forward requests of £12,507,000 in HRA and General Fund Housing capital budgets and associated resources from 2023/24 into 2024/25 and beyond to fund re-phased net capital spending, as detailed in Appendix D and the associated notes to the appendix in the officer's report.
- ii. Approve a revised capital financing structure for 2023/24, utilising £8 million of capital reserves set-aside for either debt redemption or re-investment, in place of borrowing and direct revenue financing of capital. This recognises the current high interest rates for borrowing and the need to maintain a prudent level of revenue reserves following the requirement to allow for payment of rent refunds arising from the rent regulation error.

24/63/CNL Annual Treasury Management Outturn Report 2023/24 (Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources)

Resolved (unanimously) to:

- i. Approve the report, including Council's actual Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2023/24.

24/64/CNL 2023/24 General Fund Revenue and Capital Outturn, Carry Forwards and Significant Variances (Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources)

Resolved (by 21 votes to 0 with 14 abstentions) to:

- i. Approve carry forward requests totalling £2,959,740 of revenue funding from 2023/24 to 2024/25, as detailed in Appendix C of the Officer's report. These are carry forward requests in excess of £50k. Requests up

to and including £50k which total £153,720 are approved via delegated authority to the Chief Financial Officer.

- ii. Approve carry forward requests of £19,855,000 of capital resources from 2023/24 to 2024/25 to fund rephased net capital spending, as detailed in Appendix D of the Officer's report.

24/65/CNL To consider the recommendations of Committees for adoption

24/66/CNL Employment (Senior Officer) Committee - Potential Termination Costs of Chief Executive's Office & Corporate Group Design

Resolved (unanimously) to:

- i. Approve termination costs over £100k arising from the Chief Executive's Office and Corporate Group Design due to contractual severance.

6b Civic Affairs Committee - Update on alternative options to Area Committees Resolved (by 25 votes to 0 with 10 abstentions):

- i. That Area Committees be paused for the remainder of the municipal year, 2024/25, while pilot work on alternatives continue and while more detailed proposals are developed for implementation from the start of the municipal year 2025/26.

24/67/CNL To deal with oral questions

Question 1

Councillor Porrer to Executive Councillor for Community Safety, Homelessness and Wellbeing.

Could the Executive Councillor please update council on how noisy and antisocial driving is being dealt with throughout the city?

The Executive Councillor for Community Safety, Homelessness and Wellbeing responded:

- i. The Police continued to enforce against anti-social and nuisance driving in the city through 'Operation Staple'.
- ii. Encouraged residents to report concerns to the Police. [Report antisocial behaviour | Cambridgeshire Constabulary \(cambs.police.uk\)](#).
- iii. The Police coordinate 'Community Speedwatch', which enabled residents to let the Police know about areas where there were concerns

- about speeding. [Community Speed Watch | Cambridgeshire Constabulary \(cambs.police.uk\)](https://www.cambs.police.uk)
- iv. Referred to the Vision Zero Partnership which was exploring future road safety days of action. [Road Safety Partnership \(cprsp.co.uk\)](https://www.cprsp.co.uk)

Question 2

Councillor Dryden to Executive Councillor for Climate Action and Environment.

How well are the bin collection rounds going following the implementation of the 4-day week trial?

The Executive Councillor for Climate Action and Environment responded:

- i. The 4-day week waste trial continued to progress well. Operations crews had readily adjusted to the new arrangements.
- ii. Waste rounds were being completed on time and recruitment and retention of staff was improving. Teams were familiar with their collection rounds and missed bin collection rates had fallen since the introduction of the 4-day week.
- iii. The 4-day week trial was introduced at the same time that the new waste collection routes were introduced following the round optimisation project. Despite this major change across the city, successful collection rates for quarter 4 were 99.85%.
- iv. A high-quality service was continuing to be provided for residents and there was a positive impact on waste crews for their health and wellbeing.

Question 3

Councillor Sheil to Executive Councillor for Community Safety, Homelessness and Wellbeing.

Could the Executive Councillor for Community Safety, Homelessness and Wellbeing update us on what is being done to support women experiencing homelessness in Cambridge?

The Executive Councillor for Community Safety, Homelessness and Wellbeing responded:

- i. Grant funding was provided to a range of organisations including:
 - a. the Cambridge Women's Resources Centre to fund a Support Worker who provided homelessness prevention advice to women.
 - b. Cambridge Women's Aid to provide a specialist open access community support service for women affected by domestic abuse; and

- c. the CHS Group funding their young parent project.
- ii. The Council had achieved Domestic Alliance Accreditation meaning the Council had demonstrated compliance with good practice standards when responding to homelessness enquiries from women when they disclosed domestic abuse.
- iii. Noted that female rough sleepers may have different needs to male rough sleepers. As part of the Council's Rough Sleepers Plan which had to be submitted to Central Government as part of funding arrangements, the Council specifically aimed to reduce the number of female rough sleepers. This had been challenging over the past year and the Council was putting in place measures to try and reduce the number of female rough sleepers.
- iv. A census would be undertaken in the autumn with [Change Grow Live Cambridge - Drug & Alcohol Service Cambridgeshire | Change Grow Live](#). It was hoped that the data obtained from the census would assist the Council in applying for further funding from Central Government.
- v. The Council also worked with 'It Takes a City' and had part funded 'the Haven' which provided a safe space for women who were homeless or vulnerably housed.

Question 4

Councillor Todd-Jones to Leader of the Council.

Given the gravity of the previous government's proposals set out in the 'Case for Cambridge', how will the Leader be engaging in discussions on this with the new Labour government?

The Leader responded:

- i. Discussions with the new Labour Government would start afresh.
- ii. Post election, needed to reflect upon the important role the Combined Authority would have. Discussions had started between the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Combined Authority and how Central Government could be influenced regarding the 'Case for Cambridge'.
- iii. Had met with Peter Freeman the day before, to discuss where Homes England fitted. Referred to announcements which had been made that day by Peter Freeman regarding Northstowe.
- iv. Officers were working closely with Treasury Civil Servants and had met with them earlier in the week. Cambridge would remain a significant part of national regeneration taking into consideration its contribution to economic wealth across the country.

- v. Growth wasn't just about housing and included skills, jobs, transport, infrastructure and it was vital these points were made clear to the new Government.

Question 5

Councillor Flaubert to Executive Councillor for Housing.

