



Cambridge City Council Notice of Council

Date: Thursday, 21 May 2026

Time: 11.05 am

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, 21 May 2026 at 11.05 am and I hereby summon you to attend.

Dated 13 May 2026

Yours faithfully

Robert Pollock

Chief Executive

Agenda

- 1 To elect a Mayor for the Municipal Year 2026/27
- 2 To elect a Deputy Mayor for the Municipal Year 2026/27
- 3 To Pass a Resolution of Thanks to the Outgoing Mayor
- 4 Apologies for absence
- 5 Declarations of Interest
- 6 Minutes of the meeting held on:

- 6a 26 February 2026 (Pages 5 - 48)
- 6b 19 March 2026 (Pages 49 - 52)
- 7 Mayor's announcements
- 8 To note the Returning Officer's Report that the following have been elected to the Office of Councillor
To note the following have been elected to Cambridge City Council following elections on 7 May 2026:
- Abbey – Maria Cleminson
Arbury – Sefira Davison
Castle – Alex Sage
Cherry Hinton – Russ McPherson
Coleridge – Sarah NicManis
East Chesterton – Sarah Haithcock
King’s Hedges – Martin Smart
Market – Katie Porrer
Newnham – Eleanor Toye Scott
Petersfield – Kathryn Fisher
Queen Edith’s – Amanda Taylor
Romsey – Jacqui Whitmore
Trumpington – Olaf Hauk & John Grimwood
West Chesterton – Richard Swift
- 9 To elect from among the Members of the Council Bailiffs of the City for the Municipal Year 2026/27
- 10 Election of Leader of the Council (Pages 53 - 56)
- 11 Notification of Cabinet Member Portfolios
- 12 Appointments to Committee Places and Chairs/Vice-Chairs of Committee's
Final report to follow Civic Affairs & Audit Committee meeting.
- 13 Appointments to outside bodies & working groups
Final report and appendices to follow.
- 14 Municipal Meeting Calendar 2026/27 (Pages 57 - 62)
- 15 To Consider recommendations from Committees
- 16 Civic Affairs & Audit Committee - Constitutional Updates (Pages 63 - 92)
Final recommendations to follow from Civic Affairs & Audit Committee.

- 17 Civic Affairs & Audit Committee - Annual Civic Affairs & Audit Committee report (Pages 93 - 112)
- 18 Employment Committee - Termination agreement over £100k (Pages 113 - 116)
Final recommendations will follow the Employment Committee meeting on 19 May.

It is recommended that Council resolves to exclude the press and public during item 18 by virtue of paragraph(s) 1,2,3 & 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 19 To note the officer decision - Capital Budget - Demolition of Council Owned Buildings (Pages 117 - 120)

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.

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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.

COUNCIL

26 February 2026
6.00 - 9.45 pm

Present: Councillors Ashton, Baigent, Bennett, Bick, Bird, Blackburn-Horgan, Clough, Dalzell, Davey, Divkovic, Gardiner-Smith, Gawthrope Wood, Glasberg, Griffin, Hauk, Holloway, Hossain, Howard, Illingworth, Martinelli, McPherson, Moore, Nestor, Payne, Porrer, Pounds, Robertson, Sheil, Smart, A. Smith, S. Smith, Swift, Thittala, Thornburrow, Todd-Jones, Tong, Wade and Young

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

26/1/CNL Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Dryden, Lee, Lokhmotova and Flaubert.

Councillors Ashton, Payne and Thornburrow expected to join the meeting after the start.

26/2/CNL Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor Davey	26/10/cncl	Personal: Director of Cambridge United Football Club.
Councillor Bird	26/10/cncl	Personal: Board member of Cambridge Investment Partnership.
Councillor Simon Smith	26/10/cncl	Personal: Board member of Cambridge Investment Partnership.

26/3/CNL Minutes

26/4/CNL Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2025

The minutes of 20 November 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

26/5/CNL Minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2025

The minutes of 27 November 2025 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

26/6/CNL Mayor's announcements

Past events:

- Mayor's Quiz and other fund raising events for the Mayor's charities.
- City events such as Christmas services at King's College and Great St. Martins.
- The Mayor and the Deputy Mayor visited the new Operations Hub on Cowley Road 4 February 2026.
- The Mayor was joined by fellow Councillors and chaplain at the annual Queensborough Feast held at Corpus Christi College 6 February 2026.
- A new year celebration by the Chinese Community Centre was held at Netherhall School 15 February 2026.
- The Mayor gave a talk in the Council Chamber on local government to a group of RAF 104 Squadron Cadets and Ukrainian school children 20 February 2026.

Events coming up:

- International Women's Day event – to be held in the Council Chamber 9 March 2026.
- Mayor's Reception 20 March. Councillors were reminded to RSVP by 6th March.

The Mayor wished to recognise the contributions of Mark Taylor (Accessibility Officer) who passed away at the end of last year. Mark worked for the shared Planning Service for a number of years. The Mayor wished to pass on condolences on behalf of Cambridge City Council.

26/7/CNL Public questions time

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

Question 1:

During the consultation on the North Cambridge Framework for Change, while discussing the planned redevelopment of Arbury Court, many residents and locals, including me, have expressed that we would like to see the current park retained, rather than built over and replaced. The council has made clear

that the previous plans were not final, and that a new plan, or plans, will be published some time this year.

I would like to ask about these updated plans in three regards:

- Has the council assessed the likely impact on traffic along Arbury Road and the surrounding roads from the redevelopment, and are there any plans in place to mitigate this impact?
- When will these plans be made available, and does the council know if these plans will continue to propose building on top of the current park?
- Has the council assessed the costs and risks of trying to lay down new green space on a currently paved area, in particular in terms of drainage capacity, given that the clay-rich soil in Cambridge is well known to drain poorly, leading to waterlogging and flooding even in well-established green space (e.g., in Logan's Meadow), let alone newly introduced green space?"

The Cabinet Member for Housing responded:

- i. The design and planning process will require liaison with the Highways Authority who were a statutory consultee. There will also be parking surveys.
- ii. Proposals were being developed that took the public consultation into account. Further designs would be shared with the public before a planning submission is made autumn 2026. The public's views on the park have been heard loud and clear by the Council.
- iii. The Council (through its successful partnership with Cambridge Investment Partnership) delivered a number of parks and open spaces at Mill Road, Cromwell Road, the Meadows, ATS Markets, and Orchard Park. There were clear planning and design guidelines that to be followed on drainage and flood risks. The team would work with council colleagues and the public to get feedback on play equipment, plants and the design of open spaces. The Council has been contacted by people who want to help co-design the open space at North Cambridge.

Supplementary:

- i. The bedrock in Cambridge was not great for drainage at the best of times. In the case of Arbory Court, while the current park has been green space for more than 100 years, the proposed replacement space hasn't. It's been under concrete and the weight of the blocks of Arbory Court itself. It'll have been compacted for decades now. Drainage will be difficult to achieve there.

- ii. The Council's own guide to sustainable urban drainage system says that on a former brownfield site, a lot of the measures that would normally be used just aren't suitable.
- iii. Given all the expense, given the requirement laid out in the council's own guides for all sorts of professional and expert consultations on all of these requirements, and given that we know these issues were resolved for the current park because it's been there for decades and isn't currently a lake, was there not a strong argument in the tax payers' financial interest for keeping the park where it was?

The Cabinet Member for Housing responded with the following:

- i. The Council would undertake investigation work to see what could or could not be done then decide what to do at an appropriate time.
- ii. The Public Consultation Report and the North Cambridge Framework For Change Report would be made public next week. There was a lot of feedback and the team were consulting with Planners and Highways Agency to shape the design. Letters have gone out to tenants, homeowners inviting them to a drop-in with council officers. There would also be a drop in for the public on 10 March.
- iii. The Council met with traders on a monthly basis to have discussions.
- iv. There would be a launch of Shaping North Cambridge 13 June 2026, and it was planned to share a further design in the autumn before a planning submission was made.

Question 2:

Since 2021, the Cambridge City Council has been one of the directing board members of Visit Cambridge, Cambridge's Destination Management Organisation (DMO), which was approved by the Council to be incorporated into a Community Interest Company (CIC).

As stated in publicly available Council documents, this was supposed to:

- Support the recovery and development of a sustainable visitor economy
- Support the redesign of the [Visitor Centre], and any future agreements on funding or other relationships with stakeholders
- Protect the DMO assets for the benefit of the community
- Fulfill the role of DMO for Cambridge city
- Represent the city's tourism sector locally
- Provide a report each year detailing how its activities have benefited the community for which it was set up and continue to meet the test throughout its life.

Following the publication of these documents, these ambitions have not been fulfilled, there is no evidence that they were attempted, and there has never been a Community Interest Company set up along these lines. If these records exist, can they please be brought out?

In the past two years, I have asked multiple times, through formal and informal channels, to be heard and allowed to present the Tourist Information Centre which we set up in the absence of any viable alternative, which has been successful and in need of formal recognition. During this time, I have been ignored by the Council, apart from a few insubstantial informal meetings with officers, which only took place after all the plans had been finished and the process fully underway, in which I was told that there was nothing the Council could do for us.

I would like the Full Council to bear witness to the fact that I invited all the members of the Cabinet to come and visit us, and it was made to look as though they were going to be finding some time in their diaries to do this and get in touch with me, but none of them have.

Considering the non-existent document records of the DMO, and the lack of engagement and seeming refusal to acknowledge the importance of the Tourist Information Centre, would it be fair to say that there has been a conflict of interest between the Council's role as a directing partner of the DMO, and its more recent overriding ambition to force this civic quarter development through planning?

After so many expressions of interest and more than two years of work, investment and professional service provision on behalf of the city, I have a just expectation to be met. When am I going to be given my fair hearing?

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources responded:

- i. A new destination marketing organisation called Welcome to Cambridge was set up as a Community Interest Company (CIC) in 2021.
- ii. The partners were Cambridge City Council (curating Cambridge Limited), Cambridge Bid and King's College. It's been operating since 2025 as Visit Cambridge as a not-for-profit limited company. The accounts were available on company's house, but there's not much to see because it's a dormant company.

- iii. Visit Cambridge promoted your unofficial Tourist Information Company on its website alongside other for-profit city tour services and works with businesses and wider stakeholders to help enhance the social and economic value of the visitor economy.
- iv. Visit Cambridge's work was limited by the capacity of its partners regarding marketing, online information and visitor welcome support.
- v. There was no question of a conflict of interest between the unrelated operations of Visit Cambridge and the council's promotion of the civic quarter development. Visit England is the body responsible for assessment and designation of TIC's.
- vi. Representations from the Questioner had been heard before by Councillors at meetings of the Civic Quarter Liaison Group, Cabinet and Council. The Questioner had also met with Officers on three separations to discuss take up of space in the Guildhall and completion of the works which were to be the subject of a council decision. Officers had responded to previous representations and the answers remained the same. In the event of the works going ahead, the Council would instruct an agent to market any available space to let and all space would be let on commercial terms as income generated from the Corn Exchange and Guildhall was required to fund the construction costs.

Supplementary:

- i. Took issue with details given by the Cabinet Member.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources responded with the following:

- i. A statement not a question was made, so no response required.

Question 3:

Could you please provide information as to where the previous residents of Fanshawe Road and the residents who have recently moved out of Davy Road have gone?

The Cabinet Member for Housing responded:

- i. Was able to report in broad terms that residents in both Fanshawe Road and Davy Road had receive support to move into homes of their choice.
- ii. The vast majority of tenants from Fanshawe Road had remained in Cambridge.

- a. 16 out of 20 tenants were still residing in the CB1 area.
 - b. 8 tenants had moved to new build homes at Mill Road and Cromwell Road.
 - c. 6 overcrowded households had moved to three-bedroom homes.
- iii. There was a similar picture at Davy Road. To date, 23 tenants had moved to homes of their choice in Cambridge with 5 overcrowded households having moved to three bedroomed homes that met their needs.
 - iv. Leaseholders at both Fanshawe Road and Davy Road had received support throughout the buyback process with most residents and lease holders remaining in Cambridge.

Supplementary:

- i. The Cambridge City Council Development Team Project Manager sent an email to my neighbour last week in answer to a concern about details listed on NextDoor website.
- ii. He said "Former lease holders of the now demolished Fanshawe Road blocks were notified of the sales launch and offered the chance to register their interest as the council's policy was to offer the right to return to regenerated developments. One could now see that the completed three-bedroom houses cost in the region of 650,000. The departing 10 lease holders of Fanshawe Roads flats were valued at £280,000 to £288,000."
- iii. How does the council expect the departing lease holders to be able to afford a residence that was more than twice as expensive? Together with the 22 social rent households that left who would presumably be offered the affordable rent properties when they are completed, we have another empty and meaningless promise.
- iv. How would you explain why you think it's okay for Council to behave in this way?

The Cabinet Member for Housing responded with the following:

- i. The intention was to build more council houses. People complained each time the Council tried to act.
- ii. The Council make sure each tenant had the right information and the right support all the way through into their new property.
- iii. Tenants were asked if they want to move back after they had moved out of Fanshawe Road.

- iv. Some tenants wanted to move back and some did not as they were quite happy where they had moved to. The Council did everything it possibly could.

Question 4:

Great Eastern Street Car Park, we have a problem with drivers abandoning their cars there. Would the council be prepared to change this to a metered car park to allow shoppers using Mill Road to park there?

The Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Space and City Services responded:

- i. Rather than straight away looking at car parking facilities, the Council wished to consider how to use the space more strategically. For example, it might be used as a green open space or increased children's play provision
- ii. Great eastern car park currently serves a specific function. Any changes to how it operates, including moving to a metered short stay car park as suggested would need to be carefully considered and informed by stakeholders.
- iii. There was a need to consult with stakeholders on how to proceed and explore options in future before bringing forward any formal proposal.

Supplementary:

- i. What would be the timescale for action?
- ii. Could units under the bridge be used for the community? The area needed clearing out. Could it be made a nicer area and have gates?

The Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Space and City Services responded with the following:

- i. It was a good proposal to improve the area and tackle associated anti-social behaviour.
- ii. Was unclear on details of landownership.
- iii. Would liaise with Officers about a timeline for action. A timeline infers that a change would be made, but that would be subject to consultation with stakeholders.
- iv. People may prefer to drive to the shops but the Council encourage people to get the bus, walk and cycle if they possibly could. Some people, disabled people for example, may need to drive, but the Council did not want to encourage everyone to drive.

Question 5:

Darwin Green is a new community still finding its feet, and our tennis courts were one of the few free recreational facilities available to residents. The tennis courts were used by families, young people learning the game, and residents who want to stay active. These tennis courts will shortly transfer from the developer to the City Council, and there is a concern that as other tennis courts in the city have seen charges introduced, the same could happen to our tennis courts in Darwin Green.

Will the Council prioritise accessible community sports facilities and commit to keeping Darwin Green's tennis courts free to use when they are transferred to the City Council?'

The Cabinet Member for Safety, Wellbeing and Tackling Homelessness responded:

- i. Council tennis courts in local neighbourhood parks and community spaces around the city were free and the intention was that the courts transferring to the City Council at Darwin Green would also continue to be free.
- ii. Once the courts were transferred to the City Council, it was intended to add the Darwin Green court to the Council's tennis court booking platform in association with the lawn tennis association. The LTA clubs park booking system would then be available to the public to book the courts free of charge at Darwin Green and guarantee playing times and court preferences. Whilst those who just wanted to turn up to use the courts could continue to do so because the courts were available.

Question 6:

Research¹ confirms that 85 per cent of women do not feel safe walking alone at night, and women's lived experience confirms that women's concerns are not fanciful. Design, planning, servicing and governance of public space does not, or not systematically, take women's everyday features of life into proper account.

In her book *Women After Dark*, world-leading architect and urbanist Dr Nourhan Bassam observes that women are reliant on moving in public space 'in the dark' whether as 'workers, performers, patrons, caretakers, and

¹ DemosAu, [Trusted Market Research and Polling Insights](#) (accessed 23 February 2026).

spectators'.² To that list can be added women as shoppers, caregivers moving from elderly parents' homes to their own homes, friends visiting friends, walkers and joggers keen on preserving their health and wellbeing. Indeed, myriad aspects of daily life are lived outside during evening or night hours, or in the dark winter mornings and afternoons. Bassam proposes that women's safety, security and right to enjoyment of life to the full must be 'inscribed into urban design', focusing on 'width of sidewalks, placement of lights, safety of underpasses, and accessibility of public transport'.

1. Transport is the responsibility of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, and is key to many women's safety of travel at night. The previous mayoral transport lead, Labour's Anna Smith, proposed increasing transport safety, including a safer bus stop proposal and a last bus guarantee.
2. Lighting is the responsibility of Cambridgeshire County Council, yet residents express concern about lack or dimness of lighting, particularly during these winter months.
3. Housing development in Cambridge is the responsibility of Cambridge City Council, and moving about in late evenings or nighttime is essential for many women residents.

