

Cambridge City Council Notice of Council

Date: Thursday, 24 July 2025

Time: 6.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Market Square, Cambridge, CB2 3QJ [access the building via Peashill entrance]

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

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of Cambridge City Council will be held in the Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Market Square, Cambridge, CB2 3QJ [access the building via Peashill entrance] on Thursday, 24 July 2025 at 6.00 pm and I hereby summon you to attend.

Dated 16 July 2025

Yours faithfully

Robert Pollock

Chief Executive

Agenda

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Mayor's announcements
- 4 4 Day Week - Shared Services South Cambridgeshire District Council (Pages 9 - 14)
- 5 Update on Local Government Reorganisation (Pages 15 - 34)
- 6 Public questions time
- 7 To deal with oral questions
- 8 To consider the recommendations of Cabinet/Executive for adoption
- 8a Outturn Report 2024/25 (Pages 35 - 84)
- 9 To consider the recommendations of Committees for adoption
- 9a Civic Affairs & Audit Committee - Proposed Amendments to Member Allowances (Pages 85 - 94)
- 10 To consider the following notices of motion, notice of which has been given by:
- 10a Councillor Holloway: Local Government Reorganisation
Seconded by Councillor Bick

This Council notes:

Cambridge is served by two tiers of local government – Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. Each provides different services over different geographies, with some overlapping responsibilities. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority also serves this area, as does the Greater Cambridge Partnership.

Unitary authorities combine the functions currently carried out by county councils and district-level councils.

On 19 October 2023, Cambridge City Council passed a motion on 'A Unitary Council'¹, asking the Leader and Chief Executive of the Council to:

“... initiate discussions... to identify options for a less fragmented and more cohesive model of Government for Cambridge, that best serves the needs of its residents. These discussions should involve and engage with the people of the city in a meaningful way, thereby recognising the need for our governance structures to reflect the wishes of the people we serve.”

In summer 2024, Cambridge City Council carried out an initial engagement exercise on the ‘Future of Local Government for Cambridge’¹. Around 60 people attended in-person workshops and over 500 people responded to the online survey. Nearly 83% of respondents thought that a unitary authority for the Cambridge area should be explored.

A report on this engagement exercise was considered at Full Council on 28 November 2024². Councillors agreed that the Leader should report back about next steps in summer 2025, following discussions with other local leaders and ministers.

In December 2024, the Government announced that local government in England would be reorganised, inviting proposals for new unitary councils from all two-tier areas³. On the current timetable, new unitary councils for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough would come into being in 2028.

Since the Government’s announcement, all seven existing councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have engaged in a collaborative process to explore options for local government reorganisation.

Leaders have set out three geographical options for proposals to be worked up.

A public survey on issues relating to local government reorganisation, agreed by all councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, is running for just over one month, closing on 20 July⁴.

The Local Government Reorganisation item in these meeting papers sets out the current situation, including relevant data and context for

¹ <https://engage.cambridge.gov.uk/en-GB/projects/cambridge-local-government>

² <https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/documents/s67343/241119%20Council%20report%20on%20Future%20of%20Local%20Government.pdf>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-devolution-white-paper-power-and-partnership-foundations-for-growth/english-devolution-white-paper>

⁴ <https://can-campaigns.co.uk/local-councils-in-cambridgeshire-and-peterborough-are-changing/>

deciding which geographical configuration of unitary councils might be most appropriate for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

This Council believes:

- That a unitary authority based on the current boundaries of Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, alongside viable arrangements for the rest of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, is likely to be the best option for the residents of Cambridge.

This Council resolves:

- To work with other local authorities in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough on a proposal for the whole area that can be submitted to the Government by 28 November 2025.
- To continue to collaborate with all councils across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, including providing information to support proposals that are not its preferred option.
- To launch a further engagement exercise to better understand Cambridge residents' views on their preferred geography for local government reorganisation.