Does the Exec Cllr believe that its letting policy and Home Link application system is fit for purpose?

The Executive Councillor for Housing responded:

- i. Homelink is a partnership of six local authority areas with a Combined Lettings Policy and Choice-Based Letting System.
- ii. The Lettings Policy is transparent about giving reasonable preference for the levels of housing need in line with legislation. They are delivered under bandings based on priorities. The bandings were agreed as part of the partnership and include four levels of housing need a) – d).
- iii. There was also significant flexibility within the Policy to allow for discretion around priority in exceptional cases.
- iv. The partnership regularly reviewed the Policy to ensure that it remained fit for purpose and considered any changes in legislation.
- v. The Homelink application system remained fit for purpose; the cost of the system and its administration was shared across the partnership. Feedback from customers and partners remain positive and it provided transparency about how priorities are allocated.

Question 6

Councillor Divkovic to Executive Councillor for Housing.

Could the Executive Councillor for Housing give us an update on our tenant audits?

The Executive Councillor for Housing responded:

- i. Tenancy audits had been conducted since April 2022.
- ii. Up to the end of June 2024, 1485, visits had been undertaken which was 21% of the Council's housing stock.
- iii. Was looking at how the programme could be escalated so it did not take 10 years to complete.
- iv. Issues identified from the tenancy audits included:
 - a. 19% of tenants accepting assistance to move to more suitable accommodation for their needs.

- b. 28% of tenants being provided with support and identifying domestic abuse at 64 visits, which enabled officers to offer support and advice and make safeguarding referrals.
- c. Four properties had been identified as being abandoned.
- d. Nine properties were identified as being sublet.
- e. 60% of all audits undertaken had highlighted issues to do with property condition including unreported repairs in 33% of the audited properties.
- f. 10% had unauthorised adaptations.
- g. 7% had damp and mould.

Question 7

Councillor Bennett to Leader of the Council.

Please can the Leader explain what his plans are to improve the sustainability and quality of Cambridge tourism given the failure of the tourist tax vote?

The Deputy Leader responded:

- i. Wanted to acknowledge all the work which had gone into drafting up the proposals for the accommodation bid ('A Bid').
- ii. Visit England had described it as a well-developed proposal, and it had support from some businesses the City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. It came as a surprise that the proposal would not be taken forward.
- iii. The 'A Bid' funded by a visitor levy offered the opportunity for a step change in investment offering up to £9million investment over 5 years in Cambridge for Cambridge visitors economy.
- iv. Acknowledged that it was never going to be the only solution.
- v. Next steps would be discussed at the next Cambridge Bid Board meeting.
- vi. The City Council would continue to work closely with Cambridge Bid and Visit Cambridge Partners (Kings College and Curating Cambridge) to improve the visitor experience, and create more value from tourism and improve sustainability.
- vii. Would continue to develop the Destination Management Plan for Cambridge, which was being worked on with Visit Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire District Council.
- viii. Discussions would take place with Visit England and the Combined Authority around establishing a local visitor economy partnership.

Question 8

Councillor Clough to Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services.

While supportive in principle of the Voi trials there are a number of concerns about the parking arrangements for the bikes and scooters. In some places, such as the Grantchester St/Driftway junction they are blocking the footpath and are a hazard for pedestrians and cyclists.

They appeared without notice overnight so my questions is:

Who decided these designated drop/off and collect locations were suitable, why was there no consultation with local councillors and residents and what action will be taken to remove them urgently from dangerous locations?

The Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure responded:

- i. Noted that most councillors had been contacted by residents and businesses about inconsiderately parked e-scooters / bikes.
- ii. Found that Voi responded quickly when notified about concerns.
- iii. Was happy to liaise with Senior Managers at Voi or suggested liaising with Councillor Anna Smith who could raise the issue at the Combined Authority.
- iv. Residents had contacted her asking for e-scooters to be located closer to where they lived; these requests had been passed onto Voi who had responded positively.
- v. Local Voi operatives identified places around the city which might be suitable for a number of e-scooters / bikes depending on how much space there was. The Voi City Success Manager for Cambridge regularly met with city and county council representatives to check the locations and how many e-scooters / bikes were proposed. Proximity to junctions/ accesses/ highway features was considered. Officers would refuse parking if it was likely to cause problems with sustainability. In some instances, officers suggested trialling a smaller number of e-scooters / bikes and monitoring feedback. Voi was usually quick to remove e-scooters / bikes when requested.
- vi. Believed the location referred to a trial parking spot. Officers were aware of the issues and had asked for the parking spot to be removed completely.

A full list of oral questions including those not asked during the meeting can be found in the Information Pack, which is published on the meeting webpage. [Agenda for Council on Thursday, 18th July, 2024, 6.00 pm - Cambridge Council](#)

24/68/CNL To consider the following notices of motion, notice of which has been given by:

24/69/CNL Councillor Tong - Hope for private renters

Councillor Tong proposed and Councillor Bennett seconded the following motion:

Background to motion

It is now nearly 5 years since the last government made a commitment to reform the private rental market and protect people from “no fault” evictions.

These evictions were introduced by s21 Housing Act 1988. They have created a climate of fear for private renters, which can inhibit them from asking for much needed repairs.

After much delay a Renters (Reform) Bill 2024 was drafted which would have reduced the scope of “no fault” evictions, but was halted by the announcement of the July 4 2024 General Election.

Since the announcement of the proposed reform, rates of s21 “no fault” evictions have risen sharply, with 900 s21 “no fault” evictions per week recorded in the UK. The true figure is likely to be higher because not all these evictions are recorded.

Active Motion

This Council notes:

According to the 2021 Census, 31% of Cambridge households were in private rental accommodation. The welfare of these residents is of great importance to our city.

When residents are made homeless, there can also be an obligation placed on the council (“homelessness duty”) A rise in private tenants made homeless is likely to increase the strain on council resources.

Re-introduction of the Renters (Reform) Bill to Parliament (preferably with the 81 amendments tabled by the then opposition parties) would protect private renters from unfair treatment and improve their quality of life.

Any delay in re-introducing this bill or a similar one leaves tenants exposed to s21 eviction.

It is accordingly important that this bill (or a similar bill) is made law at the earliest possible date.

The Council therefore resolves to write to the Rt Hon Angela Rayner, copying in our local MPs asking her to bring forward a new renters reform bill at the earliest possible date.