Could the Council:

1. Take whatever steps are within its power to ensure that the Cambridgeshire Peterborough Combined Authority incorporates into transport planning the importance of public transport accessibility to women's safety, security and wellbeing, starting by implementing Cllr Smith's proposals.
2. Undertake to implement whatever steps within in its power to ensure that Cambridgeshire County Council increases the wattage of City lighting so that residents throughout Cambridge and particularly north of the river where Arbury residents have expressed concerns to me can be secure whether on foot, cycle, or going to and from their cars, so that they can see where they are going and not be subjected to the dangers of dim lighting or darkness.
3. Affirm that in its house building plans it recognises the dangers and apprehensions facing women during non-daylight hours, and will incorporate into all housing plans and designs the features referenced by Dr Bassam, including footpath or pavement width, lights placement, underpass safety and associated matters.

² [Women After Dark: How Cities Keep Failing Women After Dark eBook : Bassam, Nourhan: Amazon.co.uk: Kindle Store](#) (accessed 23 February 2026); [Women After Dark - by Nourhan Bassam - Nourhan's Substack](#) (accessed 23 February 2026).

4. Prioritise in relation to the Nth Cambridge Development including Brackley Close, Kingsway Flats and Arbury Court, the issue of women's safety, security and wellbeing so that they are incorporated into planning, plans and designs, to address the issues raised by Dr Bassam.

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport responded:

- i. It seemed to her that design, planning, servicing, and governance of public space, (as the questioner put it) too often resulted in women being seen but not being safe. This was something to be challenged.
- ii. Unfortunately, and too often, women's views were listened to but not heard. Even those who found themselves in position of responsibility did not have the power to achieve all the changes they thought necessary. Undertook to push in every way to change this.
- iii. Would raise the proposal by Councillor Smith at the combined authority transport meetings where Councillor Thornburrow was the sole woman on the committee. Undertook to raise issues with the county council regarding lighting and surveillance of paths and routes so there were improvements in Arbury and Petersfield.
- iv. Asked other councillors to do the same where they were made aware of concerns by residents. They could all act as allies to put pressure on the county council.
- v. Had sent the links of the work of Dr Basam to key officers in the planning service and we collectively would consider how we could incorporate the recommendations and evidence.
- vi. We had some planning conditions which refer to the safety already. One that Councillor Thornburrow had raised in various committees was policy 56 creating successful places which stated a development that was designed to be attractive, high quality, accessible, inclusive and safe would be supported.
- vii. Proposals should be designed to remove the threat or perceived threat of crime and improve community safety.
- viii. With reference to the North Cambridge development, Councillor Thornburrow would work with Councillor Bird regarding the design brief for the homes and places the council would deliver.

Question 7:

As a teacher, I am very concerned for the safety of young people in Cambridge, especially girls and young women. One of the issues most often

raised with me is a desire for better street lighting at night. Why is the County Council not doing more to provide more effective street lighting at night and help people to stay safe, and what can the City Council do about it?

The Cabinet Member for Safety, Wellbeing and Tackling Homelessness responded:

- i. In Cambridge, street lighting on the public highway was the responsibility of the County Council (as the Highways Authority). This included decisions about lighting levels, operating hours, column locations, and maintenance standards.
- ii. The County Council decided in 2016 to reduce street lighting levels across Cambridge to 60% illumination. Following that decision, the City Council agreed to fund an uplift for 80% illumination between 10 p.m. and 2 a.m. for all street lighting in the city for the protection of all residents and visitors.
- iii. The City Council were particularly mindful of the work that was done through the campaign tackling violence against women and girls.
- iv. You asked what the City Council could do about County Council policy concerning street lighting. Although the County Council holds statutory responsibility, the City Council would continue to advocate strongly for safer streets, use the tools and funding mechanisms available to it and work in partnership to ensure that safety especially for women and girls is a shared priority.
- v. As Councillor Thornburrow mentioned, we could work as allies to put pressure on the County Council in the future.

Supplementary:

- i. Cycling was such an integral part of daily life in Cambridge, both for transport and for sustainability reasons.
- ii. We need to ensure that residents feel confident that their bikes were safe and secure.
- iii. Bike theft remained a concern for many residents in Cambridge. What role has the City Council played in preventing bike theft?

The Cabinet Member for Safety, Wellbeing and Tackling Homelessness responded with the following:

- i. In 2019 there were 2,967 bike thefts in Cambridge. As a result, the multi-agency cycle crime group led by Cambridge City Council was set up delivering educational campaign, cycle security improvement, enhancing

enforcement and other measures. This led to a 70% reduction in cycle crime in the city.

- ii. The educational campaign was spearheaded by the local charity CamCycle, encouraging people to work together and help save our cycles.
- iii. 16 new CCTV cameras had been installed in the city centre by our CCTV shared service, covering approximately 650 cycle parking spaces.
- iv. The council has extended and improved cycle parking facilities most recently at Queen Anne's Terrace.
- v. Cambridge Police had been using criminal behaviour orders to target individual offenders. These CBOS could put conditions on individual offenders such as not being in certain areas or not being in possession of cycle without proof of ownership. Where an offender continues to offend, CBOS could make it easier to secure criminal charges and result in more severe court outcomes.

Question 8:

Cambridge City Council referred Council Tax debts to bailiffs over 2800 times between 2023 and 2025, averaging almost 4 referrals per day. What was the cost to the council for these enforcement agencies in that period for the collection of council tax arrears?

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources responded:

- i. The council issued 61,000 council tax bills every year.
- ii. To support the least able to pay, the council provides council tax relief support to 9,000 households at a cost of £10 million pounds a year. It uses universal credit data to automate people's applications for council tax which stops debt accumulating due to delays of applications.
- iii. The grant funds Citizens Advise to help residents claims and managing debt.
- iv. The payment process starts with standard building process which was followed up by a reminder letter then a final notice letter. The council's customer service team was briefed and able to signpost anyone who contacts the council with outstanding payment to secure sources of support.
- v. Only when there's been no attempt to pay, the debt was referred to court, and a court summons was sent.

- vi. Once a court order was issued, council staff make a further attempt to contact the person directly and to look at alternative routes to payment. During 2025/26, 2,843 court orders were issued and 55% of these resolved at that point.
- vii. Only when all previous processes were exhausted would the council instruct an enforcement agent. The number of council tax debts referred to enforcement agencies 1483 in 2025 and 1295 this current year. This number of cases was higher though than the number of households as households could have multiple debts covering more than one year. If cases were double counted the repayment plan stops and then restarts.
- viii. 60% of the then outstanding cases were resolved by written correspondence and the remainder had an in-person visit. The enforcement agents were trained to report cases of vulnerability of hardship and that prompts the council once again to provide additional support when needed. No goods or possessions had been removed from a household for at least 12 months.
- ix. Finally, enforcement agencies charge and retain statutory fees payable by the data. Therefore, there's no cost to the council for any enforcement activity.

Supplementary:

- i. Took issue with the council putting the tax burden on those least able to pay.
- ii. Asked for a meeting to discuss issues with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources within 30 days.

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources responded with the following:

- i. The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources undertook to meet with ACORN within 30 days.

Enforcement action was only taken against those who could pay but would not. Safety nets were in place; the Council would not pursue people who could not pay.

26/8/CNL To deal with oral questions

Question 1

Councillor Glasberg to The Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Space and City Services

Residents are raising concerns about planting on verges being cut back in a way that makes it unlikely that the plants will recover, for example, the mature Cistus bushes planted as part of the landscaping scheme for Hills Road.

Planting on verges is important in the city for amenity and biodiversity as well as reducing air pollution from traffic, and it is hard to see how planting that is less than a metre high impairs visibility for cyclists, pedestrians or vehicles.

While highway safety needs to be considered there is a balance to be struck - these are residential streets not merely transport corridors.

Could councillors be informed of pending work on verges in their ward that involves cutting back planting?

The Cabinet Member responded:

- i. The City Council undertook some work for the County Council/Highways Agency to maintain verges on highways and so had to meet their safety standards. This could result in more cutting back than residents might otherwise expect and could affect plant recovery time scales.
- ii. The City Council did not receive reimbursement for the full cost of work from the County Council.

Question 2

Councillor Dalzell to the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport

Could the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport please confirm which councillors were consulted about the Milton Road Library public art project before the artist was commissioned in April 2025 by the Public Art Advisory Service? Was this in accordance with Council protocols and the Public Art Strategy?

The Cabinet Member responded:

- i. The appointment of the artist for the Milton Road Library public art project was fully in accordance with council protocols and the public art strategy.
- ii. Under both the council's adopted public art supplementary planning directive and the public art manifesto, artists appointed were appointed at the start of public art commissioning process so that they could help to shape the project's implementation.

- iii. There was no explicit requirement within the SPT, the manifesto or the commissioning program to consult councillors prior to commissioning an artist.
- iv. The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning's public art advisory service was overseeing the project delivery and, in this case, a comprehensive engagement program sought to ensure councillors, residents and young people were fully involved in shaping the art artwork has been developed and refined with input from the local community and local members. This would help shape the project once the appointed artist began their work.
- v. Noted the Milton Road engagement project had been developed by officers and this had involved meetings with eight councillors so far including Councillors Dalzell and Thornburrow.

Question 3

Councillor Porrer to the Cabinet Member for Safety, Wellbeing and Tackling Homelessness

The Willow Walk homeless hostel accommodated individuals with the highest and most complex needs on the city's supported pathway from rough sleeping towards sustainable housing. It closed in June 2022, as a result of its ongoing funding being stopped with the support of the city council, offering the explanation that it was no longer needed as capacity existed elsewhere. The charity who owned the building sold it and it is now being converted to private apartments. How is it that the council's consultants have now assessed that there is a shortage of high needs hostel accommodation in the city, which is hampering our ability to get people back into regular housing and could the Cabinet member for Safety, Wellbeing and Tackling Homelessness explain what happened?

The Cabinet Member responded:

- i. When Willow Walk was closed there was a national drive towards more community based solutions such as Housing First, and away from traditional hostel type accommodation particularly on the scale of Willow Walk.
- ii. Furthermore, reports of antisocial behaviour from neighbours, relatively high eviction rate, and the configuration of the building suggested that it was proving difficult to provide the support needed for residents within that setting.

- iii. Willow Walk wasn't providing appropriate accommodation and other options were used to get better value for money.
- iv. A full assessment of needs for each resident was carried out by the city and county councils in conjunction with local support providers at the time of closure.
- v. One of the findings from our recent homelessness review was that over the past 5 years, there has been an increase in demand for homeless services for individuals with higher and complex needs. The homelessness landscape has changed since the closure of Willow Walk.

Question 4

Councillor Blackburn-Horgan to the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport

It was agreed at council on 28th November 2024 that a report would be prepared on the case for and feasibility of one or more Article 4 directions within the city boundaries further to motion 6e Improving Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) in Cambridge. This would consider the implications of removing Permitted Development rights for smaller HMOs (currently Use Class C4) and instead require planning permission for all new builds and for change of use for existing housing stock to be used as HMOs for more than two people, including a register of all HMOs from more than 2 people and report back to a suitable member meeting by the summer of 2025. Can the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport please direct Council to this report and its recommendations.

The Cabinet Member responded:

- i. Following the council motion, officers from the council had explored whether data on HMO licensing, registrations, and planning provided evidence for a significant clustering of HMOs in the city that would support an article 4 direction as outlined.
- ii. An article 4 request must be supported by robust evidence that would enable the council to demonstrate to the secretary of state that the direction was necessary and had been applied to the smallest geographical area possible.
- iii. To date, the available evidence had not suggested enough evidence to meet the requirement for an article 4 direction to protect local immunity or the well-being of the area. Officers were aware of continuing concerns about the use of existing family homes in the city for alternative forms of

residential accommodation, including holiday rentals, student housing, subletting, HMO conversions or short-term rental accommodation for business uses. These uses these uses could lead to greater turnover of occupancy.

- iv. The Council did not have compelling evidence that HMO occupancy for three or more people alone would address the high threshold requirement to justify an article 4 direction as outlined.
- v. Officers were proposing to bring a report engaging with these wider housing related matters and the housing strategy to Members later in the year and Councillor Thornburrow would keep the Council informed about the progress of this report.

Question 5

Councillor Hauk to the Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Spaces and City Services

What steps can the City Council take to facilitate and accelerate the adoption of open spaces and roads that are currently under the control of developers?

The Cabinet Member responded:

- i. The Council was keen to adopt open spaces and new roads adopted as quickly as possible assuming they could be managed consistently and to an agreed standard.
- ii. Adoption was governed by legally binding section S106 agreements and linked directly to development bill programs, site phasing and the satisfactory resolution of defects.
- iii. Section 106 agreements were legally binding documents between a developer and a local planning authority under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 designed to mitigate the impact of new developments. These arrangements were deliberate and existed to protect the council and residents from inheriting assets that were incomplete, unsafe, or would create long-term maintenance liabilities for the public purse.
- iv. Within that framework, the council was taking practical steps to facilitate and where possible accelerate adoption. This included earlier engagement with developers, clearer guidance on adoptable standards, early technical signoff specifications, improved coordination across services, and the use of phased adoption where completed areas met the required standards.

- v. Where delays persisted, the Council could also use enforcement mechanisms available through section 106 agreements to ensure developers met their obligations.

The Council could not adopt assets before they were complete or accept land with unresolved defects as this would transfer unacceptable financial and operational risk to the council and its residents. Ultimately, the delivery and timing of adoption was determined by developers build programs and the planning permission granted including the conditions attached to those decisions.

26/9/CNL To consider the recommendations of the Executive for adoption

26/10/CNL Budget Setting Report and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026-27

The Executive presented its budget recommendations as set out in the Council Agenda and published on the City Council's website.

Councillor Bick and Liberal Democrat Group Members presented the Liberal Democrat Group's alternative budget as set out in the Council Agenda and published on the City Council's website.

Councillor Bennett and Green Group Members presented the Green Group's alternative budget as set out in the Council Agenda and published on the City Council's website.

Councillor Payne joined the meeting before debate started on the budget.

Members **agreed nem con** to extend the meeting past the 3 hour guillotine.

Under the Council's budget procedure, the Liberal Democrat Group's alternative budget was deemed to have been moved and seconded as an amendment.

Under the Council's budget procedure, the Green Group's alternative budget was deemed to have been moved and seconded as an amendment.

The Liberal Democrat Group's alternative budget amendment was **lost by 15 votes to 22 with 1 abstention.**

The Green Group's alternative budget amendment was **lost by 5 votes to 22 with 11 abstentions.**

Councillor Glasberg left the meeting and did not return.

The Liberal Democrat Group requested the recommendations below were voted on separately to the rest of the Budget Setting recommendations contained on pages 41-45 of the Council agenda. This included the HRA components of recommendations L, Q, R and S.

Housing rents and charges:

c) Approve an increase in rents for all Social Rent, Social Rent shared ownership and Affordable Rent properties of 4.8% (September 2025 CPI plus 1%), with effect from 1 April 2026.

d) Agree to fully implement rent convergence for all Social Rent tenants at a maximum rate of £1 per week from 1 April 2027, then £2 per week from 1 April 2028, in line with recent government announcements, for a period of up to 10 years.

e) Approve an increase in rents for Affordable Rent shared ownership properties in line with the maximum permitted in each individual property lease (generally RPI plus 0.5%).

f) Approve that garage and parking space charges are increased by up to 4.8%, as set out at section 10 of the Budget Setting Report 2026/27.

g) Approve the methodology for calculating Housing Revenue Account service charges and leasehold administration costs as set out at Appendix K, and delegates authority to the Chief Finance Officer to carry out the detailed calculation of 2026/27 charges in line with this methodology, noting that the council will endeavour to limit increases to 4.8% where possible.

Revenue budgets:

i) Approve the Housing Revenue Account revenue proposals shown at Appendix H.

Capital budgets:

k) Approve the Housing Revenue Account capital proposals set out at Appendix I(a) and the revised capital plan set out at Appendix I(b).

(Housing Revenue Account element of recommendation L only to be voted on with this vote)

l) Approve the proposed capital financing plans set out at section 5 (General Fund) and **section 7 (Housing Revenue Account)** of the Budget Setting Report 2026/27, whilst noting that the constitution delegates all executive decisions on borrowing, investment or financing to the Chief Finance Officer, who is required to act in accordance with CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local Authorities.

m) Note in particular that the council's ambitious Housing Revenue Account investment programme, including the 10-year new homes programme, will require new borrowing of around £483 million over the next 10 years, as set out at section 7 of the Budget Setting Report 2026/27.

Risks and reserves:

(Housing Revenue Account element of recommendation Q only to be voted on with this vote)

q) Set the 2026/27 prudent minimum balance at £8.059 million for the General Fund, **and £6.801 million for the Housing Revenue Account**, with a working target balance of 120% of the prudent minimum balance in each case, in line with the advice of the Chief Finance Officer.

Medium-Term Financial Strategy:

(Housing Revenue Account element of recommendation R & S only to be voted on with this vote)

r) Approve the council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy for the General Fund and **Housing Revenue Account** as set out at section 9 of the Budget Setting Report 2026/27.

s) Note the key assumptions used in the development of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy at Appendix C, and **in particular the sensitivity of the Housing Revenue Account 30-Year Business Plan to changes in these assumptions, as set out in detail at Appendix J.**

It was **RESOLVED** to agree the Executive's budget proposals C-S (contained on pages 41-45 of the Council agenda including HRA components of recommendations L, Q, R and S) **by 36 votes to 1.**

Councillor Bennett left the meeting and did not return.