10b Councillor Dalzell: Securing Arbury Court's Future as a Thriving Community Hub

This Council notes:

1. The vital role Arbury Court plays as a community hub serving North Cambridge residents;
2. The ongoing 'Shaping North Cambridge' consultation and the positive engagement between officers, local businesses, and the community regarding future redevelopment plans;
3. The constructive approach taken by officers in engaging with local businesses and residents during the consultation process;
4. Current uncertainty facing existing businesses due to lease arrangements ending in 2030;
5. The strong preference expressed by local businesses for replacement retail facilities to be built before existing premises are redeveloped, avoiding the need for temporary

accommodation;

6. That detailed consultation findings and proposals will not be presented to Cabinet until October 2025.

This Council believes:

1. Local businesses and residents deserve certainty about Arbury Court's future and their role in it now, rather than waiting for final proposals;
2. The positive collaborative approach between officers and the community should be formally endorsed and protected;
3. Any redevelopment must enhance rather than diminish Arbury Court's function as a community retail hub.

This Council resolves:

1. That any development proposal for Arbury Court will prioritise the construction of replacement retail facilities before existing businesses are displaced;
2. To ensure that existing businesses will receive appropriate lease extensions or firm relocation commitments extending well beyond 2030;
3. To ensure the redevelopment enhances retail provision and community facilities rather than diminishing them;
4. To establish these principles as non-negotiable parameters for any development brief or partner selection process.

10c Councillor Tong: The Failure of Jesus Lock Island and Baits Bite Lock Island

The River Cam faces an existential threat.

The islands of the two locks that maintain a steady water level, Jesus Lock and Baits Bite Lock, are both at risk of failing due to the disrepair. Meanwhile, in their June update, titled An Organisation in Crisis⁵, the Conservators of the River Cam announced that they were in dire financial straits.

While the urgent work needed to Baits Bite Lock Island has been approved, the Conservators of the River Cam have said that a much-needed rebuild of both lock islands would be impossible given the

¹ https://www.camconservancy.org/files/ugd/79067b_d61c6956e9bf47a3a48ba6a30f54696a.pdf

cost, even without factoring in the fact that Jesus Lock island also requires stabilisation in the short term.

While the damage caused to both the local environment and tourism would be a problem in itself, the harm that this would cause to the local community would be most devastating. A representative of Cam Valley Forum has acknowledged² that if the water level of the river lowered, local residents could be exposed to centuries of waste that has laid buried, posing a significant health risk.

Urgent action must be taken, yet the Conservators of the River Cam do not have the funds to do so, stating that they believe ‘unless specifically instructed by state or court, the necessary funding required by the Conservancy to ensure long-term survival will not be made available.’

The council resolves to;

- Write to Steve Reed, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, explaining the need for the Conservators of the River Cam to receive funding for these essential repairs.
- To also request that responsibility for overseeing the River Cam is transferred to any future unitary authority comprising Cambridge.

11 Written questions

No discussion will take place on this item. Members will be asked to note the written questions and answers document as circulated around the Chamber.

12 To consider any other business

12a Notification of Cabinet Portfolios

(Pages 95 - 98)

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

In the event of the fire alarm sounding all persons should vacate the building by way of the nearest escape route and proceed directly to the assembly point in front St Mary's Church. The duty Officer will assume overall control during any evacuation, however in the unlikely event the duty Officer is unavailable, this responsibility will be assumed by the Committee Chair.

Information for the public

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- Website: <http://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk>
- Email: democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk
- Phone: 01223 457000

This Meeting will be live streamed to the Council's YouTube page. You can watch proceedings on the livestream or attend the meeting in person.

Those wishing to address the meeting will be able to do so virtually via Microsoft Teams, or by attending to speak in person. You must contact Democratic Services democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk by 12 noon two working days before the meeting.

The full text of any public question must be submitted in writing by noon two working days before the date of the meeting or it will not be accepted. All questions submitted by the deadline will be published on the meeting webpage before the meeting is held.

Further information on public speaking will be supplied once registration and the written question / statement has been received.