(At the time of drafting this motion, the Council is unaware of whether such a proposal will be included in the King's Speech on 17 July 2024 and shall adjust the letter accordingly.)

The Council also proposes to require its private rentals team to consider whether support for private tenants can be increased in the short term before any increase in legal protection and bring a report to the appropriate council committee on its proposals in Autumn 2024.

The Council wishes particularly to require officers to report on whether it would be practical to introduce a local version of the measures introduced by the Mayor of London, including online resources Rogue Landlord and Agent Checker, Property Licence Checker and Report a Rogue Landlord tool.

Useful Links (not part of active motion)

We have included some background papers that we found useful.

<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/improving-private-rented-sector/reforming-private-renting-london>

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10004/>

<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/improving-private-rented-sector/advice-renters>

We have also drawn upon the 2021 Census figures and the council's own Housing Facts.

Councillor Holloway proposed and Councillor Bird seconded the following amendment to motion (deleted text ~~struck through~~ and additional text underlined):

Background to motion

It is now nearly 5 years since the last government made a commitment to reform the private rental market and protect people from “no fault” evictions.

These evictions were introduced by s21 Housing Act 1988. They have created a climate of fear for private renters, which can inhibit them from asking for much needed repairs.

After much delay a Renters (Reform) Bill 2024 was drafted which would have reduced the scope of “no fault” evictions, but was halted by the announcement of the July 4 2024 General Election.

Since the announcement of the proposed reform, rates of s21 “no fault” evictions have risen sharply, with 900 s21 “no fault” evictions per week recorded in the UK. The true figure is likely to be higher because not all these evictions are recorded.

Active Motion

This Council notes:

According to the 2021 Census, 31% of Cambridge households were in private rental accommodation. The welfare of these residents is of great importance to our city.

In October 2022, the Council passed a motion (<https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=29659>) resolving to, among other things, set up a private renters’ forum, to re-consider the need for a Selective Landlord Licensing Scheme, and to ensure that all HMOs in the city are inspected, improved if needed, and licensed. The Council is taking a proactive approach to private tenant engagement, with a presence in supermarkets and at events such as ARU Property Fair and the Big Lunch, as well as monthly drop-in sessions.

The Council has an HMO licensing scheme, and rogue landlords can be reported to the Council.

When residents are made homeless, there can also be an obligation placed on the council (“homelessness duty”). A rise in private tenants made homeless is likely to increase the strain on council resources.

Re-introduction of the Renters (Reform) Bill to Parliament (~~preferably with the 81 amendments tabled by the then opposition parties~~) or a similar bill would protect private renters from unfair treatment and improve their quality of life.

Any delay in re-introducing this bill or a similar one leaves tenants exposed to s21 eviction.

It is accordingly important that this bill (or a similar bill) is made law at the earliest possible date.

~~The Council therefore resolves to write to the Rt Hon Angela Rayner, copying in our local MPs asking her to bring forward a new renters reform bill at the earliest possible date.~~

The Labour Party's 2024 manifesto states: 'We will immediately abolish Section 21 'no fault' evictions, prevent private renters being exploited and discriminated against, empower them to challenge unreasonable rent increases, and take steps to decisively raise standards, including extending 'Awaab's Law' to the private sector.' (<https://labour.org.uk/change/break-down-barriers-to-opportunity/>)

This Council resolves:

To welcome the Labour Party's commitment to immediately abolishing Section 21 evictions and to introducing other measures to support private renters, including setting up a National Landlords Register.

To keep under review how the Council can use and work within the framework of any new national legislation to further support private renters.

~~(At the time of drafting this motion, the Council is unaware of whether such a proposal will be included in the King's Speech on 17 July 2024 and shall adjust the letter accordingly.)~~

~~The Council also proposes to require its private rentals team to consider whether support for private tenants can be increased in the short term before any increase in legal protection and bring a report to the appropriate council committee on its proposals in Autumn 2024.~~

~~The Council wishes particularly to require officers to report on whether it would be practical to introduce a local version of the measures introduced by~~

~~the Mayor of London, including online resources Rogue Landlord and Agent Checker, Property Licence Checker and Report a Rogue Landlord tool.~~

Useful Links (not part of active motion)

We have included some background papers that we found useful.

<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/improving-private-rented-sector/reforming-private-renting-london>

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10004/>

<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/improving-private-rented-sector/advice-renters>

We have also drawn upon the 2021 Census figures and the council's own Housing Facts.

The amendment was carried by 20 votes in favour to 5 against and 10 abstentions.

Resolved (unanimously) that:

Background to motion

It is now nearly 5 years since the last government made a commitment to reform the private rental market and protect people from “no fault” evictions.

These evictions were introduced by s21 Housing Act 1988. They have created a climate of fear for private renters, which can inhibit them from asking for much needed repairs.

After much delay a Renters (Reform) Bill 2024 was drafted which would have reduced the scope of “no fault” evictions, but was halted by the announcement of the July 4 2024 General Election.

Since the announcement of the proposed reform, rates of s21 “no fault” evictions have risen sharply, with 900 s21 “no fault” evictions per week recorded in the UK. The true figure is likely to be higher because not all these evictions are recorded.

Active Motion

This Council notes:

According to the 2021 Census, 31% of Cambridge households were in private rental accommodation. The welfare of these residents is of great importance to our city.

In October 2022, the Council passed a motion (<https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=29659>) resolving to, among other things, set up a private renters' forum, to re-consider the need for a Selective Landlord Licensing Scheme, and to ensure that all HMOs in the city are inspected, improved if needed, and licensed. The Council is taking a proactive approach to private tenant engagement, with a presence in supermarkets and at events such as ARU Property Fair and the Big Lunch, as well as monthly drop-in sessions.

The Council has an HMO licensing scheme, and rogue landlords can be reported to the Council.

When residents are made homeless, there can also be an obligation placed on the council ("homelessness duty"). A rise in private tenants made homeless is likely to increase the strain on council resources.

Re-introduction of the Renters (Reform) Bill to Parliament or a similar bill would protect private renters from unfair treatment and improve their quality of life.

Any delay in re-introducing this bill or a similar one leaves tenants exposed to s21 eviction.

It is accordingly important that this bill (or a similar bill) is made law at the earliest possible date.