It was **RESOLVED** to agree the remaining Executive's budget proposals **by 22 votes to 1 with 13 abstentions**.

26/11/CNL Council Tax Reduction Scheme

It was **RESOLVED** to agree the recommendations:

1. Universal Credit Scheme Uprating

To uprate the income bands and contribution levels within the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for households in receipt of Universal Credit in line with the annual percentage increase in the National Minimum Wage and better equalise earnings disregards.

2. Non-Universal Credit Working-Age Scheme

To retain a Council Tax Reduction Scheme for working-age households not in receipt of Universal Credit, and to apply:

- (a) Department for Work and Pensions applicable amounts and premiums where these continue to be published; or
- (b) where such figures are unavailable, to uprate scheme allowances annually in accordance with the September Consumer Price Index (CPI).

3. Council Tax Liability Basis

That 100% of the Council Tax liability shall continue to be used as the starting point for the calculation of entitlement under both Council Tax Reduction Schemes.

4. Delegated Authority and Duration

To delegate authority to the Chief Finance Officer to carry out the annual review and uprating of the Council Tax Reduction Schemes in Page 149 Agenda Item 8 accordance with legislative changes and the uprating principles set out above; and to confirm that the Schemes shall remain in operation (subject to any such annual uprating) until 31 March 2029.

5. Where the household was on universal credit to retain a flat rate scheme for non-dependence of £8.36 for 2026/27 with an annual uprating in accordance with the September consumer price index and annually increased by September CIP thereafter. Non-dependents who received disability income or pension credit or a war pension or armed forces independent payment or were the charge payer and or partner have a disability or receive a carer's benefit will not have a non-dependent deduction.

26/12/CNL To consider the recommendations of Committees for adoption**26/13/CNL Pay Policy Statement**

Resolved to approve:

- i. The recommendation that the Cambridge Weighting rate is increased from £13.00 per hour to £13.69 per hour.
- ii. To review and recommend to Full Council the Pay Policy Statement in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report.

26/14/CNL Review of Statement of Licensing Policy

Resolved to approve:

- i. Consider the results of the public consultation exercise as summarised in Appendices B and C of the Officer's report.
- ii. Approve the Statement of Licensing Policy as attached at Appendix E of the report. Appendix D included tracked changes showing the amendments that have been made as part of the consultation and additional changes following consultation responses.

26/15/CNL To consider the following notices of motion, notice of which has been given by:**26/16/CNL Councillor Tong: City of Sanctuary**

Councillor Bick and Councillor Tong proposed to use Council Procedure Rule 1.9.4 to refer the motion to Civic Affairs and Audit Committee for consideration.

It was **RESOLVED** to agree referring the motion to Civic Affairs **by 31 votes to 4 with 1 abstention.**

26/17/CNL Councillor Dalzell: Unfair Business Rates Increases, Threatening Neighbourhood Shops

Councillor Dalzell proposed and Councillor Hauk seconded the following motion:

This Council notes:

1. That neighbourhood shopping areas across Cambridge are facing dramatic business rates increases from April 2026, with Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data showing particularly severe impacts in areas outside the city centre including Milton Road (25% increases), Chesterton Road (43-46%), Cherry Hinton High Street (19-25%), Queen Edith's, and Arbury (approximately 20%).
2. That business rates are a nationally controlled tax, the proceeds of which are controlled by central government, with local councils only collecting them on Government's behalf and receiving a small incentive for increases in the total raised in their areas.
3. That these increases coincide with the removal of 40% Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) relief affecting 230,000 small firms across England, meaning actual bills for neighbourhood shops will increase by several hundred percent over the next three years despite so-called 'transitional protections'.
4. That the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) has warned of 'three years of business rates misery' with an average 52% hike in bills for small businesses such as cafés, shops and hairdressers, describing this as a 'tax timebomb' that threatens high streets and the jobs and services they provide.
5. That the Government has raised new funds from a high-value multiplier which it has the power to use to support retail, hospitality and leisure sectors but has chosen not to, leaving most of the high street without adequate support.
6. That the VOA operates geographical 'valuation schemes' grouping streets together, with neighbourhood shopping areas serving less affluent communities systematically facing higher increases than city centre areas.
7. That businesses in these neighbourhood areas provide essential local services, affordable goods, and employment to Cambridge's less affluent communities.

This Council believes:

8. That forcing neighbourhood shops to raise prices or close makes the cost of living crisis worse for families across Cambridge who can least afford it.
9. That viable local shopping areas are essential for community cohesion and supporting residents who cannot easily travel to city centre retail.
10. That there is no rational justification for neighbourhood shopping areas serving deprived communities to face massive increases of 20-46%.

11. That the Government has raised new revenue from high-value properties which could be used to support small businesses but has chosen to provide only limited relief to pubs and music venues while leaving most of the high street without adequate support.
12. That the removal of meaningful RHL relief, combined with aggressive revaluation, threatens the survival of neighbourhood shops across Cambridge.
13. That the Government's transitional protections are wholly inadequate - allowing bills to increase by £800 per year or 15-25% over three years amounts to managed decline of our local high streets.
14. That businesses facing these increases will be forced to raise prices (increasing the cost of living for residents across Cambridge who can least afford it), reduce services, or close entirely.
15. That Labour's handling of business rates reform has been chaotic and poorly communicated, with the Government's own calculator withdrawn after providing incorrect figures, leaving businesses unable to plan with certainty.

This Council resolves:

16. To write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Cambridge's Members of Parliament calling on the Labour Government to provide meaningful relief for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses equivalent to the previous 40% support levels, using the new revenue raised from high-value properties, and urging Government to enact meaningful long-term reform by replacing business rates with a Commercial Landowner Levy (CLL) paid by property owners instead of tenants.
17. To write to the VOA demanding an explanation for the geographical disparities in rateable value increases across Cambridge, particularly why neighbourhood shopping areas are facing massive increases of 20-46%, and requesting an urgent review of the methodology used.

Councillor S. Smith proposed and Councillor **Nestor** seconded the following amendment to motion (deleted text ~~struck through~~ and additional text underlined):

Labour Amendment to Agenda Item 9b

Proposed by Councillor Simon Smith, seconded by Councillor Antoinette Nestor

Existing text ~~struck through~~, additional text underlined

UNFAIR BUSINESS RATES INCREASES THREATENING RELIEFS FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD SHOPS, HOSPITALITY AND LEISURE SECTORS

This Council notes:

- ~~1. That neighbourhood shopping areas across Cambridge are facing dramatic business rates increases from April 2026, with Valuation Office Agency (VOA) data showing particularly severe impacts in areas outside the city centre including Milton Road (25% increases), Chesterton Road (43-46%), Cherry Hinton High Street (19-25%), Queen Edith's, and Arbury (approximately 20%).~~
- ~~2. That business rates are a nationally controlled tax, the proceeds of which are controlled by central government, with local councils only collecting them on Government's behalf and receiving a small incentive for increases in the total raised in their areas.~~
- ~~3. That these increases coincide with the removal of 40% Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) relief affecting 230,000 small firms across England, meaning actual bills for neighbourhood shops will increase by several hundred percent over the next three years despite so-called 'transitional protections'.~~
- ~~4. That the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) has warned of 'three years of business rates misery' with an average 52% hike in bills for small businesses such as cafés, shops and hairdressers, describing this as a 'tax timebomb' that threatens high streets and the jobs and services they provide.~~
- ~~5. That the Government has raised new funds from a high-value multiplier which it has the power to use to support retail, hospitality and leisure sectors but has chosen not to, leaving most of the high street without adequate support.~~
- ~~6. That the VOA operates geographical 'valuation schemes' grouping streets together, with neighbourhood shopping areas serving less affluent communities systematically facing higher increases than city centre areas.~~
- ~~7. That businesses in these neighbourhood areas provide essential local services, affordable goods, and employment to Cambridge's less affluent communities.~~

~~**This Council believes:**~~

-
- ~~8. That forcing neighbourhood shops to raise prices or close makes the cost of living crisis worse for families across Cambridge who can least afford it.~~
 - ~~9. That viable local shopping areas are essential for community cohesion and supporting residents who cannot easily travel to city centre retail.~~
 - ~~10. That there is no rational justification for neighbourhood shopping areas serving deprived communities to face massive increases of 20-46%.~~
 - ~~11. That the Government has raised new revenue from high-value properties which could be used to support small businesses but has chosen to provide only limited relief to pubs and music venues while leaving most of the high street without adequate support.~~
 - ~~12. That the removal of meaningful RHL relief, combined with aggressive revaluation, threatens the survival of neighbourhood shops across Cambridge.~~
 - ~~13. That the Government's transitional protections are wholly inadequate – allowing bills to increase by £800 per year or 15-25% over three years amounts to managed decline of our local high streets.~~
 - ~~14. That businesses facing these increases will be forced to raise prices (increasing the cost of living for residents across Cambridge who can least afford it), reduce services, or close entirely.~~
 - ~~15. That Labour's handling of business rates reform has been chaotic and poorly communicated, with the Government's own calculator withdrawn after providing incorrect figures, leaving businesses unable to plan with certainty.~~
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This Council resolves:

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- ~~16. To write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Cambridge's Members of Parliament calling on the Labour Government to provide meaningful relief for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses equivalent to the previous 40% support levels, using the new revenue raised from high-value properties, and urging Government to enact meaningful long-term reform by replacing business rates with a Commercial Landowner Levy (CLL) paid by property owners instead of tenants.~~

~~17. To write to the VOA demanding an explanation for the geographical disparities in rateable value increases across Cambridge, particularly why neighbourhood shopping areas are facing massive increases of 20-46%, and requesting an urgent review of the methodology used.~~

1. In April 2026, the Government introduced three changes to business rates. A revaluation based on market rents as of April 2024, five new multipliers and targeted reliefs. Taking each change in turn:

2. Rateable Value: This is the annual rent a property could fetch on the open market as estimated every three years by the Valuation Office Agency. The revaluations can therefore lead to increases and decreases according to market trends by location and sector. Businesses can challenge a new rateable value if they believe it is not justified.

3. Multipliers: Business rates are determined by a property's rateable value x national multiplier (poundage) set by the Government.

4. From 2026, the Government moved from a two-tier multiplier system (of 49.9p and 55.5p for properties with rateable values of less and more than £55k) to a five-tier system shown below.

5. This includes two permanently lower multipliers for the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors which are part of a £4.3bn support package to manage changes in rateable values and loss of the Retail, Hospitality, Leisure relief. However, the revaluation changes and new lower multipliers may not necessarily result in higher business rates for businesses in this sector.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Property Type Rateable Value</u>	<u>2026/27 Multiplier</u>
<u>Small RHL</u>	<u>Retail, Hospitality, Leisure <£51k</u>	<u>38.2p</u>
<u>Standard RHL</u>	<u>Retail, Hospitality, Leisure £51- £499k</u>	<u>43p</u>
<u>Small Non-RTL</u>	<u>Other Sectors < £51k</u>	<u>43.2p</u>
<u>Standard Non-RTL</u>	<u>Other Sectors £51-£499k</u>	<u>48p</u>
<u>High-Value</u>	<u>All Properties > £500k</u>	<u>50.8p</u>

6. Targeted support: In addition to the lower multipliers, there are three main relief schemes:

7. Supporting Small Business Scheme 2026-29. This applies when a business has, due to the 2026 revaluation lost some or part of either their Small Business Rates relief, or Retail, Hospitality and Leisure relief, or 2023 Supporting Small Business relief.

8. If eligible, an increase in business rates would go up by the greater of either £800 or the following transitional relief percentage caps: 5% for properties with rateable values of up to £20,000, 15% for rateable values £20k to £100k and 30% for rateable values of more than £100k.

9. It is important to translate revaluation increases of 25% into the payable business rates bills and review what has happened since 2019.

For example, in 2019 a shop in the City was the subject of a rateable value of £19,500 and a business rates bill of £6,383. In 2026, the same property has a rateable value of £28,750 and a business rate bill of £7,919, after applying the new multiplier and Supporting Small Business Cap worth £287.50. This amounts to an increase of 24% over seven years against an increase in the Consumer Prices Index of 27.5%.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Rateable Value £</u>	<u>Multiplier</u>	<u>Retail Hospitality Leisure Relief</u>	<u>Business Rates £</u>
<u>2019</u>	<u>19,500</u>	<u>0.49</u>	<u>33%</u>	<u>6,383</u>
<u>2020</u>	<u>19,500</u>	<u>0.499</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<u>2021</u>	<u>19,500</u>	<u>0.499</u>	<u>100% Q1 66% Q2,3,4</u>	<u>2,483.54</u>
<u>2022</u>	<u>19,500</u>	<u>0.499</u>	<u>50%</u>	<u>4,865.25</u>
<u>2023</u>	<u>23,000</u>	<u>0.499</u>	<u>75%</u>	<u>2,797.52</u>
<u>2024</u>	<u>23,000</u>	<u>0.499</u>	<u>75%</u>	<u>2,869.25</u>
<u>2025</u>	<u>23,000</u>	<u>0.499</u>	<u>50%</u>	<u>6,886.20</u>
<u>2026</u>	<u>28,750</u>	<u>0.38</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>7,919.13</u>

In the intervening years, the shop has benefited from a rates free year, and temporary Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief rates from 100% to 50%, and from 2026/27 a new lower and permanent multiplier of 38p in every £ in rateable value.

ii) Transitional relief: This caps business rate increases for properties over the three years 2026/27 – 2028/29 as follows:

<u>Ratable value</u>	<u>2026/27</u>	<u>2027/28</u>	<u>2028/29</u>
<u>Less than £20k</u>	<u>5%</u>	<u>10% + inflation</u>	<u>25% + inflation</u>
<u>£20k to £100k</u>	<u>15%</u>	<u>25% + inflation</u>	<u>40% + inflation</u>
<u>More than £100k</u>	<u>30%</u>	<u>25% + inflation</u>	<u>25% + inflation</u>

11. iii) Pubs and Live Music Venues Relief. For 2026/27 eligible pubs and live music venues will receive after deducting other eligible reliefs a 15% business rates relief. Business rates will be frozen in real terms for two years from April 2027. This additional relief will benefit 89 pubs in the City.

12. The Council serves as the business rates collections authority on behalf of the Government. In the context of the various changes, the Council Collections team has been:

i) Providing reassurance to businesses concerned about how much their business rates bills will be by signposting them to online calculators and providing estimates and information on the support measures and how to appeal, and

ii) Working to ensure all applicable reliefs and adjustments are applied to the 2026/27 business rates bills which will be issued in March 2026. This will enable all businesses to see how their charge has been calculated and make informed decisions about whether to appeal. However, there may be cases where the exact nature of the business is unknown. Charge payers are encouraged to contact the Council if they believe a relief has not been applied.

13. The Treasury has stated restructuring of business rates for 2026/27 is designed to be revenue neutral overall but shifts the burden from smaller, in-person retail, hospitality and leisure properties to properties with rateable values over £500k, for example distribution warehouses. The British Property Federation claims the overall tax burden will increase by £1.7bn and complained about the burden on big businesses.

This Council believes:

14. Neighbourhood shops and local shopping areas provide residents with convenient access to goods and services, are vital for those with mobility issues and without access to a car and contribute to community cohesion and sense of place and belonging.

15. It has a significant responsibility to maintain the viability of its portfolio of local shops and shopping parades, redevelop them as required and secure provision in new developments through planning policies and development management practices.

16. Businesses whose premises are the subject of hard-to-justify increases in rateable values be encouraged to appeal.

17. Businesses with concerns about their eligibility for the various reliefs be encouraged to seek advice from the Council's collections team.

18. It would be misleading to make claims about 'massive increases' in business rates and consequential increases in retail prices, reductions in services and closures in advance of comprehensive evidence of the impacts in monetary terms.

19. It would be prudent to request and review such evidence before any resolution could be justified to make representations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Cambridge's MP's and Valuation Office Agency.

This Council resolves:

20. The Council will use its discretionary relief powers under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act (as amended) to grant the Pubs and Live

Music Venues Relief and claim full reimbursement from the Government in accordance with its expanded guidance (Business Rates Information Letters 1/2026 and 3/2026).

21. Request officers to provide further information – in monetary terms – on the financial impacts of the new rateable valuations, multipliers and relief schemes on neighbourhood shops, hospitality and leisure sectors.

The amendment was **carried by 22 votes to 10 with 5 abstentions.**

Resolved (by 35 votes to 0 with 1 abstention) that:

This Council notes:

1. In April 2026, the Government introduced three changes to business rates. A revaluation based on market rents as of April 2024, five new multipliers and targeted reliefs. Taking each change in turn:

2. *Rateable Value*: This is the annual rent a property could fetch on the open market as estimated every three years by the Valuation Office Agency. The revaluations can therefore lead to increases and decreases according to market trends by location and sector. Businesses can challenge a new rateable value if they believe it is not justified.

3. *Multipliers*: Business rates are determined by a property's rateable value x national multiplier (poundage) set by the Government.

4. From 2026, the Government moved from a two-tier multiplier system (of 49.9p and 55.5p for properties with rateable values of less and more than £55k) to a five-tier system shown below.