The Labour Party's 2024 manifesto states: 'We will immediately abolish Section 21 'no fault' evictions, prevent private renters being exploited and discriminated against, empower them to challenge unreasonable rent increases, and take steps to decisively raise standards, including extending 'Awaab's Law' to the private sector.' (<https://labour.org.uk/change/break-down-barriers-to-opportunity/>)

This Council resolves:

To welcome the Labour Party's commitment to immediately abolishing Section 21 evictions and to introducing other measures to support private renters, including setting up a National Landlords Register.

To keep under review how the Council can use and work within the framework of any new national legislation to further support private renters.

Useful Links (not part of active motion)

We have included some background papers that we found useful.

<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/improving-private-rented-sector/reforming-private-renting-london>

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-10004/>

<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/improving-private-rented-sector/advice-renters>

We have also drawn upon the 2021 Census figures and the council's own Housing Facts.

24/70/CNL Councillor Payne - Sewage Pollution in our water

Councillor Payne altered their motion under Council Procedure Rule 26.1 with the consent of Council. Councillor Hauk seconded the motion. The altered motion is detailed below, deleted text ~~struckthrough~~, additional text underlined.

Council notes the public outrage displayed in the general election about the pollution of rivers, waterways and beaches by sewage - an outrage which is shared locally in relation to the River Cam.

With the last government having been unwilling to take convincing measures to address this, council calls on the new government now to treat this as a priority for action, including introduction of criminal liability of water companies and suspension of executive bonuses for failure to meet performance targets.

Council requests the Chief Executive to write to the new Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs seeking welcoming the inclusion of

legislation with this intent ~~to appear~~ in the very first King's Speech, and to both of Cambridge's MPs asking them to support this.

Councillor Thornburrow altered their amendment to motion under Council Procedure Rule 23.4, deleted text ~~struckthrough~~, additional text underlined. Councillor Griffin seconded the motion.

Council notes the public outrage displayed in the general election about the pollution of rivers, waterways and beaches by sewage – an outrage which is shared locally in relation to the River Cam.

~~With the last government having been unwilling to take convincing measures to address this, council calls on the new government now to treat this as a priority for action, including introduction of criminal liability of water companies and suspension of executive bonuses for failure to meet performance targets.~~

Council further notes that change has begun, as seen in the inclusion of the Water (Special Measures) Bill in the King's Speech, a bill which will

- ensure water bosses face personal criminal liability for lawbreaking.
- give the water regulator powers to ban the payment of bonuses when environmental standards are not met.
- introduce a 'code of conduct' for water companies, so customers can summon board members and hold executives to account.
- and require water companies to install real-time monitors at every sewage outlet with data independently scrutinised by the water regulators.

Council therefore requests the Chief Executive ~~to~~ write to the ~~new~~ Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Steven Reed, seeking welcoming the inclusion of legislation ~~to appear~~ in the very first King's Speech, ~~and to both of Cambridge's MPs asking them to support this.~~

The amendment was carried by 20 votes in favour to 15 against.

Resolved (unanimously) that:

Council notes the public outrage displayed in the general election about the pollution of rivers, waterways and beaches by sewage – an outrage which is shared locally in relation to the River Cam.

Council further notes that change has begun, as seen in the inclusion of the Water (Special Measures) Bill in the King's Speech, a bill which will

- ensure water bosses face personal criminal liability for lawbreaking.
- give the water regulator powers to ban the payment of bonuses when environmental standards are not met.
- introduce a 'code of conduct' for water companies, so customers can summon board members and hold executives to account.
- and require water companies to install real-time monitors at every sewage outlet with data independently scrutinised by the water regulators.

Council therefore requests the Chief Executive write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Steven Reed, welcoming the inclusion of legislation in the very first King's Speech.

24/71/CNL Councillor Lee - Our Voting System

Councillor Lee proposed and Councillor Young seconded the following motion:

The Council notes that the recent general election produced a new government with 100% of the power after winning two-thirds of the Parliamentary seats with only a third of the popular vote, when turnout was the lowest since 2001.

It considers that 'First Past The Post' is neither fair, inclusive, representative or popular and that it encourages voter disengagement, with surveys frequently showing that switching to a form of proportional representation is widely popular.

It calls on the Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister to express our dissatisfaction with the current electoral system, and our belief that a better system is both possible and desirable, and to ask him to set up a Citizens' Assembly to explore a system of voting fit for the Twenty-First century, encompassing national, local and mayoral elections.

It also calls on the Leader of the Council to write to the city's two members of Parliament calling for their support for this request.

Councillor Gilderdale proposed and Councillor Griffin seconded the following amendment to motion (~~deleted text struck through~~ and additional text underlined):

~~The Council notes that~~ welcomes the result of the recent general election which delivered a Labour Government for the first time since 2010. However, low turnout remains a persistent issue in national and local government elections with participation reducing again at the most recent City Council elections in May 2024. Political engagement is perceived to be particularly low among those aged under 30 and that the lack of engagement from young people is something which should be of concern for all political parties. ~~produced a new government with 100% of the power after winning two-thirds of the Parliamentary seats with only a third of the popular vote, when turnout was the lowest since 2001.~~

This Council believes that electoral reform can help to improve both engagement and tackle polarisation within our political system and will therefore:

- Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Government asking it to re-introduce proportional voting systems for the elections for Police and Crime Commissioners and Directly Elected Mayors during this parliament, at the same time expressing regret that the single transferrable voting system was removed from these elections in the first place.
- Ask the relevant Officers at the City Council to develop a plan, working with partners at the County Council (who passed a similar motion earlier in the year) to encourage greater understanding of the role of the different tiers of local government here in Cambridge, and in particular to bring forward proposals about how we can work to better engage with younger people in Cambridgeshire to increase participation in local elections.

~~It considers that 'First Past The Post' is neither fair, inclusive, representative or popular and that it encourages voter disengagement, with surveys frequently showing that switching to a form of proportional representation is widely popular.~~

~~It calls on the Leader of the Council to write to the Prime Minister to express our dissatisfaction with the current electoral system, and our belief that a better~~

~~system is both possible and desirable, and to ask him to set up a Citizens' Assembly to explore a system of voting fit for the Twenty-First century, encompassing national, local and mayoral elections.~~

~~It also calls on the Leader of the Council to write to the city's two members of Parliament calling for their support for this request.~~

The amendment was carried by 21 votes in favour to 14 against.

Resolved (unanimously) that:

The Council welcomes the result of the recent general election which delivered a Labour Government for the first time since 2010. However, low turnout remains a persistent issue in national and local government elections with participation reducing again at the most recent City Council elections in May 2024. Political engagement is perceived to be particularly low among those aged under 30 and that the lack of engagement from young people is something which should be of concern for all political parties.

This Council believes that electoral reform can help to improve both engagement and tackle polarisation within our political system and will therefore:

- Ask the Chief Executive to write to the Government asking it to re-introduce proportional voting systems for the elections for Police and Crime Commissioners and Directly Elected Mayors during this parliament, at the same time expressing regret that the single transferrable voting system was removed from these elections in the first place.
- Ask the relevant Officers at the City Council to develop a plan, working with partners at the County Council (who passed a similar motion earlier in the year) to encourage greater understanding of the role of the different tiers of local government here in Cambridge, and in particular to bring forward proposals about how we can work to better engage with younger people in Cambridgeshire to increase participation in local elections.

24/72/CNL Councillor Glasberg - Declaration of a Water Emergency

Councillor Glasberg proposed and Councillor Bennett seconded the following motion:

This Council notes with concern the rapidly accelerating water crisis that we are facing. Cambridge experienced severe drought in 2022 and 2023, while recently we have seen some of the wettest six months on record in the UK, which have caused flooding in many parts of the city and surrounding areas, damaged agriculture, roads and other public infrastructure, and affected the lives of numerous residents.

We now have by turns either too much or too little water, as well as distressingly high levels of pollution. When residents see local flooding, they may think that our water shortage is over. Unfortunately, drought and flooding go hand in hand as dry hard soil fails to absorb water. Valuable rain fails to reach our chalk streams and instead contributes to flooding.

In 2019, the City Council declared biodiversity and climate emergencies. This helped to raise public awareness of these critical issues and influenced planning and other decisions.

We need a water emergency declaration for the same reasons.

This council recognises that other agencies are charged with water management. However, we acknowledge the impact of our own actions and decisions on our local water issues. We acknowledge that without broad engagement and co-operation that the chances of any improvement in our water situation is very limited.

This may be the longest motion that Greens have ever submitted to this council. We make no apologies for this. The scale of the crisis and the extent of the water supply gap is such that we consider that no prudent or responsible person can justify leaving any stone unturned to improve the situation

This council:

- Asserts that our water issues go wider than the supply and sewage problems that are the responsibility of the local water companies
- Resolves to take steps to ensure the public are aware of the full extent of our water supply gap by monitoring and republishing the information prepared by Water Resources East, the Environment Agency and others as appropriate and providing full and clear information on the extent of the water gap.
- Pledges to encourage all organisational departments, partners and our communities, businesses and residents to address the water crisis within Cambridge and the wider region, and

- To take a full and active part in that work ourselves and employ our “soft power” fully

(1) Declare recognition of the water emergency and the local impact this could have on the residents, communities and businesses we serve;

(2) Help reduce over-abstraction by:

- Giving full weight in planning applications for large-scale developments to the evidence of the Environment Agency as statutory consultee on water issues
- Writing to the Rt Hon Angela Rayner to request the withdrawal or amendment of the 8 May 2024 WMS (“Written Ministerial Statement”) on the Cambridge Delivery Group to be replaced with a new WMS requiring greater priority to be given to water issues in considering any local planning applications
- Writing to the Rt Hon Angela Rayner to request that planning matters in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire remain under the control of the local authorities
- Requiring the highest water efficiency standards for any new developments that are approved, including mandatory greywater collection and recycling;
- Undertaking a public information/education programme within the next year to encourage residents to use less water, using all communications mechanisms
- Continuing to engage with the water companies, alongside expert community groups, to accelerate solutions to over-abstraction, supporting those that are strategically planned, clearly costed and transparent, and compatible with commitments to reach net zero and halt biodiversity loss;
- Putting pressure on the water companies to take more concerted, urgent and innovative action to:
 - cap abstraction from the Chalk aquifer at today’s actual levels;
 - manage demand more effectively through actions such as the prompt declaration of hosepipe bans, the accelerated introduction of universal metering and proactive encouragement of water collection and recycling e.g. water butt installation;
 - rapidly increase efforts to repair leaks.

(3) Reduce pollution by

- supporting the public’s pressure on Anglian Water to invest urgently in updating its smaller, older sewage treatment works and to halt illegal

dumping of sewage into rivers. All wastewater installations and infrastructure that discharges into chalk streams and rivers should be upgraded to this end.

(4) Mitigate flooding by:

- pushing for the prioritisation of nature-based solutions, including restoration of flood plain habitats and appropriate vegetation management to slow down surface run-off, reduce the risk of flash flooding and minimise pollution;
- promoting the concept of, and principles behind the ‘sponge’ city and region approach: i.e. the creation of places with multiple areas of greenery, trees, ponds, soakaways, pocket parks, rain gardens and permeable paving to allow water to drain away, and with measures to store rainwater and runoff (e.g. water butts).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The erratic weather patterns, generated by climate change, are well understood on paper by both the Cambridge Water Scarcity Group and the water companies. Cambridge Water, the water supply company for the city and parts of South Cambridgeshire, notes in its 2025-2030 business plan¹ that “*we are likely to see more extremes of weather, with 60% less rainfall in the summer and 30% more rainfall in the winter in our Cambridge region by the 2080s.*” In its draft Water Resource Management Plan, the company acknowledges clearly that, with current growth proposals and the need for licence caps on abstraction to protect the natural environment, the region will run into a water deficit by 2029/30.