5. This includes two permanently lower multipliers for the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors which are part of a £4.3bn support package to manage changes in rateable values and loss of the Retail, Hospitality, Leisure relief. However, the revaluation changes and new lower multipliers may not necessarily result in higher business rates for businesses in this sector.

Category	Property Type Rateable Value	2026/27 Multiplier
Small RHL	Retail, Hospitality, Leisure <£51k	38.2p
Standard RHL	Retail, Hospitality, Leisure £51-£499k	43p
Small Non-RTL	Other Sectors < £51k	43.2p
Standard Non-RTL	Other Sectors £51-£499k	48p
High-Value	All Properties > £500k	50.8p

6. *Targeted support:* In addition to the lower multipliers, there are three main relief schemes:

7. Supporting Small Business Scheme 2026-29. This applies when a business has, due to the 2026 revaluation lost some or part of either their Small Business Rates relief, or Retail, Hospitality and Leisure relief, or 2023 Supporting Small Business relief.

8. If eligible, an increase in business rates would go up by the greater of either £800 or the following transitional relief percentage caps: 5% for properties with rateable values of up to £20,000, 15% for rateable values £20k to £100k and 30% for rateable values of more than £100k.

9. It is important to translate revaluation increases of 25% into the payable business rates bills and review what has happened since 2019.

For example, in 2019 a shop in the City was the subject of a rateable value of £19,500 and a business rates bill of £6,383. In 2026, the same property has a rateable value of £28,750 and a business rate bill of £7,919, after applying the new multiplier and Supporting Small Business Cap worth £287.50. This amounts to an increase of 24% over seven years against an increase in the Consumer Prices Index of 27.5%.

Year	Rateable Value £	Multiplier	Retail Hospitality Leisure Relief	Business Rates £
2019	19,500	0.49	33%	6,383
2020	19,500	0.499	100%	0.00
2021	19,500	0.499	100% Q1 66% Q2,3,4	2,483.54
2022	19,500	0.499	50%	4,865.25
2023	23,000	0.499	75%	2,797.52
2024	23,000	0.499	75%	2,869.25
2025	23,000	0.499	50%	6,886.20
2026	28,750	0.38	0%	7,919.13

In the intervening years, the shop has benefited from a rates free year, and temporary Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Relief rates from 100% to 50%, and from 2026/27 a new lower and permanent multiplier of 38p in every £ in rateable value.

ii) Transitional relief: This caps business rate increases for properties over the three years 2026/27 – 2028/29 as follows:

Ratable value	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Less than £20k	5%	10% + inflation	25% + inflation

£20k to £100k	15%	25% + inflation	40% + inflation
More than £100k	30%	25% + inflation	25% + inflation

11. iii) Pubs and Live Music Venues Relief. For 2026/27 eligible pubs and live music venues will receive after deducting other eligible reliefs a 15% business rates relief. Business rates will be frozen in real terms for two years from April 2027. This additional relief will benefit 89 pubs in the City.

12. The Council serves as the business rates collections authority on behalf of the Government. In the context of the various changes, the Council Collections team has been:

i) Providing reassurance to businesses concerned about how much their business rates bills will be by signposting them to online calculators and providing estimates and information on the support measures and how to appeal, and

ii) Working to ensure all applicable reliefs and adjustments are applied to the 2026/27 business rates bills which will be issued in March 2026. This will enable all businesses to see how their charge has been calculated and make informed decisions about whether to appeal. However, there may be cases where the exact nature of the business is unknown. Charge payers are encouraged to contact the Council if they believe a relief has not been applied.

13. The Treasury has stated restructuring of business rates for 2026/27 is designed to be revenue neutral overall but shifts the burden from smaller, in-person retail, hospitality and leisure properties to properties with rateable values over £500k, for example distribution warehouses. The British Property Federation claims the overall tax burden will increase by £1.7bn and complained about the burden on big businesses.

This Council believes:

14. Neighbourhood shops and local shopping areas provide residents with convenient access to goods and services, are vital for those with mobility issues and without access to a car and contribute to community cohesion and sense of place and belonging.

15. It has a significant responsibility to maintain the viability of its portfolio of local shops and shopping parades, redevelop them as required and secure provision in new developments through planning policies and development management practices.

16. Businesses whose premises are the subject of hard-to-justify increases in rateable values be encouraged to appeal,

17. Businesses with concerns about their eligibility for the various reliefs be encouraged to seek advice from the Council's collections team.

18. It would be misleading to make claims about 'massive increases' in business rates and consequential increases in retail prices, reductions in

services and closures in advance of comprehensive evidence of the impacts in monetary terms.

19. It would be prudent to request and review such evidence before any resolution could be justified to make representations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Cambridge's MP's and Valuation Office Agency.

This Council resolves:

20. The Council will use its discretionary relief powers under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act (as amended) to grant the Pubs and Live Music Venues Relief and claim full reimbursement from the Government in accordance with its expanded guidance (Business Rates Information Letters 1/2026 and 3/2026).

21. Request officers to provide further information – in monetary terms – on the financial impacts of the new rateable valuations, multipliers and relief schemes on neighbourhood shops, hospitality and leisure sectors.

26/18/CNL Councillor Gardiner-Smith: Holiday Voucher Scheme

Councillor Gardiner-Smith proposed and Councillor A. Smith seconded the following motion:

This Council notes:

- The Cambridgeshire Holiday Voucher Scheme was championed by Labour and introduced in 2023 by the Joint Administration at Cambridgeshire County Council.
- The scheme provides over 20,000 thousand school-aged children with access to nutritious meals during school holidays.
- The scheme makes a very real and practical difference to struggling families — the equivalent of £15 per week per child during the 12 weeks of school holidays for the worst-off households in our county.
- The Liberal Democrat administration at Cambridgeshire County Council proposed and voted through a County Council budget for 2026-27 that scraps this vital lifeline for vulnerable children and their families from September 2026.
 - The cuts came just a month after the UK government confirmed it was increasing direct funding to Cambridgeshire County Council by 28.8%.
 - The cuts are in marked contrast to the food justice work being supported by Cambridge City Council, which includes support for holiday activity and lunch clubs across the city.

- The Liberal Democrat County Councillors sided with Conservative and Reform UK councillors to vote down the Labour group's fully costed amendment, which would have ensured vulnerable families received this vital support until 2029.

This council resolves to:

- Condemn the decision by Cambridgeshire County Council to cut the holiday vouchers scheme and call on the County Council to support Labour's proposal to keep the scheme.
- Thank the many voluntary and community groups who work alongside Cambridge City Council for food justice in Cambridge.

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

Holiday Voucher Scheme

~~This Council notes:~~

- ~~• The Cambridgeshire Holiday Voucher Scheme was championed by Labour and introduced in 2023 by the Joint Administration at Cambridgeshire County Council.~~
- ~~• The scheme provides over 20,000 thousand school-aged children with access to nutritious meals during school holidays.~~
- ~~• The scheme makes a very real and practical difference to struggling families — the equivalent of £15 per week per child during the 12 weeks of school holidays for the worst-off households in our county.~~
- ~~• The Liberal Democrat administration at Cambridgeshire County Council proposed and voted through a County Council budget for 2026-27 that scraps this vital lifeline for vulnerable children and their families from September 2026.~~
- ~~○ The cuts came just a month after the UK government confirmed it was increasing direct funding to Cambridgeshire County Council by 28.8%.~~
- ~~○ The cuts are in marked contrast to the food justice work being supported by Cambridge City Council, which includes support for holiday activity and lunch clubs across the city.~~
- The Liberal Democrat county councillors sided with Conservative and Reform UK councillors to vote down the Labour group's fully costed

~~amendment, which would have ensured vulnerable families received this vital support until 2029.~~

~~This council resolves to:~~

- ~~• Condemn the decision by Cambridgeshire County Council to cut the holiday vouchers scheme and call on the County Council to support Labour's proposal to keep the scheme.~~
- ~~• Thank the many voluntary and community groups who work alongside Cambridge City Council for food justice in Cambridge.~~

Council Notes:

Cambridgeshire County Council has provided holiday meal vouchers since 2021, becoming one of the first councils to top up Government funding to ensure no child goes hungry during school holidays

The scheme previously cost approximately £5 million per year: £1.5 million from the County Council and £3.5 million from the Government's Household Support Fund

In January 2026, the Labour Government ended the Household Support Fund and replaced it with the Crisis and Resilience Fund

The Labour Government's statutory framework for the Crisis and Resilience Fund (paragraph 44) explicitly states: "This may not be through the blanket provision of vouchers to those on free-school meals"

The County Council's Section 151 Officer confirmed this was also the case Without additional County Council funding, thousands of vulnerable children would have gone without food support during school holidays in 2026

Cambridgeshire County Council has provided £2.7 million to continue supporting families with holiday meal costs, adding an extra £1 million to bridge the gap left by the Labour Government ending the Household Support Fund

This funding will ensure vulnerable children continue to receive support with food during school holidays whilst the County Council implements the Labour Government's new statutory framework for needs-based crisis support

The Labour Government increased general funding to Cambridgeshire County Council, but simultaneously cut the specific £3.5 million that funded holiday meal vouchers

Cambridge City Council supports food justice work across the city and recognises the vital importance of ensuring no child goes hungry

This Council Resolves to:

Call on the Labour Government to restore the £3.5 million annual funding for holiday meal support that they cut when ending the Household Support Fund

Call on the Labour Government to amend paragraph 44 of the Crisis and Resilience Fund statutory framework guidance to permit councils to provide blanket holiday meal vouchers if they choose to do so
Thank Cambridgeshire County Council for providing £2.7 million to ensure vulnerable children continue to receive food support during school holidays
Thank the many voluntary and community groups who work alongside Cambridge City Council for food justice in Cambridge
Call on all Cambridge MPs to lobby the Labour Government to restore full funding for holiday meal support across the country

The amendment was **lost by 9 votes to 25 with 2 abstentions.**

Resolved (by 26 votes to 9 with 1 abstention) that:

This Council notes:

- The Cambridgeshire Holiday Voucher Scheme was championed by Labour and introduced in 2023 by the Joint Administration at Cambridgeshire County Council.
- The scheme provides over 20,000 thousand school-aged children with access to nutritious meals during school holidays.
- The scheme makes a very real and practical difference to struggling families — the equivalent of £15 per week per child during the 12 weeks of school holidays for the worst-off households in our county.
- The Liberal Democrat administration at Cambridgeshire County Council proposed and voted through a County Council budget for 2026-27 that scraps this vital lifeline for vulnerable children and their families from September 2026.
 - The cuts came just a month after the UK government confirmed it was increasing direct funding to Cambridgeshire County Council by 28.8%.
 - The cuts are in marked contrast to the food justice work being supported by Cambridge City Council, which includes support for holiday activity and lunch clubs across the city.
- The Liberal Democrat County Councillors sided with Conservative and Reform UK councillors to vote down the Labour group's fully costed amendment, which would have ensured vulnerable families received this vital support until 2029.

This council resolves to:

- Condemn the decision by Cambridgeshire County Council to cut the holiday vouchers scheme and call on the County Council to support Labour's proposal to keep the scheme.
- Thank the many voluntary and community groups who work alongside Cambridge City Council for food justice in Cambridge.

26/19/CNL Councillor Ashton: Potholes Cambridge

Councillor Ashton proposed and Councillor Moore seconded the following motion:

This Council calls on Liberal Democrat-controlled Cambridgeshire County Council, who are in charge of pothole repairs, to take the urgent measures needed to reduce the current death traps Cambridge City residents face daily and to outline how this will be done.

This Council notes:

According to the County Council's own figures, there are currently 5600 potholes needing repair^[1]. They state that they are fixing over 1000 per week. This would mean we should expect the residents of Cambridge to see an end to the current holes in 6 weeks' time.

A survey by go.compare found that Cambridgeshire has the highest number of potholes reported in England and Wales: 22 potholes per mile of road.

The Labour Government is investing £188m in road repairs and resurfacing in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough over the next four years.

This Council resolves:

That the Leader of Cambridge City Council should write to the Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council to highlight this Council's serious concerns for our residents' health and safety when using our roads.

To call on Cambridge's MPs to write to the Leader of the Liberal Democrat-controlled Cambridgeshire County Council to highlight the concerns of our residents.

The Council asks that those City Councillors who also sit on the County council, representing Queen Ediths and Abbey Wards, ensure that action is taken to prevent the roads becoming even more of a death trap for users.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/news/more-highways-officers-for-pothole-season>

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

This Council calls on:

~~Liberal Democrat-controlled Cambridgeshire County Council, who are in charge of pothole repairs, to take the urgent measures needed to reduce the current death traps Cambridge City residents face daily and to outline how this will be done.~~

~~This Council notes:~~

~~According to the County Council's own figures, there are currently 5600 potholes needing repairⁱⁱⁱ. They state that they are fixing over 1000 per week. This would mean we should expect the residents of Cambridge to see an end to the current holes in 6 weeks' time.~~

~~A survey by go.compare found that Cambridgeshire has the highest number of potholes reported in England and Wales: 22 potholes per mile of road.~~

~~The Labour Government is investing £188m in road repairs and resurfacing in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough over the next four years.~~

~~This Council resolves:~~

~~That the Leader of Cambridge City Council should write to the Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council to highlight this Council's serious concerns for our residents' health and safety when using our roads.~~

~~To call on Cambridge's MPs to write to the Leader of the Liberal Democrat-controlled Cambridgeshire County Council to highlight the concerns of our residents.~~

~~The Council asks that those City Councillors who also sit on the County Council, representing Queen Ediths and Abbey Wards, ensure that action is taken to prevent the roads becoming even more of a death trap for users.~~

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/news/more-highways-officers-for-pothole-season>

This Council notes with concern the ongoing challenge of road maintenance across Cambridge, while recognising that the root causes of this crisis demand honest acknowledgement rather than political point-scoring.

This Council further notes:

That Cambridgeshire County Council inherited from the previous Conservative administration a highways department in a state of managed decline, with a maintenance backlog of £800 million, no adequate asset management systems, no leadership, and a highways maintenance contract described by council officers themselves as unfit for purpose.

That the Liberal Democrat-led Cambridgeshire County Council has more than doubled the capital maintenance programme from £24 million in 2023/24 to £59 million per annum, and has instigated a root and branch highways change programme with 55 different projects across 3 phases.

That the total capital highways maintenance funding for Cambridgeshire in 2025/26 amounts to £58.3 million, comprising £31.7 million from the Department for Transport, £20 million of additional funding sourced by the Liberal Democrat-led County Council, £3.5 million of additional County Council maintenance funding, and £3.1 million from the A14 grant — meaning that £23.1 million of the total represents funding the Liberal Democrat County Council has found itself, over and above central government provision.

That the Labour Group at Cambridgeshire County Council voted against this additional funding from 2027, a decision that would have returned the county's highways to a state of managed decline.

That the Labour Government's additional contribution to Cambridgeshire road repairs this financial year was £5.8 million in practice — not the £8.1 million billed publicly, as £2.3 million of existing grant was simultaneously removed.

That Cambridgeshire County Council requires approximately £59 million per year simply to maintain its road network at a steady state — a figure consistent with the Government's own funding formula, which indicates Cambridgeshire alone requires £230 million over four years — leaving an annual funding gap of £27 million. The £188 million referenced in national and local Labour communications covers the entire Cambridgeshire and Peterborough region over four years, not Cambridgeshire alone, and is wholly inadequate to address either the steady state requirement or the £800 million inherited backlog.

That whilst the Labour Government's 2024 general election manifesto pledged to fill one million additional potholes per year, the capital maintenance funding subsequently provided to local authorities cannot be used for pothole filling — meaning the Government has broken its own manifesto commitment, as confirmed by independent national analysis.

That certain roads in Cambridgeshire, particularly those crossing peat fenland, cost up to four times more to repair than standard roads and deteriorate significantly faster due to geological conditions, yet the Government's highways maintenance funding formula makes no provision whatsoever for geological variation — a fact raised in the House of Commons by the Liberal

Democrat Member of Parliament for St Neots and Mid Cambridgeshire, who called on the Secretary of State for Transport to either create a dedicated budget for peat-affected roads or adjust the formula accordingly.

That the Secretary of State for Transport, in response to that Parliamentary question, confirmed only that she would raise the matter with the Roads Minister — and that no substantive response has since been received.

That ring-fenced funding from central government cannot be redirected between purposes: Active Travel England cycling funds cannot be used for pothole repairs, and pothole-filling revenue budgets are a separate and highly constrained stream. Conflating these figures to mislead residents is not acceptable.

That the Government's own assessment of Cambridgeshire County Council's highways performance has awarded a green rating for spend, confirming that the Liberal Democrat administration is investing appropriately, and that the road maintenance crisis is a consequence of historic underfunding rather than current council decisions.

This Council believes:

That the £188 million referenced in the original motion as a Labour Government investment represents a four-year Cambridgeshire and Peterborough-wide commitment that, while welcome, is insufficient to maintain the current state, let alone to address an £800 million backlog in Cambridgeshire.

That a Government which pledges to fill one million potholes in its manifesto, then provides funding that cannot legally be spent on filling potholes, owes Cambridge residents an explanation.

That Cambridge residents deserve an MP who raises their concerns about roads in Parliament, rather than one who limits their contribution to social media announcements of funding that was already committed.