Current plans for addressing this are wholly inadequate, and incompatible with the February 2024 government ‘guidance’ on water scarcity². Plans for large-scale development will increase the burden, causing over-abstraction and pollution with negative impacts on the quality of life for residents and further threats to our chalk streams, trees and natural vegetation as the water table falls and becomes more polluted. Information provided by the City Council on the water crisis is minimal: hidden within its webpage on recycling³

References:

¹ <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/about-us/our-strategies-and-plans/business-plan-2025-2030>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/addressing-water-scarcity-in-greater-cambridge-update-on-government-measures/addressing-water-scarcity-in-greater-cambridge-update-on-government-measures>

³ <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/reduce-your-waste>

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<https://spiral.imperial.ac.uk/bitstream/10044/1/111577/7/Scientific%20Report%20UK%20Storms.pdf>

¹ <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/biodiversity-emergency>

¹ <https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=21684>

¹ <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/about-us/our-strategies-and-plans/business-plan-2025-2030>

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/addressing-water-scarcity-in-greater-cambridge-update-on-government-measures/addressing-water-scarcity-in-greater-cambridge-update-on-government-measures>

¹ <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/reduce-your-waste>

[Written statements - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament](#)

Councillor Thornburrow proposed and Councillor Porrer seconded the following amendment to motion (deleted text struck through and additional text underlined):

This Council notes with concern the rapidly accelerating water crisis that we are facing and it further notes that, following the declarations of a climate emergency and a biodiversity emergency in 2019, actions have been taken across the Council in relation to this issue, many in partnership with South Cambridgeshire District Council as part of our Shared Planning service, including:

- Responding to public questions with the Water Crisis Forum 2019
- An Integrated Water Management Study - the Stantec Report 2020
- The Greater Cambridge Chalk Streams Report 2020
- A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2021
- The Council Rivers, Safe Swimming and Sewage Motion 2022
- The Council Stop Dumping Sewage in our River and Chalk Streams Motion 2023
- A Water awareness campaign in 2022
- A Biodiversity Strategy 2022 – 2030
- Appointment of Chalk Stream Officer 2023
- A Designated Bathing Water area of the Cam 2024

And work to ensure that our emerging shared local plan has the highest proposed standards of water sustainability measures, including drainage, grey and rain water reuse.

Council resolves to continue to provide support for the ongoing work of the Water Scarcity Group in both its focus on new supply side measures to ensure timely progress with new pipelines and reservoirs for new sustainable developments, and also to ensure that future measures for water credits, grey and rain water recycling and retrofitting linked to new and existing developments in and around the Greater Cambridge area are robust and evidenced.

Council also resolves to hold Cambridge Water and Anglian Water to their commitment to a public information/education programme that will help residents and businesses use less water.

Council believes that, within the powers available to us, we are responding to the water emergency that faces us, working to ensure the sustainable development of thriving communities in Cambridge.

Council therefore resolves to continue to do so, confident that the newly elected Labour government will provide legislative, practical and financial support for local authorities as we deal with these pressing issues.

~~Cambridge experienced severe drought in 2022 and 2023, while recently we have seen some of the wettest six months on record in the UK, which have caused flooding in many parts of the city and surrounding areas, damaged agriculture, roads and other public infrastructure, and affected the lives of numerous residents.~~

~~We now have by turns either too much or too little water, as well as distressingly high levels of pollution. When residents see local flooding, they may think that our water shortage is over. Unfortunately, drought and flooding go hand in hand as dry hard soil fails to absorb water. Valuable rain fails to reach our chalk streams and instead contributes to flooding.~~

~~In 2019, the City Council declared biodiversity and climate emergencies. This helped to raise public awareness of these critical issues and influenced planning and other decisions.~~

~~We need a water emergency declaration for the same reasons.~~

~~This council recognises that other agencies are charged with water management. However, we acknowledge the impact of our own actions and decisions on our local water issues. We acknowledge that without broad engagement and co-operation that the chances of any improvement in our water situation is very limited.~~

~~This may be the longest motion that Greens have ever submitted to this council. We make no apologies for this. The scale of the crisis and the extent of the water supply gap is such that we consider that no prudent or responsible person can justify leaving any stone unturned to improve the situation~~

~~This council:~~

- ~~• Asserts that our water issues go wider than the supply and sewage problems that are the responsibility of the local water companies~~
- ~~• Resolves to take steps to ensure the public are aware of the full extent of our water supply gap by monitoring and republishing the information prepared by Water Resources East, the Environment Agency and others as appropriate and providing full and clear information on the extent of the water gap.~~
- ~~• Pledges to encourage all organisational departments, partners and our communities, businesses and residents to address the water crisis within Cambridge and the wider region, and~~
- ~~• To take a full and active part in that work ourselves and employ our “soft power” fully~~

~~(1) Declare recognition of the water emergency and the local impact this could have on the residents, communities and businesses we serve;~~

~~-~~

~~(2) Help reduce over-abstraction by:~~

- ~~• Giving full weight in planning applications for large-scale developments to the evidence of the Environment Agency as statutory consultee on water issues~~
- ~~• Writing to the Rt Hon Angela Rayner to request the withdrawal or amendment of the 8 May 2024 WMS (“Written Ministerial Statement”) on~~

~~the Cambridge Delivery Group to be replaced with a new WMS requiring greater priority to be given to water issues in considering any local planning applications~~

- ~~• Writing to the Rt Hon Angela Rayner to request that planning matters in Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire remain under the control of the local authorities~~
- ~~• Requiring the highest water efficiency standards for any new developments that are approved, including mandatory greywater collection and recycling;~~
- ~~• Undertaking a public information/education programme within the next year to encourage residents to use less water, using all communications mechanisms~~
- ~~• Continuing to engage with the water companies, alongside expert community groups, to accelerate solutions to over-abstraction, supporting those that are strategically planned, clearly costed and transparent, and compatible with commitments to reach net zero and halt biodiversity loss;~~
- ~~• Putting pressure on the water companies to take more concerted, urgent and innovative action to:
 - ~~○ cap abstraction from the Chalk aquifer at today's actual levels;~~
 - ~~○ manage demand more effectively through actions such as the prompt declaration of hosepipe bans, the accelerated introduction of universal metering and proactive encouragement of water collection and recycling e.g. water butt installation;~~
 - ~~○ rapidly increase efforts to repair leaks.~~~~

~~(3) Reduce pollution by:~~

- ~~• supporting the public's pressure on Anglian Water to invest urgently in updating its smaller, older sewage treatment works and to halt illegal dumping of sewage into rivers. All wastewater installations and infrastructure that discharges into chalk streams and rivers should be upgraded to this end.~~

~~(4) Mitigate flooding by:~~

- ~~• pushing for the prioritisation of nature-based solutions, including restoration of flood plain habitats and appropriate vegetation management to slow down surface run-off, reduce the risk of flash flooding and minimise pollution;~~
- ~~• promoting the concept of, and principles behind the 'sponge' city and region approach: i.e. the creation of places with multiple areas of greenery, trees, ponds, soakaways, pocket parks, rain gardens and permeable paving to allow water to drain away, and with measures to store rainwater and runoff (e.g. water butts).~~

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The erratic weather patterns, generated by climate change, are well understood on paper by both the Cambridge Water Scarcity Group and the water companies. Cambridge Water, the water supply company for the city and parts of South Cambridgeshire, notes in its 2025-2030 business plan^[1] that “we are likely to see more extremes of weather, with 60% less rainfall in the summer and 30% more rainfall in the winter in our Cambridge region by the 2080s.” In its draft Water Resource Management Plan, the company acknowledges clearly that, with current growth proposals and the need for licence caps on abstraction to protect the natural environment, the region will run into a water deficit by 2029/30.