That Cambridge residents deserve honesty about who is responsible for decades of road neglect, and that blaming those now working hard to repair the damage does a disservice to residents — particularly when the Government responsible for decades of underfunding sits in Westminster.

This Council resolves:

To write to the Secretary of State for Transport calling for a multi-year, ring-fence-free road maintenance settlement that properly reflects the scale of the inherited backlog in Cambridgeshire, and for an urgent review of the highways funding formula to account for geological conditions including peat fenland roads.

To call on Cambridge's Labour MP to raise in the House of Commons the specific funding crisis facing Cambridgeshire's roads, including the inadequacy of the current funding formula and the £27 million annual funding gap.

To call on Cambridge's Labour MP to seek an urgent substantive response from the Roads Minister following the Secretary of State's commitment to raise the issue of peat-affected road funding, made in response to a Parliamentary question from the Liberal Democrat Member for St Neots and Mid Cambridgeshire.

To note the significant and measurable progress being made by the Liberal Democrat-led Cambridgeshire County Council in reversing years of Conservative neglect, including the Government's own green rating for highways spend, and to encourage continued close working between the City and County Councils to prioritise road safety for Cambridge residents.

The amendment was **lost by 9 votes to 23 with 4 abstentions.**

Resolved (by 28 votes to 9) that:

This Council calls on Liberal Democrat-controlled Cambridgeshire County Council, who are in charge of pothole repairs, to take the urgent measures needed to reduce the current death traps Cambridge City residents face daily and to outline how this will be done.

This Council notes:

According to the County Council's own figures, there are currently 5600 potholes needing repair^[1]. They state that they are fixing over 1000 per week. This would mean we should expect the residents of Cambridge to see an end to the current holes in 6 weeks' time.

A survey by go.compare found that Cambridgeshire has the highest number of potholes reported in England and Wales: 22 potholes per mile of road.

The Labour Government is investing £188m in road repairs and resurfacing in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough over the next four years.

This Council resolves:

That the Leader of Cambridge City Council should write to the Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council to highlight this Council's serious concerns for our residents' health and safety when using our roads.

To call on Cambridge's MPs to write to the Leader of the Liberal Democrat-controlled Cambridgeshire County Council to highlight the concerns of our residents.

The Council asks that those City Councillors who also sit on the County Council, representing Queen Ediths and Abbey Wards, ensure that action is taken to prevent the roads becoming even more of a death trap for users.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/news/more-highways-officers-for-pothole-season>

26/20/CNL Written questions

Members were asked to note the written questions and answers that had been placed in the information pack circulated around the Chamber.

The meeting ended at 9.45 pm

CHAIR

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COUNCIL

19 March 2026
6.00 - 8.00 pm

Present: Councillors Ashton, Baigent, Bennett, Bick, Bird, Blackburn-Horgan, Clough, Dalzell, Davey, Divkovic, Flaubert, Gardiner-Smith, Gawthrope Wood, Glasberg, Griffin, Hauk, Holloway, Hossain, Howard, Illingworth, Lee, Lokhmotova, Martinelli, Moore, Porrer, Pounds, Robertson, Sheil, Smart, S. Smith, Swift, Thittala, Thornburrow, Tong, Wade and Young

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

26/21/CNL Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Dryden, McPherson, Nestor, A. Smith and Todd-Jones.

26/22/CNL Mayor's announcements

The Mayor updated the Council on recent events including a celebration of International Women’s Day, a visit from the Commander of HMS Protector, a multi-cultural Ramadan Iftar hosted by the Cambridge Muslim Trust, the installation of the new Chancellor of Cambridge University, and the Mayor’s Reception.

The Mayor then presented Councillor Richard Robertson with a certificate marking twenty years of service to Cambridge City Council. Councillors Holloway, Davey and Bird spoke in praise of the work undertaken by Councillor Robertson during this time.

26/23/CNL Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Reason
Councillor Holloway	26/26/CNL	Personal: Member of the Advisory Council to the Cambridge Growth Company
Councillor Davey	26/26/CNL	Personal: Director of

		Cambridge United
Councillor Smart	26/26/CNL	Personal: Chair of Cambridge City Council Planning Committee

26/24/CNL Public questions time

Question 1

I should like to ask the following question about the Establishment of a centrally led Urban Development Corporation on behalf of the FeCRA Committee.

The Federation of Cambridge Residents' associations is a grassroots civic voice for everyone in Cambridge - and also for its environment. Residents want a say in shaping Cambridge's development to ensure that the city grows in a way that will achieve balanced communities and quality of life. The Federation's strength is in our network of members across city neighbourhoods, plus our strong connections with nearby villages. Most residents do not even know there is a consultation on the establishment of a centrally led Urban Development Corporation for Greater Cambridge. Why hasn't every household in Cambridge received a leaflet? There have been no drop-in events, no posters, no information on the Council's website. How do City Councillors know the views of residents if they haven't asked them?

The Leader of the Council responded with the following:

- It was vital that residents had a voice in discussions about the future of the City.
- The consultation was being run by central government, but the City Council had promoted it and sought to obtain views from residents in various ways, including articles on the City Council website, a Cambridge Conversations event, a session for young people, radio interviews, social media posts, and a press release.
- Community-led events were also taking place and were welcomed.

Supplementary Question

There had been little information on the proposed Development Corporation compared to the Local Plan. At this Council meeting, Councillors are only asked to discuss the matter and not vote on it. The response will come from the Leader of the City Council. Residents say this denies elected representatives, and effectively residents, a voice on this important decision. We therefore request that no decision is taken before a referendum is held and

that the result of the referendum should be legally binding. Will the Council agree to this in the interests of democracy and transparency?

The Leader of the Council responded with the following:

- The Local Plan showed the importance of local involvement in, and control of, the planning service. There had been 100 events as part of engagement on the Local Plan, however that was a City Council proposal. The Development Corporation proposals were different as they had been proposed by central government.
- As a central government proposal, Cambridge City Council would not have the power to call a referendum.
- The consultation response required answers to thirteen different questions, which would be informed by the discussion at Full Council.
- Anyone could respond to the consultation and the Leader encouraged people to do so.

Question 2

The consultation states that a Greater Cambridge Development Corporation would rely on borrowing, private partners and developing assets to generate income. Won't this financial model end up chasing profit at the expense of social housing, public services and ecological sustainability?

The Leader of the Council responded with the following:

- The funding model was not yet clear, but a significant amount of funding would be required for the Development Corporation to do what it wanted to do.
- Any final decision would lie with central government.

Supplementary Question

If you say you care about the same things as me, why are you ceding control of them? Why don't you trust your local council to deal with these issues? When residents engage on planning matters there is a dialogue and then the option to vote out Councillors if we don't agree with them. This is now no longer going to be possible with the Development Corporation.

The Leader of the Council responded with the following:

- He would not want planning powers to be taken away. Local democratic control was important.
- The planning service was performing well in terms of the number of homes it was bringing forward, but even if it were not, it was important to retain the current level of local engagement to build consensus on how the area grows.

26/25/CNL Consultation on the Establishment of a centrally led Urban Development Corporation for Greater Cambridge

The Council discussed the government's proposal to establish a centrally led Urban Development Corporation, by reviewing and commenting on the matters highlighted in the officer's report and on any other matter relevant to the consultation ahead of a final response being submitted by the Leader on behalf of the Council.

Key discussion points were as follows:

- The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service was recognised as exemplary. It should not become part of a Development Corporation.
- A Development Corporation would be welcomed to support with:
 - Bringing forward construction of the 37,000 homes for which there is planning permission
 - Sewage capacity
 - Water supply
 - Public transport
 - Energy supply
 - Protecting nature
 - Social infrastructure
- It should not be created at the expense of local democratic oversight of planning decisions and plan-making.
- Evidence base and funding plans were lacking.
- The Development Corporation should consider adoption of transport functions.
- Residents would no longer have a voice in the planning process.
- The Development Corporation would need a strategic framework and clear long-term goals.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm

CHAIR



REPORT TITLE: Election of Leader of the Council

To: Full Council 21 May 2026

Report by: Dan Kalley, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Email: dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk

Wards affected: All

Director Approval: the Chief Executive confirms that the report author has sought the advice of all appropriate colleagues and given due regard to that advice; that the equalities impacts and other implications of the recommended decisions have been assessed and accurately presented in the report; and that they are content for the report to be put to Council for decision.

1. Recommendations

1.1 The Council is asked to:

Elect the Leader of the Council in line with the Localism Act 2011 and the Council Constitution until the day of the Annual Meeting of the Council in the year their term of office ends or until:

- death or disqualification;
- resignation from the office; or
- removal from office by resolution of the Council.

2. Purpose and reason for the report

2.1 To consider the election of a new Leader of the Council in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's Constitution. This will likely be for a period of two years until April 2028, when Cambridge City Council will be dissolved and a new unitary authority is

expected to take on its, and other authorities, powers and functions in line with the governments proposed timetable for Local Government Reorganisation.

3. Alternative options considered

3.1 The Council will need to appoint a Leader in order to discharge the functions of the Executive. If the council does not appoint a Leader, the Council risks not being able to fulfil its executive arrangements as prescribed by the Local Government Act 2000, which could affect decisions that need to be taken on behalf of the Council and its residents.

4. Background and key issues

4.1 Following the election held on Thursday 7 May 2026 the Council is now in a position where it needs to appoint a Leader from amongst its numbers in order for the governance of the Council to continue. A proposer and seconder for any nomination will be required in order for the Council to vote on such a proposal.

4.2 The Localism Act 2011 updated the existing legislation relating to the appointment of a Leader within the Cabinet model of Executive arrangements by making amendments to the Local Government Act 2000, which have the effect of allowing a Leader to be appointed for a period determined by the Council's Constitution, Article 7.3:

The Leader will be a Councillor elected to the position by the Council and will remain as Leader until the day of the Annual Meeting of the Council in the year their term of office ends or until:

- death or disqualification;*
- resignation from the office; or*
- removal from office by resolution of the Council.*

In the event of the office of the Leader becoming vacant before the expiration of their term of office, the Council will elect a new Council Leader at its next meeting, or a meeting called for that purpose.

5. Corporate plan and Council Vision

- 5.1 The Leader of the Council will play a crucial role in setting and delivering the Corporate plan and Vision for the Council.

6. Implications

Relevant risks

- 6.1 The Council will need to appoint a Leader in order for the business of the Council to continue. There are legal and reputational risks if there is no leader in place.

The Leader is responsible for appointing Cabinet members, allocating portfolios, determining executive responsibilities and maintaining executive governance arrangements.

Financial Implications

- 6.2 There are none.

Legal Implications

- 6.3 This is a legal requirement under the Local Government Act 2000 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. For councils operating the Leader and Cabinet model, there must therefore legally be:

- a Leader of the Council,
- appointed/elected in accordance with the authority's Constitution and legislation.

Equalities and socio-economic Implications

- 6.4 There are none.

Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications

6.5 There are none.

Procurement Implications

6.6 There are none.

Community Safety Implications

6.7 There are none.

7. Background documents

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

7.1 Council Constitution and Localism Act 2011.

8. Appendices

8.1 There are none.

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Dan Kalley, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, email:

dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk



REPORT TITLE: Meeting Calendar 2026/27

To:

Full Council 21 May 2026

Report by:

Dan Kalley, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Email: dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk

Wards affected:

N/A

Director Approval: Director Robert Pollock confirms that the report author has sought the advice of all appropriate colleagues and given due regard to that advice; that the equalities impacts and other implications of the recommended decisions have been assessed and accurately presented in the report; and that they are content for the report to be put to Council for decision.

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Full Council approves the meeting calendar for the Municipal Year 2026/27.

2. Purpose and reason for the report

- 2.1 The report is presented to Full Council to approve the meetings calendar as part of the process of the Annual General Meeting.

3. Background and key issues

- 3.1 An initial draft was presented to the Civic Affairs & Audit Committee meeting on 9 March 2026.

Some updates have been made to the original draft including separating the gap between the two scrutiny committees in September and November.

Dates have been considered around the party conferences in the Autumn to avoid

clashes.

4. Consultation, engagement and communication

4.1 Civic Affairs & Audit Committee were consulted as part of their remit.

5. Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact

5.1 That the meeting calendar is approved subject to any final changes. Setting the committee cycle for the next Municipal Year.

6. Implications

Relevant risks

6.1 There are none.

Financial Implications

6.2 There are none.

Legal Implications

6.3 There are none.

Equalities and socio-economic Implications

6.4 There are none.

Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications

6.5 There are none.

Procurement Implications

6.6 There are none.

Community Safety Implications

6.7 There are none.

7. Background documents

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

7.1 None.

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 – Meeting Card 2026/27

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Dan Kalley, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk

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Cambridge City Council Meeting Dates, May 2026 - May 2027

MEETING	DAY	TIME	2026								2027				
			MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY
Council	THUS	6.00PM	21		16				1	26			25		27
Cabinet	TUES	5.00PM			7			23*Wed	20	17	15	19	11*Thurs	23	
Scrutiny, Performance, Assets and Strategy	TUES	5.30PM		23				8		3		27*Wed		2	
Scrutiny, Services, Climate and Communities	THUS	5.30PM		18				24		19			4	11	
Housing Advisory Board	MON	5.00PM		15				14		9		25			
Employment (Ad-hoc 2x meeting a year)															
Civic Affairs and Audit	MON	5.30PM		22					5	30			1	15	
Full Licensing	MON	10.00AM		29				7				25			5
Licensing Sub	MON	10.00AM		8	13, 20	10,24		1*Tues	5, 26	2,23	7,21	4, 11	15	8,22	
Planning	WED	10.00AM		24	1			2	7	4	2	6	3	3, 31	
Jnt Dev Control	WED	10.00AM		17	15	19		16	21	18	16	20	24	17	21
Equalities	THURS	4.00PM			2							14			
DCF	TUES	10.00AM		16	21			29	27	24	8	26	16	16	
JSEF	TUES	5.00PM			14				13			5			
Cambridge Joint Area Committee	WED	4.00PM		24				9			9			10	

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Member briefings	TIME	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY
Mon, Wed at 18.00	00:00	various*												

*various member briefings/training sessions for new/all councillors are taking place during May (see Induction Programme)

- 2026 Lib Dem Party Conference
- 2026 Labour Party Conference
- 2026 Green Party Conference TBC
- Planning Committee Training
- Licensing Committee Training
- Elections

7

03-Jun
01-Jun

19-22
27-30

2 Oct - 11 Oct

6

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REPORT TITLE: Constitutional Updates revised Member/Officer Protocol

To: Civic Affairs & Audit Committee (9 March 2026)

Report by:

Tom Lewis, Head of Legal Practice and Monitoring Officer

Email: tom.lewis@3csharedservices.org

Wards affected:

None

Director Approval: Director Robert Pollock confirms that the report author has sought the advice of all appropriate colleagues and given due regard to that advice; that the equalities impacts and other implications of the recommended decisions have been assessed and accurately presented in the report; and that they are content for the report to be put to the Committee for consideration.

1. Recommendations

1.1 That the Civic Affairs and Audit Committee recommend to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) the following changes to the Constitution following the last meeting on 9 March 2026:

- The updated member/officer protocol
- The limited power for Cabinet to make supplementary estimates – additional revenue and capital expenditure up to a threshold.

To note:

- that the Committee already agreed to recommend minor revisions to the terms of reference for the Equalities Panel to be renamed the Inclusion and Equity Panel.

2. Purpose and reason for the report

2.1 Following the initial report being presented to the committee in March the member/officer

protocol has been updated and amended based on feedback from the Committee. A further briefing note was provided to members of the committee with regards to the supplementary estimates.

All members of the committee have had an opportunity to comment on some of the updates.

Committee are therefore asked to agree the updated protocol for inclusion in the report that is presented to the Annual Council meeting on 21 May 2026.

3. Background and key issues

3.1 Protocol on Member / Officer Relations

The updated Protocol on Member / Officer Relations is attached at appendix 1. A link to the previous report can be found here, ([Review of Constitutional Arrangements Cover Report.pdf](#)). The previous protocol had not been updated for a number of years. The updated version is based on best practice across the sector. It shares similarities with the member/officer protocol at South Cambridgeshire District Council but retains elements that are unique to the city council.

The updated Protocol provides a clearer, operational framework for constructive and professional working relationships. It retains the core principles of political neutrality, mutual respect and clear separation of roles, and strengthens or provides greater clarity wherever possible.

Adoption of the revised Protocol will support more consistent behaviour standards and clearer day-to-day working practices and should reduce avoidable friction by setting out predictable processes.

3.2 Supplementary Estimates

Committee members received addition information to clarify the process by which Cabinet can approve relatively small additional amounts of revenue and capital spend outside of the annual budget setting process. No concerns were raised.

4. Corporate plan

- 4.1 The Constitution underpins the decision making of the Council in order for the Council to carry out its priorities as part of the Corporate Plan

[Corporate plan 2022-27: our priorities for Cambridge - Cambridge City Council](#)

5. Consultation, engagement and communication

- 5.1 Changes to the Constitution are being presented to the committee as part of the consultation and engagement process. Any recommendations from the committee will be presented to Full Council for ratification.

6. Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact

- 6.1 If approved at the AGM the changes will be included in the Constitution and will take effect from that date.

7. Implications

Relevant risks

- 7.1 There are none.

Financial Implications

- 7.2 There are none.

Legal Implications

- 7.3 The Constitution contains the rules by which the Council governs itself. It contains a number of legal provisions that are set out in statute. Part of good governance is to review the Constitution and ensure any legal updates are reflected.

Equalities and socio-economic Implications

7.4 There are none.

Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications

7.5 There are none.

Procurement Implications

7.6 There are none.

Community Safety Implications

7.7 There are none.

8. Background documents

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

8.1 [Report to Council May 2025](#)

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 – Updated Member Officer Protocol

Appendix 2 – Inclusion and Equity Panel ToR

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Tom Lewis, Head of Legal Practice and Monitoring Officer, email:

tom.lewis@3csharedservices.org

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Updated Protocol on Member / Officer Relations

The Protocol is a ‘code of standards’ for members and officers to work together to benefit residents and support good governance. It describes the ground rules for professional, lawful, and effective working relationships between elected Members and paid officers.

When the constitution was revised in May 2025 the Protocol on Member / Officer Relations was not updated to reflect modern practice and is now somewhat outdated. The proposed updated Protocol and existing Protocol are attached at Annex A.

The update includes recent guidance from the LGA. It retains the core principles of political neutrality, mutual respect and separation of roles, and strengthens or provides greater clarity in several key areas:

- explicit **reciprocal expectations** for Members and officers based on LGA recommended guidance, including Nolan principles.
- greater **clarity on roles**: Members lead on policy, priorities and scrutiny; officers provide impartial advice, deliver decisions and manage day-to-day operations.
- clearer **guidance on ‘familiarity’ and conduct** between all officers and all members, rather than just toward the Cabinet - officers work for all members of the council.
- clearer **protection for officer integrity and impartiality**, including arrangements in relation to political group briefings
- earlier **engagement of ward Members** in matters affecting their wards
- a more **structured route for addressing concerns** or resolving relationship breakdowns, and
- recognition that new governance - **Leader/Cabinet with O&S and committee Chairs** - necessitates particular relationships officers will have with those members.

Following feedback from the Civic Affairs & Audit Committee section 7 (Member Enquiries) has been revised. That section is now clearer about the different routes members can take to have queries addressed, now in 5 working days rather than 7, which is also reflected in the ‘Who Does What?’ guide for Councillors.

Once adopted there would be a short programme of briefings for Members and officers, and updates to Member and officer induction.

Annex A: [UPDATED] Protocol on Member / Officer Relations

This Protocol forms part of the Constitution of Cambridge City Council and sets out the framework governing relationships between Members and Officers. It reflects the Council's commitment to high standards of governance, mutual respect, professional integrity and lawful decision-making.

1. Introduction

1.1 Effective member-officer relations are built on a series of interconnecting basic principles:

- **Ethical conduct:** Members and officers individually act with selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- **Mutual respect and trust:** Members and officers respect each other, their respective roles and responsibilities.
- **Clear and well understood roles and responsibilities:** The roles and responsibilities of both members and officers, including the boundaries between them, are clearly defined, consistently communicated and understood by all members and officers working with members.
- **Visible leadership:** Senior members and officers actively and visibly model, promote and uphold the authority's standards, setting clear expectations. They are committed to preventing, identifying and resolving conflicts constructively and transparently.

1.2 This Protocol operates alongside other elements of the Council's constitution and statutory legislation:

- The Members' Code of Conduct
- The Officers' Code of Conduct
- The Council's Constitution
- The Scheme of Delegation
- The Access to Information Procedure Rules
- Relevant legislation including the Local Government Act 1972 and Localism Act 2011.

1.3 Members should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer where necessary. Officers should seek guidance from their Line Manager, Service Lead, Assistant Director, Director, or Chief Executive as appropriate.

1.4 This protocol will be reviewed on a regular basis alongside any review of the Constitution.

2. Roles of Members and Officers

2.1 Both members and officers are servants of the public and they are indispensable to one another. Their individual responsibilities are, however, distinct. Members are responsible to the electorate and serve only so long as their term of office lasts. Officers are employees of the Council and their job is to give advice to members and the authority, and to carry out the Council's work under the direction and control of the Council, the Cabinet and relevant committees, panels etc. Officers shall act in the best interests of the Council as a whole and shall not give partisan political advice. Mutual respect between members and officers is essential to good local government.

2.2 Members have three main areas of responsibility:

- (1) determining the policy of the Council and providing political leadership,
- (2) representing the Authority externally, and
- (3) acting as advocates on behalf of their constituents.

It is not the role of members to involve themselves in the day-to-day management of the Council's services. Members should be careful to avoid involvement in internal office management, discipline and other employment related issues, as the actions of a member may be held to be the actions of the Council as an "employer".

2.3 Members of the Cabinet and chairs and vice-chairs of committees and panels have additional responsibilities. Their relationships with officers may be different from, and more complex than, those of members without those responsibilities and this is recognised in the expectations they are entitled to have.

2.4 As individual members of the Council, all members have the same rights and obligations in their relationship with officers and should be treated equally. This principle is particularly important in the context of overview and scrutiny. Where a political group forms an administration, either alone or in partnership with another group or groups, it is recognised that the relationship between officers (particularly those at a senior level in the Council) and the administration will differ from that with

opposition groups. However, members in opposition still have the same rights and obligations in their relationships with officers and should be treated equally.

2.5 The Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer) hold statutory responsibilities which must be respected at all times. The role of officers is to give advice and information to members and to implement the policies determined by the Council.

3. Expectations

3.1 Members can expect from officers:

- (a) a commitment to the Authority as a whole, and not to any political group;
- (b) a working partnership;
- (c) an understanding of, and support for, respective roles, workloads and pressures;
- (d) a timely response to enquiries and complaints;
- (e) professional advice, not influenced by political views or preference, which does not compromise the political neutrality of employees;
- (f) regular up-to-date information on matters that can reasonably be considered appropriate and relevant to their needs, having regard to any individual responsibilities that they have and positions that they hold;
- (g) awareness of, and sensitivity to, the political environment;
- (h) respect, dignity and courtesy;
- (i) training and development in order to carry out their role effectively;
- (j) integrity, mutual support and appropriate confidentiality;
- (k) not to have personal issues raised with them by employees outside the agreed procedures;
- (l) that employees shall not use their relationship with members to advance their personal interests or to influence decisions improperly;
- (m) that employees shall at all times comply with the Officers' Code of Conduct.

3.2 Officers can expect from members:

- (a) a working partnership;
- (b) an understanding of, and support for, respective roles, workloads and pressures;
- (c) political leadership and direction;
- (d) respect, dignity and courtesy;
- (e) integrity, mutual support and appropriate confidentiality;
- (f) not to be subject to bullying or to be put under undue pressure. Members should have regard to the seniority of officers in determining what are reasonable requests, having regard to the power relationship between members and officers, and the potential vulnerability of officers, particularly at junior levels;
- (g) that members shall not use their relationship with officers to advance their personal interests or those of others or to influence decisions improperly;
- (h) that members shall at all times comply with the local Code of Conduct.

4. Working Relationships and Conduct

4.1 It is clearly important that there should be close working relationships between all officers and members. However, such relationships should never be allowed to become so close or appear so close as to bring into question the individual's ability to deal impartially with others. Close personal familiarity between individual members and officers can damage professional relationships and can prove embarrassing to other members and officers. Situations should be avoided, therefore, that could give rise to suspicion and / or appearance of improper conduct or behaviour. Provided these guidelines are observed, there is no reason why there should not be an informal atmosphere between members and officers outside formal meetings and events.

4.2 Any dealings between members and officers should be conducted with mutual trust, respect and courtesy and neither party should seek to take unfair advantage of their position. An employee who is one of their constituents may ask a member for advice and support. Employees are entitled to seek such assistance in the same way as any other member of the public. However, members should be careful not to prejudice the Council's position in relation to disciplinary procedures or employment matters in respect of any employee. A member approached for help in such circumstances should first seek advice from the Monitoring Officer.

4.3 Members shall not pressurise any officer to change their professional opinion on any Council business matter or do anything that compromises, or which is likely to compromise, the impartiality of officers or those who work for, or on behalf of, the Council.

Constructive Criticism

4.4 It is an absolute requirement that councillors do not criticise officers personally or use, as councillors, inappropriate language or conduct in public about reports or actions taken by officers. Officers are similarly constrained by their own code, by their employment provisions and by their requirement to maintain professional integrity. It is important that there should be mutual respect and courtesy between councillors and officers and that no councillor or officer should seek to take unfair advantage of their position.

4.5 Councillors have the right to criticise reports or the actions taken by officers but they should always avoid personal attacks on officers and ensure that criticism is constructive, well-founded and likely to lead to improved performance in future, and does not seek to apportion blame.

5. Accountability of Members / Officers under Scrutiny Arrangements

An Overview and Scrutiny Committee may scrutinise and review decisions made by the Cabinet or actions taken by or on behalf of the Cabinet. As well as reviewing documentation, in fulfilling the scrutiny role, these committee's may require the Leader, lead cabinet member or Chief Officer or service lead to attend before it as provided in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

6. Local Members (Ward Councillors)

6.1 Local members have an important role to play in representing the Council in electoral Wards, responding to the concerns of their constituents, in meetings with partners and serving on external bodies and organisations.

6.2 It is essential for the proper running of the Council that there should be full and appropriate engagement with local Ward members before new decisions are taken which affect their electoral Wards. It is the duty of each Chief Officer or service manager to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the requirements engage and to keep local members informed and that the timing of such information allows members to contribute to those discussions.

- 6.3. Issues may affect a single electoral Ward but others may have a wider impact in which case numerous members will need to be involved and kept informed. In such instances and engagement should be proportionate and coordinated.
- 6.4 Officers must ensure Ward Councillors are consulted or advised of the exercise of delegated powers relevant to their area where appropriate.
- 6.4 Wherever a public meeting (i.e. a meeting open to the public to attend) is organised by the Council to consider a local issue, all members representing the electoral Ward(s) affected should, as a matter of course, be invited to attend. Similarly, whenever the Council undertakes a formal consultative exercise, the local member(s) shall be notified at the outset of the exercise.
- 6.5 If a local member is not sure how to handle a problem that has arisen in their Ward they may, if appropriate, seek guidance from their Group Leader or member colleagues before seeking advice from Chief Officers or service managers.

7. Members' Enquiries

- 7.1 The relationship between members and officers should be characterised by partnership, empowerment and trust. In order to ensure delivery of the Council's priorities and provision of high-quality public services it is essential that members and officers work in a collaborative and mutually supportive manner. Officers should recognise the need for members to receive information in a timely manner in order to carry out their constituency roles. Members should likewise be appreciative of the competing demands on officer time and the variety of routes available to them to resolve enquiries.
- 7.2 There now exists a significant amount of information about council services on the council's public website. This includes digital routes to report issues or request services, which are then logged and monitored to ensure they are addressed appropriately and expediently. Members should, whenever possible, first check the City Council website to resolve general queries, or to report issues or request services
1. Members should advise residents to do the same.
- 7.3 Members frequently get involved in resident matters if there is a potential unresolved failure of service or to advocate on behalf of residents. If it is necessary to contact an officer to resolve such an enquiry, Members should refer to 'Who Does What' to identify the appropriate service manager to contact. If that is not clear, Members can

¹ On-line options are the quickest, easiest, and most efficient way to report issues or receive a service. [Report it - Cambridge City Council](#).

Speak to the contact centre in order to be referred to the appropriate officer or service. Try to avoid contacting Chief Officers about issues that should be dealt with by a service manager.

- 7.4 Members' enquiries which fall within the remit of residents' complaints, which should not generally include a request for service, shall be handled under the Council's Complaints Procedure². The Council aims to respond to all complaints within 10 working days. If more time is required residents will be informed of the reasons why. Residents are also informed of who is dealing with their complaint. All complaints are logged and monitored, and complaint performance is reported quarterly.
- 7.5 Service managers and Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring that members' enquiries are dealt with promptly and satisfactorily within their service areas. There should however be no expectation among members that member queries will always be given priority over an officer's other work commitments, which also includes providing services to residents.
- 7.6 Officers shall aim to provide a substantive response to members' enquiries within 5 working days of receipt. If a substantive response cannot be provided within that timescale, officers shall contact the member to explain the reason why and liaise with them regarding the timescale within which the full response shall be sent.
- 7.7 An officer shall raise with their service manager or Chief Officer any enquiry which would impose a disproportionate burden on their work and, if necessary, further discussion shall then take place with the member concerned with a view to agreement of the approach to managing the response to the enquiry.
- 7.8 The process outlined above supplements members' statutory and common law rights to information as detailed in paragraph 10.

8. Political Groups

- 8.1 Political group meetings, whilst they form an important part in the preliminaries to Council decision-making, are not formal decision-making bodies of the Council and, as such, are not empowered to make decisions on behalf of the Council. Conclusions reached at such meetings do not, therefore, rank as Council decisions and it is essential that members and officers understand and interpret them accordingly.
- 8.2 Officer support to political groups shall not extend beyond providing information and advice in relation to Council business (not party-political business). It may be

² [Compliments, complaints and suggestions - Cambridge City Council](#)

appropriate for officers to participate in discussions within political group meetings in relation to the professional advice they give. However, it is good practice for party political discussions and debates to take place and conclusions to be reached in the absence of officers, in order to avoid suspicion of impropriety or misunderstanding.

8.3 Officers shall respect the confidentiality of any political group discussions. Any breach of this part of the protocol shall be brought to the attention of the Monitoring Officer for consideration. For the avoidance of doubt, it shall be recognised by all that, in discharging their duties, officers serve the Council as a whole and not exclusively any political group, combination of groups or any individual members. Members shall, at all times, respect the political impartiality of officers and shall not expect or encourage officers to give a political view on any matter.

8.4 When an officer is requested to attend a political group meeting:

(a) the request to attend shall be made through, and approved by, the appropriate Chief Officer or Chief Executive;

(b) such a request shall only be made in relation to Council business; and officers shall:

(i) provide relevant factual advice and assistance;

(ii) leave during the deliberations of the political group on the issues;

(iii) respect the confidentiality of any party group decisions at which they are present;

(iv) not champion, defend, action a request or spend any resources of the Council, or be held responsible for actioning in any way whatsoever the decisions of the political group(s), unless and until such decisions have become the formal decisions of the Council; and

(v) inform the other political groups, offering them the right of the same information.

9. Access to Information and Documentation

9.1 Access to Information Procedure Rules set out the rights of access for members.

9.2 Any member may request a private and confidential briefing from a senior officer on matters of policy, which have already been or may be discussed by the Council within its decision-making or advisory process. All such requests shall be made to the appropriate Chief Officer or service lead and shall be subject to the constraints and demands of the service. Briefings shall remain strictly confidential and are not to be

shared with other members of the Council unless so permitted by the relevant member and officer.

9.3 Individual members may request any Chief Officer (or another senior officer) to provide them with factual information, which is necessary in pursuance of the proper performance of their duties. Such requests shall be reasonable and shall also recognise the need for officers to maintain the distinction between the cabinet and scrutiny processes.

9.4 As regards the legal rights of members to inspect Council documents, these are partly covered by statute and partly by common law. This is commonly known as the “need to know principle”.

9.5 Sometimes a member’s “need to know” will be presumed. For example, a member is unlikely to be refused an opportunity to inspect documents relating to the functions or activities of a member body on which they serve. At other times, for example when documents contain confidential information or personal information about a third party, the member shall be required to satisfy the relevant Chief Officer or service lead about their “need to know”.

9.6 If a Chief Officer or service manager considers the cost of providing the information requested, or the nature of the request to be unreasonable they should seek guidance from the Monitoring Officer as to whether the information should be provided. Where necessary, the Monitoring Officer shall determine whether the information should be provided.

9.7 Confidential information relating to casework shall not normally be sought. If in exceptional circumstances members wish to discuss confidential aspects of an individual case then they shall first seek advice from the appropriate Chief Officer or service lead and may also need to seek permission from the constituent.

9.8 Council information provided to a member shall only be used by the member for the purpose for which it was provided (i.e. in connection with the proper performance of the member’s duties as a member of the Council). Where confidential, personal or otherwise sensitive information is obtained by a member, they shall deal with that information in accordance with the Members’ Code of Conduct.

10. Correspondence

10.1 E-mail relating to the Council shall be treated in the same way as formal business correspondence and its distribution considered accordingly. Members should restrict the distribution of e-mail correspondence to the intended recipients and refrain from

using multi address distribution lists (for example e-mail replies copied to all members) unless there is good reason so to do. It should be noted that e-mail can be used for documentary evidence in matters such as disciplinary proceedings and libel cases even after it has been deleted.

10.2 Official correspondence on behalf of the Council shall normally be sent in the name of the appropriate officer, rather than in the name of a member. However, there are circumstances in which it is appropriate for correspondence to appear in the name of a member. For example, a local member may deal with correspondence with a local constituent in relation to a local matter in their name. Similarly, the Leader of the Council or a lead cabinet member may deal with correspondence concerning their area of responsibility in their name.