Current plans for addressing this are wholly inadequate, and incompatible with the February 2024 government ‘guidance’ on water scarcity^[2]. Plans for large-scale development will increase the burden, causing over-abstraction and pollution with negative impacts on the quality of life for residents and further threats to our chalk streams, trees and natural vegetation as the water table falls and becomes more polluted. Information provided by the City Council on the water crisis is minimal: hidden within its webpage on recycling^[3]

References:

[1] <https://spiral.imperial.ac.uk/bitstream/10044/1/111577/7/Scientific%20Report%20UK%20Storms.pdf>

[1] <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/biodiversity-emergency>

[1] <https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=21684>

[1] <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/about-us/our-strategies-and-plans/business-plan-2025-2030>

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/addressing-water-scarcity-in-greater-cambridge-update-on-government-measures/addressing-water-scarcity-in-greater-cambridge-update-on-government-measures>

[1] <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/reduce-your-waste>

[Written statements - Written questions, answers and statements - UK Parliament](#)

[1] <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/about-us/our-strategies-and-plans/business-plan-2025-2030>

[2] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/addressing-water-scarcity-in-greater-cambridge-update-on-government-measures/addressing-water-scarcity-in-greater-cambridge-update-on-government-measures>

[3] <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/reduce-your-waste>

The amendment was carried by 30 votes in favour to 4 against.

Resolved (by 30 votes in favour to 0 against with 4 abstentions) that:

This Council notes with concern the rapidly accelerating water crisis that we are facing and it further notes that, following the declarations of a climate emergency and a biodiversity emergency in 2019, actions have been taken across the Council in relation to this issue, many in partnership with South Cambridgeshire District Council as part of our Shared Planning service, including:

- Responding to public questions with the Water Crisis Forum 2019
- An Integrated Water Management Study - the Stantec Report 2020
- The Greater Cambridge Chalk Streams Report 2020
- A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2021
- The Council Rivers, Safe Swimming and Sewage Motion 2022
- The Council Stop Dumping Sewage in our River and Chalk Streams Motion 2023
- A Water awareness campaign in 2022
- A Biodiversity Strategy 2022 – 2030
- Appointment of Chalk Stream Officer 2023
- A Designated Bathing Water area of the Cam 2024

And work to ensure that our emerging shared local plan has the highest proposed standards of water sustainability measures, including drainage, grey and rain water reuse.

Council resolves to continue to provide support for the ongoing work of the Water Scarcity Group in both its focus on new supply side measures to ensure

timely progress with new pipelines and reservoirs for new sustainable developments, and also to ensure that future measures for water credits, grey and rain water recycling and retrofitting linked to new and existing developments in and around the Greater Cambridge area are robust and evidenced.

Council also resolves to hold Cambridge Water and Anglian Water to their commitment to a public information/education programme that will help residents and businesses use less water.

Council believes that, within the powers available to us, we are responding to the water emergency that faces us, working to ensure the sustainable development of thriving communities in Cambridge.

Council therefore resolves to continue to do so, confident that the newly elected Labour government will provide legislative, practical and financial support for local authorities as we deal with these pressing issues.

24/73/CNL Councillor Davey - Cambridge: Our Vision

Councillor Gilderdale proposed and Councillor Moore seconded the following motion:

Council notes:

- Cambridge is a vitally important city both to the region and to the country's regeneration. There has always been government interest and investment in the Cambridge area, from Harold Wilson to Gordon Brown and more recently former Secretary of State Michael Gove's 2050 proposals.
- The City Council has and will continue to play an essential role in the running of the city, providing important democratic governance and local decision making.
- With renewed interest in the city, including from the new Labour government, it is important that the Council establishes its own vision for Cambridge's future, one which is led by residents, workers and businesses here.
- The Council's current vision was written and adopted in 2014/15, following Labour taking over control of the Council. Since then, the city has seen significant change, as it has continued to grow rapidly, and become more diverse.

- Cambridge and the council have lived through Brexit, Covid, cost of living crises and the impacts of conflict around the world.
- This vision has been informed by conversations with residents about what matters most to them now and in the future; by councillors in their roles as community champions; and by our staff and partners. This includes the 'Rich Picture', 'State of the City' and the 'Cambridge Conversations' led by Executive Councillors.
- The vision is high-level and accessible. Many council strategies, delivery plans and targets fall out of the vision and will be further developed and refined, ideally with partners and communities, to help shape a new corporate plan from 2025-2030.

Council believes:

- This vision reflects the values, aspirations and needs of our local communities based on these conversations and ongoing collaborations.
- This vision will help the council in conversations about the future of Cambridge. It will enable us to represent the views of our citizens and to assert the city's future needs in discussions we have with our partners and our recently elected Labour government.

Council resolves:

- To adopt the Vision statement which positions the Council as a place maker, convenor and community facilitator as well as playing a core role in providing public services.
- To promote our vision and ambition for the future of Cambridge, building on our vision for One Cambridge, Fair for All, to underpin and direct the work of the council and our partnerships including the emerging Local Plan and Cambridge 2050.

Cambridge: Our Vision

One Cambridge, Fair for All

Where:

- **Residents enjoy a high quality of life and exemplar public services.** Cambridge is a place of high employment where everyone has a warm, safe, and affordable home, and beautiful open spaces to enjoy. Communities are thriving and empowered,

supported by well-run public services, and drawing on shared prosperity with greater equality in health and educational outcomes.