10.3 Any member who receives correspondence should consider whether it is appropriate in the circumstances for it to be passed to an officer for a reply, or for them to reply in their name. Any such correspondence should always have regard to the Council's policies, practices and procedures and any mechanisms, if appropriate, for changing them. A member is advised to seek advice, as necessary, from officers before sending any correspondence in their own name.

10.4 Correspondence which creates legal obligations or gives instructions on behalf of the Council should never be sent out in the name of a member. Correspondence includes any communication by letter, e-mail, texts, social media posts or other electronic means.

11. Publicity and Media

Publicity

11.1 The Council wishes to encourage regular, open and two-way dialogue with its communities to ensure that the public are aware of the Council's activities, are informed about how to access services and are aware of opportunities for public participation in the democratic process.

11.2 The way information is publicised has changed significantly over time with online and social media being more prominent and instant. Messaging in publicity should be well considered as it is essential to ensure that local authority decisions on publicity are made in accordance with clear principles of good practice.

11.3 Officers and members of the Council shall, therefore, in making decisions on publicity, take account of the provisions of the national Code of Recommended

Practice on Local Authority Publicity 2011. The Council's communications team can help to ensure publicity is timely, correct and targeted appropriately.

11.4 Particular care should be taken with Council publicity in the run-up to an election. Additional guidance is issued at these times to help members and officers. The MO or Chief Executive can provide advice where necessary about the guidance during periods of heightened sensitivity.

Media

11.5 Members wishing to publicise themselves or their political parties shall do so in an independent capacity without using Council resources. This applies to other support service Members receive to carry out their official duties, which may only be used on Council business, and may not be used for party political work.

11.6 When using Council email, or writing on behalf of the authority, correspondence should not include political comments or criticise Council policy adopted by Full Council. If members wish to make political statements in correspondence, they shall not use Council communications channels or, give the impression their views are those of the Council on any communications channels, including social media.

11.7 The Council's Communications Team provides a press office function on behalf of the Council. Media enquiries requesting information or a response on behalf of the Council should be referred to the Communications Team and all proactive communications on behalf of the Council's work should be coordinated through the Communications Team

12. When Things Go Wrong

12.1 This protocol is designed to provide the framework within which members and officers work effectively together. However, the following process should be followed in the event of any difficulties arising.

Procedure for officers to follow when experiencing difficulties with members

12.2 From time to time the relationship between members and officers may break down or become strained. It will always be preferable to resolve matters informally, through conciliation by an appropriate senior manager or member, for example an informal meeting arranged between the relevant member and officer, the member's group leader and the Chief Executive. Officers also have recourse to a procedure whereby the complaint or grievance can be referred to the Council's Monitoring Officer.

Procedure for members to follow when experiencing difficulties with officers

12.3 A member should not raise matters relating to the conduct, behaviour or capability of an officer in a manner that is incompatible with the objectives of this protocol. An officer has no means of responding to such criticism in public. If any member feels that they have not been treated with proper mutual trust, respect or courtesy or have any concern about the conduct or capability of an officer, they should raise the matter, in private, with the relevant Service Manager, Assistant Director or Director.

12.4 Any concerns with regard to a senior officer or Chief Officer should be discussed in private with the Chief Executive. Where the officer concerned is the Chief Executive, the matter should be raised with the Leader of the Council or Monitoring Officer, as appropriate to the circumstances. If the matter cannot be resolved informally it may be necessary to invoke the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

13. Whistleblowing

Where an officer or councillor is concerned about potential unlawful conduct of an officer or councillor, the Council's whistle-blowing policy may also be relevant.

14. Interpretation

Questions of interpretation of this protocol shall be determined by the Monitoring Officer or Chief Executive.

15. Unresolved issues and amendments to this Protocol

15.1 If there are any issues of concern which are not dealt with by this Protocol, then the relevant Member or officer may discuss the matter with the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer with a view to advice being provided.

15.2 Should any Member or officer wish to suggest an amendment to this protocol, they are encouraged to contact either the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer.

Adopted by Cambridge City Council: _____

Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this Protocol is to guide councillors, officers and other individuals who are members of Council bodies in their relations with one another. The Codes of Conduct for both members and officers have been referred to in the development of this Protocol and should be considered in addition to it when appropriate.
- 1.2 Given the variety and complexity of such relations, this Protocol does not seek to be either prescriptive or comprehensive. It seeks simply to offer guidance on some of the issues that most commonly arise. It is hoped, however, that the approach that it adopts to these issues will serve as a guide to dealing with other issues.
- 1.3 This Protocol is to a large extent no more than a written statement of current practice and convention. In some respects, however, it seeks to promote greater clarity and certainty.
- 1.4 This Protocol also seeks to reflect the principles underlying the respective rules of conduct which apply to members and officers. The purpose of the rules and this Protocol is to enhance and maintain the integrity (real and perceived) of local government by demanding very high standards of personal conduct.

Roles of Members and officers

- 2.1 The elected members are responsible for:
 - the initiation and direction of policy;
 - democratic accountability to the electorate for policies and for service delivery;
 - the scrutiny of Council services;
 - community leadership;
 - the promotion of partnership working; and
 - the presentation of Council policy.

2.2 The officers are responsible for:

- providing the professional advice that members must have before them when formulating policy and when taking decisions. The functions and areas of responsibility of the Council's Chief Officers are described in Article 11 of the Constitution (pages 23-26);
- implementing members' decisions;
- running the Council's services and day-to-day administration;
- taking managerial and operational decisions in accordance with the Council's schemes of delegation; and
- the provision of information regarding Council services and approved Council policies including via the media.

Working relationships

3.1 The Council has determined that there should be no formal separation of officer support between the executive and scrutiny functions. The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that staffing support is sufficient. To assist this, the Chief Executive will be responsible for ensuring that proper officer support is provided for overview and scrutiny.

3.2 The working relationship between senior officers and the Executive will be particularly close. This relationship, however, must not:

- compromise officers' duties to all Members of the Council;
- be so close as to give the appearance of partiality on the part of the officer;
- undermine the confidentiality of any discussions within the Corporate Management Team or between senior officers and other Members;
- compromise officers' professional responsibility to advise Members that a particular course of action should not be pursued;
- abrogate officer responsibility for action taken under Delegated Powers.

- 3.3 Officers will also provide advice and assistance to individual Members in respect of Council business, including issues raised by constituents. They must not be requested to advise upon private matters.
- 3.4 Paragraph 2 of the Officer Code of Conduct (Pages 295-299) emphasises that officers are employed by, and serve, the whole Council. They are politically neutral and must avoid being identified with any political party. Members must respect this.
- 3.5 Directors/Assistant Directors (but not normally any other officer below second tier) may, in exceptional circumstances, be invited to attend political group meetings to explain or advise on policies and/or issues provided that this facility is available to all political groups represented on the Council. The Chief Executive should be informed by an employee that he/she is to attend such a meeting.
- 3.6 Paragraph 3.5 does not apply to invitations to officers to attend group meetings in their capacity as trade union representatives, which shall be permitted.
- 3.7 Political group meetings fall outside the Council's decision-making process. Conclusions reached at such meetings are not Council decisions and so should not be relied upon as such.
- 3.8 The Chief Executive and Directors may attend collectively to brief meetings of those members making up the Executive and the Chairs of Scrutiny & Regulatory Committees, on forthcoming issues.
- 3.9 Scrutiny committees have the power to require Executive Councillors and officers to appear before them and answer questions. So far as Executive Councillors are concerned, scrutiny committees should, wherever possible, require attendance only at meetings that appear in the Council diary. So far as officers are concerned, the statutory guidance states that "local authorities may wish to adopt conventions that overview and scrutiny committees would normally only require officers above a certain grade to attend to ensure that more junior officers are not put under undue pressure". Accordingly, the Council's scrutiny committees will only be able to require

the attendance of Chief Officers and Directors/Assistant Directors. However, to facilitate proper conduct of business, they may arrange, as necessary, for other officers to attend meetings to assist.

Familiarity

- 4.1 Close personal familiarity between individual members and officers can damage the principle of mutual respect. It could also, intentionally or accidentally, lead to the passing of confidential information or information which should not properly be passed between them, such as personal details.
- 4.2 Such familiarity could also cause embarrassment to other members and/or other officers and even give rise to suspicions of favouritism.
- 4.3 As a result care should be taken by individual members and officers in their relationship with each other.

Undue Pressure

- 5.1 It is important that in any dealings between members and officers neither should seek to take unfair advantage of their position.
- 5.2 In their dealings with both Directors and officers (especially junior employees), members need to be aware that it is easy for officers to be overawed and feel at a disadvantage. Such feelings can be intensified where members hold official and/or political office.
- 5.3 A member should not apply any pressure on an officer to do work outside of normal duties. A member should also not normally require an officer to do work outside of reasonable working hours but if deemed essential then this should be negotiated. Neither should pressure be put on an officer to do anything that he or she is not empowered to do.

- 5.4 Similarly, an officer must not lobby or use influence on an individual member to make a decision in his or her personal favour. They should not raise personal matters to do with their job, nor make claims or allegations about other officers, nor make negative comments on the competency of another officer as the Council has formal procedures for this.
- 5.5 Members should recognise that officers' workloads frequently require extended periods of concentration or involve tight deadlines. Members should respect officers' working time and should, where possible, arrange appointments and avoid frequent unscheduled interruptions.

Constructive criticism & redress

- 6.1 It is important that there should be mutual courtesy between Members and officers. It is important that there are reasonable standards of courtesy and no member or officer should seek to take unfair advantage of their position.
- 6.2 Members have the right to criticise reports or the actions taken by officers but they should:
- always avoid personal attacks on officers;
 - ensure that criticism is constructive and well-founded.
- 6.3 If a member considers that he or she has not been treated with proper respect or courtesy, he or she may raise it with the officer's line manager or Director without delay if it is not possible to resolve it through direct discussion. If the issue still remains unresolved appropriate action may be taken by the Director in accordance with the Council's normal procedures. Feedback should be given to the member on the outcome.
- 6.4 If an officer considers that he or she has not been treated with proper respect or courtesy, and a direct discussion is impractical or fails to resolve the matter, he or she should raise the matter with the line manager or Director without delay. In such circumstances, the Director will take such action as is appropriate either by

approaching the individual and/or Party Group Leader. The Director will inform the Chief Executive if the Party Group Leader becomes involved, or in any other case where it is appropriate. Feedback should be given to the officer on the outcome.

- 6.5 The Council operates a confidential whistle-blowing policy overseen by the Standards Committee. The Council is committed to the highest possible standards of operation, integrity, openness and accountability. It is expected that where an officer or member is concerned about potential unlawful conduct of an officer or member, they voice those concerns so that they can be dealt with effectively. Nb. The Code of Conduct for Members (Part 5a of the Constitution pages 287-294) refers to those matters where a member is aware that another member has failed to comply with the Code.

Officers' advice on declarations of interest

- 7.1 The Council's Head of Legal Practice will provide advice and information to Members on declarations of interest of a personal nature and whether or not such an interest might amount to a prejudicial interest. However, Members will know the nature and extent of any interest they may have. It is the Member's responsibility, therefore, to decide whether any interest should be declared.

Officers' reports and advice

- 8.1 The Director/Assistant Director in whose name a report to the Council (or any part of its formal decision-making structure) will always be fully responsible for the contents of it.
- 8.2 A report will only be amended where the suggested amendment also reflects the professional judgement of the author of the report. Any remaining disagreement between the Executive Councillor/Chair and the author of the report should be referred to the Chief Officer, or, if the author of the report is a Chief Officer, to the Chief Executive for resolution after consultation with the Leader.

- 8.3 On occasions, officers will need to express a professional view on a matter which may not support the view of the Executive and/or the relevant Chief Officers of the Council. They must be allowed to do so without interference from, or victimisation by, members or officers.

Officer decisions taken under delegated powers

- 9.1 When making a decision under powers delegated to them, it must be recognised that it is the officer, and not any member, who takes the action and it is the officer who is accountable for it.

Dealing with the Media

- 10.1 Officers and members should be aware of the Convention on dealing with the Media in Appendix F of the Council Procedure Rules in Part 4a of the Constitution (pages 138-140). This is also listed on the Council's Intranet under 'Publicity and Media'.

Involvement of ward councillors

- 11.1 Whenever a public meeting is organised by the Council to consider a local issue, all the councillors representing the Ward or Wards affected should, as a matter or course, be invited to attend the meeting with the maximum possible notice being given. Similarly whenever the Council undertakes any form of consultative exercise on a local issue, the Ward Councillors should be consulted at the outset of the exercise.
- 11.2 Ward Councillors should be notified in advance about any issues likely to affect them. This would include press releases relating to a particular Ward or significant matters likely to affect a Ward.
- 11.3 Officers are reminded of the protocol for consulting Ward Councillors before exercising delegated powers (Part 3 – Discharge of Council Functions pages 83-84).

Correspondence

- 12.1 Unless a member or officer requests confidentiality, it is to be assumed that correspondence between a Member and an officer is not confidential and may be shown to others (an obvious exception is where an issue relates to an individual constituent and would normally be treated in confidence). If, in an officer's view, correspondence between an individual member and an officer is of interest to other members, to keep them fully informed, it should be made clear to the original member that copies have been sent to other members.
- 12.2 Where issues are raised by, or with, individual members relating to a matter of general interest in a ward, (as it is in the best interests of the Council to ensure that all members are properly informed of general issues in their Ward), copies of correspondence will normally be sent to all members for the Ward and the appropriate Executive Councillor. However, a member may specifically request that correspondence is not copied to other members and/or there may be a political, or other reason, why it is not appropriate to do so.
- 12.3 Where an officer sends information on his/her own initiative to an Executive Councillor, copies will be provided to the relevant minority spokesperson(s) and Chair of Scrutiny.
- 12.4 Official letters sent on behalf of the Council should normally be in the name of the appropriate officer, rather than in the name of a member. It may be appropriate in certain circumstances (e.g. representations to a Government Minister) for a letter to be signed by a member, but this should be the exception rather than the norm.

Member support services

- 13.1 The Council provides a range of support services, including stationery, typing and postage to enable Members to carry out their duties. These may only be used on Council business. They may not be used for party political work of any kind except for the administration of party group meetings (but not attending or minuting such meetings).

Unresolved issues and amendments to this Protocol

- 14.1 If there are any issues of concern which are not dealt with by this Protocol, then the relevant Member or officer may discuss the matter with the Chief Executive with a view to advice being provided.
- 14.2 Should any Member or officer wish to suggest an amendment to this protocol, he/she is asked to contact either the Chief Executive or Director of Customer & Democratic Services.
- 14.3 Any amendments require approval of Council on the recommendation of the Civic Affairs Committee. The Standards Committee and any other relevant body may be consulted on issues raised by the Protocol and on proposed amendments when appropriate.

Inclusion and Equity Panel

Appointed by: Leader

Terms of Reference:

To promote equity and inclusion in order that all communities in Cambridge achieve better outcomes; thrive and succeed, with access and removing barriers to opportunity, networks, resources, and support with an emphasis on valuing the lived experiences of individual and communities and identifying best practice locally and nationally.

It delivers this purpose by:

- Ensuring Panel recommendations are informed by those with lived experience of inequality
- Aligning the Panel's agenda to the Forward Plan, prioritising items with the greatest equalities impact
- Developing a work plan that enables Panel members to request specific items come to the Panel for its consideration

The IEP will focus on equity for people with characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 as well as:

- People with care experience (an umbrella term used to describe individuals who are, or who have at any time been, in the care of a local authority)
- People with experience of being on a low-income or in poverty
- Travelling community members, including those without the protected characteristic of 'race' under the Equality Act 2010
- Non-binary and gender fluid people
- Veterans Objectives
- Drive service improvements in respect of equity within Council and influence practice more widely in the City.
- Share their expertise and make recommendations that promote equity and inclusion, and celebrate diversity, based on their lived experience and/or professional knowledge.
- Influence the council's approach to equity for our communities and staff by making recommendations on strategy, policies and plans (and equality impact assessments as they relate to these), helping to inform Cabinet decisions and scrutiny.
- Monitor and report on the Council's compliance with equity related legislation, including the Equality Act 2010.

Membership

The IEP membership will consist of:

- The nominated Cabinet Member (or a nominated substitute in their absence)

Membership from each of the following:

- Councillors who will be appointed by Cabinet with an expectation that one per Political Group and Lead Cabinet Member. Each Political Group will nominate their own members of the Panel who will represent their Group.

Delegation to the Director of Communities to facilitate Membership of:

- Cambridge City Council staff
- Public Members and members of the Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise and Faith sector working with diverse communities that experience discrimination, marginalisation and inequality.

The IEP will invite independent people from different equality groups to speak on issues that are important to them based on their lived experiences, helping to guide the Panel's discussions. Moreover, the Political Groups can nominate councillors who are not members of the Panel to attend meetings to speak to particular items as agreed by the Chair of the Panel.

Civic Affairs & Audit Committee

9 March 2026

5.30 – 7.30pm

Present: Councillors McPherson (Chair), Gawthrope_Wood (Vice-Chair), Bennett, Bick, Dalzell, Robertson and Sheil

Officers Present:

Chief Executive: Robert Pollock

Chief Financial Officer: Jody Etherington

Head of Legal Practice and Monitoring Officer: Tom Lewis

Communities Director: Sam Scharf

Chief Audit Executive: Jonathan Tully

Democratic Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer): Dan Kalley

Democratic Services Officer: Sarah Michael

Meeting Producer: Matthew Hussey

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

Annual Civic Affairs and Audit Committee report

Recommendations of the Civic Affairs & Audit Committee, which met on 9 March 2026, are outlined below:

The Committee **resolved unanimously** to approve the recommendations on to Full Council.