- **Decarbonisation and sustainability are central to prosperity.** Cambridge is a net zero carbon city, where people and nature enjoy a clean river, clean air, and biodiverse green spaces. Strong nature networks are coordinated between relevant bodies to combat the impacts of social and climate injustice.
- **Innovation benefits people and planet.** Cambridge champions pioneering discoveries which shape a better future for people and planet. There is a lifelong citywide commitment to learning which enables every resident to develop their skills and fulfil their potential. Businesses are key to the success of a thriving local economy which benefits residents and workers.
- **Development is sustainable and inclusive.** High-quality social housing, sustainable public transport alongside key infrastructure is prioritised to ensure Cambridge is a vibrant and caring city. Cambridge's beautiful architecture and public realm, with well-used community spaces, promote pride and wellbeing and is accessible to all.
- **Arts, sports, and culture are thriving.** Cambridge celebrates the city's diversity through a vibrant arts and cultural scene, including music, festivals, sports, and food and drink. Accessible arts, sports and culture provide spaces for people of all ages to come together to enjoy the city, both during the day and at night.
- **Democratic accountability is genuine and accessible.** Residents actively participate in democratic life and transparent decisions are made by and for the people of Cambridge. There is genuine partnership between academic, business, and civic communities to enhance residents' prosperity. Local control, devolution, and community empowerment are championed through transparent and simplified local government.

Resolved (by 19 votes in favour to 0 against with 15 abstentions) to support the motion.

8f Councillor A.Smith - TUC Volunteer Charter: Strengthening Relations Between Paid Staff and Volunteers

Councillor A.Smith proposed and Councillor Nestor seconded the following motion:

This Council Notes:

1. The key role volunteering plays both locally and nationally.⁴
2. Our gratitude to the many thousands of volunteers that do so much to enhance our city and, particularly, to support the most vulnerable. Our equal gratitude to our staff, who work so tirelessly for our council and our city.
3. The impact that the economic downturn and the cost-of-living crisis have had on our paid and voluntary sectors⁵.
4. The importance of sound core principles in enhancing relations between paid staff and volunteers.
5. That volunteering helps build social capital and community cohesion and plays an important role in the delivery of key public services. But that volunteers should not be a substitute for paid staff.

This Council Resolves to:

1. Affirm and adopt the TUC Volunteer charter principles as set out below.
2. Use these principles as a guide to review our more detailed policies and procedures, which reflect our local needs and circumstances. To do this in discussion with local union representatives and volunteering managers.
3. Encourage partner organisations to do the same, to make sure paid staff are protected and volunteers supported.

TUC Volunteer Charter⁶

Preamble

This Charter sets out the key principles on which volunteering is organised and how good relations between paid staff and volunteers are built. It has been

⁴ According to Support Cambridgeshire's 2023 State of the Sector Survey, approximately 2,100 charities operate in Cambridgeshire. These charities employ an estimated 5,300 people, with over 30,000 volunteers and nearly 11,000 trustees recorded with the Charity Commission. This does not include the many more people who give of their time through mutual aid.

⁵ Support Cambridge's 2023 State of the Sector Survey highlighted issues in the local voluntary sector. Increasingly, the voluntary sector is struggling to both recruit volunteers, trustees and staff. Lack of funding was the biggest issue raised.

⁶ Source, <https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/charter-strengthening-relations-between-paid-staff-and-volunteers> (2009)

developed jointly by Volunteering England (VE) and the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and has been endorsed by the wider volunteering and trade union movements.

Its starting point is that volunteering plays an essential role in the economic and social fabric of the UK. It is estimated that some 22 million people volunteer each year, contributing around £23 billion to the economy. Volunteering helps build social capital and community cohesion and plays an important role in the delivery of key public services. Volunteering is also good for the volunteer: it helps improve health and wellbeing and provides opportunities for individuals to acquire skills and knowledge that can enhance career development or employment prospects.

This Charter demonstrates the value and importance that both organisations place on voluntary activity and the time, skills and commitment given by volunteers.

This Charter recognises that voluntary action and trade unionism share common values. Both are founded on the principles of mutuality and reciprocity, leading to positive changes in the workplace and community. The trade union movement itself is built on the involvement and engagement of volunteers.

Volunteering England and the TUC acknowledge that on the whole, relations between paid staff and volunteers are harmonious and mutually rewarding. They can, however, be enhanced by good procedures, clarity of respective roles, mutual trust and support. This Charter sets out the key principles to help underpin good relations in the workplace.

These principles should be used as a guide by individual organisations to develop more detailed policies and procedures, which reflect local needs and circumstances. This should be done, wherever possible, between local union representatives, employers and volunteering managers.

Paid work is any activity that is undertaken at the direction of an employer and is financially compensable.

Volunteering is freely undertaken and not for financial gain; it involves the commitment of time and energy for the benefit of society and the community.

Charter Principles

1. All volunteering is undertaken by choice, and all individuals should have their right to volunteer, or indeed not to volunteer;

2. While volunteers should not normally receive or expect financial rewards for their activities, they should receive reasonable out of pocket expenses;
3. The involvement of volunteers should complement and supplement the work of paid staff, and should not be used to displace paid staff or undercut their pay and conditions of service;
4. The added value of volunteers should be highlighted as part of commissioning or grantmaking process but their involvement should not be used to reduce contract costs;
5. Effective structures should be put in place to support and develop volunteers and the activities they undertake, and these should be fully considered and costed when services are planned and developed;
6. Volunteers and paid staff should be provided with opportunities to contribute to the development of volunteering policies and procedures;
7. Volunteers, like paid staff, should be able to carry out their duties in safe, secure and healthy environments that are free from harassment, intimidation, bullying, violence and discrimination;
8. All paid workers and volunteers should have access to appropriate training and development;
9. There should be recognised machinery for the resolution of any problems between organisations and volunteers or between paid staff and volunteers;
10. In the interests of harmonious relations between volunteers and paid staff, volunteers should not be used to undertake the work of paid staff during industrial disputes.

This Charter stands between Volunteering England and the TUC as a statement of principles and good practice. It is also a model for use by individual unions, volunteer involving organisations in the public, third and private sectors and other bodies in discussions around the use of volunteers.

Resolved (by 23 votes in favour to 0 against with 10 abstentions) to support the motion.

24/74/CNL Written questions

The Mayor advised that no written questions had been received.

24/75/CNL To Note Record of Urgent Officer Decision

10a Appointment of Councillor representatives to the Conservators of the River Cam.

The decision was noted.

24/76/CNL Notification of Appointment of S.151 Officer

The appointment of Jody Etherington as the Council's Section 151 Officer was noted.

The meeting ended at 11.55 pm

CHAIR