Accordingly, Council is recommended to:

Approve the Annual Civic Affairs and Audit Committee report.

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REPORT TITLE: Annual Civic Affairs & Audit Committee Report

To:

Civic Affairs & Audit Committee (9 March 2026)

Report by:

Jonathan Tully, Chief Audit Executive & Dan Kalley, Democratic Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Email: jonathan.tully@3csharedservices.org & dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk

Wards affected:

None:

Director Approval: Director Jane Wilson confirms that the report author has sought the advice of all appropriate colleagues and given due regard to that advice; that the equalities impacts and other implications of the recommended decisions have been assessed and accurately presented in the report; and that they are content for the report to be put to the Committee.

1. Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that the Civic Affairs and Audit Committee:

1. Review and approve the draft Annual Civic Affairs & Audit Committee Report shown in Appendix 1 for submission to Council at the Annual Meeting in May.
2. Delegate authority to the Chair, in consultation with the committee, to agree any minor changes to the report before submission to Council

2. Purpose and reason for the report

2.1 The Civic Affairs & Audit Committee has been in operation since Annual Council in May 2025. This was preceded by the Civic Affairs Committee. The Committee has a wide-ranging remit that underpins the Council's governance processes by providing independent challenge and assurance of the adequacy of risk management, internal controls including internal audit, anti-fraud and the financial reporting framework.

The Committee also has responsibility for oversight of Civic and Constitutional functions. Reports have been provided this year on giving updates to the Civic functions, ensuring that work is undertaken to maintain the history and importance of the office of Mayor. Further work will be presented to committee as progress is made around Local Government Reorganisation.

3. Alternative options considered

- 3.1 The committee could not provide an annual report, however best practice guidelines have stated that local authorities should produce a report for the Council to review as part of good governance arrangements.

4. Background and key issues

- 4.1 The attached Draft Annual Report has been produced (Appendix 1).

The report shows:

- Background to the Committee, its roles, responsibilities, and membership.
- An overview and coverage of its remit including Internal Audit, Accounts and Financial Management, External Audit, Risk Management, Control Assurance, Corporate Governance, Civic Functions and Fraud and Irregularities; and
- Focus on good governance moving forward and looking at continuous improvement.

5. Consultation, engagement and communication

- 5.1 The Civic Affairs & Audit Committee has the opportunity to feed into the report before being presented to Full Council

6. Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact

- 6.1 Publication of the report will enable the public to gain an insight into the role of the Committee and will ensure that the Committee can continue to progress and develop in the future. The Council continues to evolve its Civic Affairs & Audit Committee in line with

best practice to provide effective challenge.

Subject to approval by Civic Affairs & Audit Committee, it is intended to present the report to Council for noting as part of the Committee's annual update in order to demonstrate the work carried out on the governance arrangements across the Council.

7. Implications

Relevant risks

7.1 There are none.

Financial Implications

7.2 There are none.

Legal Implications

7.3 There are none.

Equalities and socio-economic Implications

7.4 None required.

Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications

7.5 There are none.

Procurement Implications

7.6 There are none.

Community Safety Implications

7.7 There are none.

8. Background documents

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

8.1 CIPFA guidance

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 – Annual Civic Affairs & Audit Committee Report

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact, Jonathan Tully, Chief Audit Executive, Jonathan.tully@cambridge.gov.uk

Dan Kalley, Democratic Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer), dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk



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Foreword From The Chair

As Chair of the Civic Affairs & Audit Committee, I am pleased to present this Annual Report for the municipal year.

The Committee plays a vital role in supporting Cambridge City Council's commitment to strong governance, civic functions, financial stewardship and effective risk management. On behalf of the Committee, I am satisfied that during the year we have continued to provide robust and constructive challenge across our core responsibilities, including oversight of internal and external audit, financial reporting, treasury management, risk management, counter-fraud arrangements and the Annual Governance Statement. As well as receiving reports on the Civic functions at the Council and the Council's Constitution.

Throughout the year, the Committee has received regular reports from Internal Audit, monitored delivery of the approved audit plan, and reviewed management's progress in implementing agreed actions. We have also maintained effective engagement with External Audit to ensure independent scrutiny of the Council's financial statements and value for money arrangements.

I would like to thank fellow Committee Members for their diligence and commitment, and officers for the quality and professionalism of the reports and advice provided throughout the year. The constructive and open working relationship between Members and officers is fundamental to the Committee's effectiveness.

Looking ahead, the Committee will continue to strengthen its role, support continuous improvement in governance arrangements, and ensure that Cambridge City Council maintains the highest standards of accountability and transparency.

Councillor Russ McPherson

Chair of the Civic Affairs & Audit Committee
Cambridge City Council

Executive Summary

Statement of Accounts and External Audit Progress

Substantial progress has been made on the auditing of our accounts in 2025/2026.

Recognising there was a national backlog, Central Government issued a consultation on proposals to clear the backlog in February 2024. This established new statutory backstop dates for all financial years up to and including 2027/28, replacing existing deadlines in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. These [measures](#) were set out in a statement in July 2024. This approach enabled external auditors to complete lighter touch reviews to accelerate the recovery, and issue modified and disclaimed opinions. The external auditors' other statutory duties – including to report on Value for Money arrangements, to make statutory recommendations and issue Public Interest Reports remained. It was therefore very important that the Committee actively participated in reviewing the accounts, and we had effective engagement with both our external auditors during this process.

We concluded our Statement of Accounts with our external auditor EY for financial year 2023/2024 in May 2025 and financial year 2024/2025 in February 2026.

Below is a timetable summarising our current position as of May 2026.

Year	Draft statements	Audit Plan	Audit Fieldwork	Audit Sign-off	Date signed off (forecast)
2023/2024	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	May 2025
2024/2025	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	February 2026
2025/2026	In progress	In progress			(January 2027)

Our Statements are available to read on [our Website](#).

Governance and risk management

Our review of the past 12 months below highlights the positive work undertaken to maintain and develop our governance arrangements. This includes:

- ✓ regular assurance reports from internal audit;
- ✓ reviewing the Council's Risk Management Framework and Strategy;
- ✓ Information Governance assurance
- ✓ reviewing development of the Performance Management Framework

Conclusion

We would like to thank the officers who have supported the Committee, members who have substituted at meetings as needed, and our external auditors.








It is important for all of us to maintain awareness of our responsibilities and how we can help the Council. We suggest that all members and officers:

- ✓ make sure decisions are made in line with our corporate governance principles, being mindful of our [Code of Governance](#) and the [Constitution](#);
- ✓ are alert to the possibility of fraud or mistake in handling public money: if you have any concerns, please report these to the fraud and enforcement team, internal audit, external audit, or use our whistleblowing policy; and
- ✓ are familiar with how to access to help and guidance, and where policies can be found.

Committee overview

Who we are

The [Civic Affairs and Audit Committee](#) was established in May 2025 as part of the Council's new Cabinet and Leader Governance model. This was a progression of the existing [Civic Affairs Committee](#) both of which have the remit to provide those charged with Governance (Full Council) independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of the Council's financial reporting and governance processes, and undertake non-executive functions including electoral, civic and democratic processes. Our membership at the end of the municipal year for 2025/2026 is:

	Councillor Russ McPherson (Chair)
	Councillor Jenny Gawthrop Wood (Vice-Chair)
	Councillor Naomi Bennett
	Councillor Tim Bick
	Councillor Jamie Dalzell
	Councillor Richard Robertson
	Councillor Patrick Sheil

Officers which regularly support the Committee:

- Chief Finance Officer
- Chief Audit Executive
- Chief Operating Officer
- Democratic Services Manager

When we meet

We typically meet at least quarterly. Four meetings were held during 2025/2026:



What we do



We review and consider areas which support the Council’s corporate governance arrangements:

Governance Risk and Control	Internal Audit	External Audit	Financial Reporting
<p>Local Code of Governance and the Annual Governance Statement</p> <p>Instruments of financial control and arrangements to secure value for money</p> <p>Risk management, and effectiveness of internal controls.</p> <p>Counter-fraud strategy, and fraud and corruption risks.</p> <p>Partnerships and collaborations.</p>	<p>Internal Audit Charter and Code of Ethics</p> <p>Risk-Based Internal Audit Plan</p> <p>Reports from the Chief Audit Executive during the year, including updates on the work of Internal Audit, key findings, issues of concern and actions.</p> <p>Consider the Chief Audit Executive’s opinion on the control environment and the results of the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme.</p>	<p>Comment on the scope and depth of external audit work to ensure their independence and it gives value for money.</p> <p>Review any issues raised by Public Sector Audit Appointments</p> <p>Consider the external auditor’s annual letter, relevant reports and the report to those charged with governance.</p> <p>Advise and recommend on the effectiveness of relationships between external and internal audit and other inspection agencies or relevant bodies.</p>	<p>Review the annual Statement of Accounts,</p> <p>Consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed.</p> <p>Notify Council with regard to conclusion and submission of the Statement of Accounts.</p>

This helps us to report our findings to those charged with governance and we do this by publishing this annual report. See [our website](#) for more information about the Committee.

Civic & Constitutional Functions

Civic leadership in Cambridge City Council has a distinguished history dating back to 1207, when King John granted the town the right to elect a Mayor. That historic charter established a tradition of civic representation and democratic accountability that continues to shape the Council's identity today. The ceremonial and civic functions of the authority are not merely matters of tradition; they embody the Council's connection to its residents, institutions and communities, and reinforce the dignity and integrity of public office.

Councillors and officers alike share responsibility for upholding these traditions while ensuring that civic arrangements remain modern, inclusive and responsive. The Civic Affairs and Audit Committee play a central role in providing oversight of civic governance, monitoring constitutional arrangements, and ensuring that high standards of probity and transparency are maintained.

During the 2025–26 Municipal Year, significant work was undertaken to review and modernise the Council's governance framework. A revised Constitution was formally adopted at the Annual Meeting in May 2025. Building on that work, a further report was presented to the Committee on 9 March 2026 to establish a structured programme of ongoing constitutional review, including proposed refinements to key protocols such as the Member–Officer Protocol.

The Committee has continued to receive assurance reports on the implementation and effectiveness of civic arrangements, ensuring that high standards are embedded in practice and not merely set out in policy. This proactive approach will be particularly important as Local Government Reorganisation progresses through summer and autumn 2026. The Civic Affairs and Audit Committee will play a pivotal role in maintaining constitutional clarity, safeguarding civic traditions, and ensuring that the Council remains resilient and well-governed through a period of structural change.

What we did during the year

In March 2025 our Civic Affairs Committee and Governance Design Group [reviewed and recommended](#) that Full Council approve a new Constitution to support operation of an updated Leader and Cabinet Model of governance from the start of the 2025/2026 Municipal Year. We established a newly titled Civic Affairs and Audit Committee, and our Terms of Reference was developed with support of ADSO. As part that review, we reviewed the Committee functions to Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) best practice guidance, to help ensure we continue to operate effectively.

CIPFA produced a diagram to illustrate this:



Using their guidance, we can evaluate our work and demonstrate how we contributed to development of effective governance arrangements in the year:

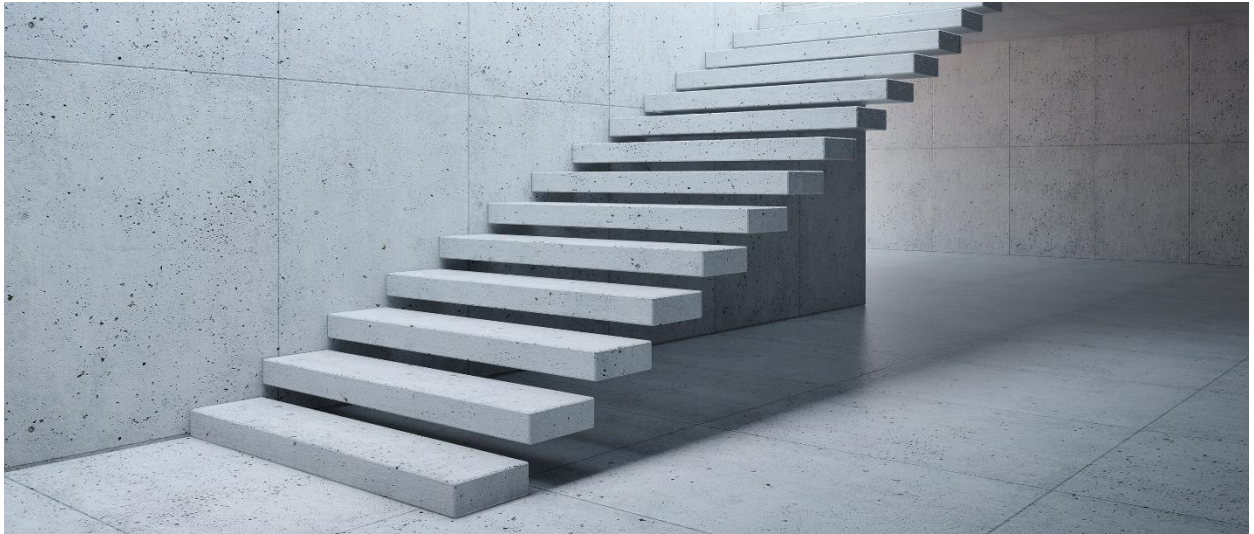
Areas where the committee can have impact by supporting improvement	Examples from the year
<p>Promoting the principles of good governance and their application to decision making.</p>	<p>We supported development of the Local Code of Governance which was updated in the year.</p> <p>In May 2025 the Civic Affairs Committee reviewed and approved the Annual Governance Statement for 2023/2024 in advance of approving the Statement of Accounts for 2023/2024.</p> <p>In February 2026 the Civic Affairs and Audit Committee reviewed and approved the Annual Governance Statement for 2024/2025 in advance of approving the Statement of Accounts for 2024/2025.</p> <p>As part of our review we suggested and agreed changes that were reflected in the final published versions of the documents. We supported effective partnership working by ensuring that robust governance, risk management and accountability arrangements are in place across collaborative activities. We kept up to date on the progress of the external audits, noting new legislation which introduced backstop dates to manage the national backlog. The Council is now up to date with the accounts as per the current backstop dates.</p>
<p>Contributing to the development of an effective control environment.</p>	<p>We reviewed regular reports from Internal Audit which provided updates on assurance work completed. This included follow-up reports on previous reviews where there was limited assurance and / or significant recommendations.</p> <p>The Finance team maintained their compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code.</p>

Areas where the committee can have impact by supporting improvement	Examples from the year
<p>Supporting the establishment of arrangements for the governance of risk and for effective arrangements to manage risks.</p>	<p>We discussed and noted how we are integrating our risk management data into the broader Performance Management Framework to strengthen alignment between risk and performance oversight.</p> <p>Our Risk Management Framework includes a scoring matrix that supports consistent risk evaluation and helps prioritise mitigation efforts. In November 2025 we noted the development of updated financial scoring factors to reflect current conditions and ensure effective and proportionate mitigation.</p> <p>In March 2026 we received a report on the Council’s risk management arrangements and reviewed the revision of our Strategy and Framework.</p>
<p>Advising on the adequacy of the assurance framework and considering whether assurance is deployed efficiently and effectively.</p>	<p>We considered the assurance framework whilst reviewing the Annual Governance Statement. This included variety of assurance sources including internal controls, policy development, risk management, the Chief Audit Executive annual opinion, external inspections, and the reports of the external auditors.</p>
<p>Supporting effective external audit, with a focus on high quality and timely audit work.</p>	<p>We discussed with external auditors how the Government has introduced legislation for a lighter touch audit of the outstanding accounts within the national backlog, and how these risks were being managed.</p> <p>We noted the audit plan from our external auditors, which considered risks and how the audit of the 2024/2025 would be carried out.</p> <p>We considered the External Audit completion reports for both 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 financial years from our external auditors EY.</p>

Areas where the committee can have impact by supporting improvement	Examples from the year
Supporting the quality of the internal audit activity, in particular underpinning its organisational independence.	<p>We reviewed internal audit reports which gives details on the planned audits and the audit strategy, compliance with professional codes, and received regular updates on the progress of current internal audits and outcomes of the reviews.</p> <p>We noted the implementation of the Global Internal Audit Standards in the UK Public Sector, and approved the teams new charter, code of ethics, and strategy which are based on the new professional standards. We noted the teams action plan to implement the new standards.</p>
Aiding the achievement of the authority's goals and objectives by helping to ensure appropriate governance, risk, control and assurance arrangements.	<p>We received and discussed the Information Governance Annual Report which provides an overview of the current arrangements in place to monitor the Information Governance arrangements at the Council including Data Protection Compliance and Information Security / Cyber Security Compliance. It also included an update on council performance related to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) / Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) Requests; Data Subject Access Requests; Personal Data Incidents</p> <p>As part of our ongoing training and awareness we received regular reports on Governance Risk and Control. These included topical updates to help us consider emerging risks. Examples included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued approach to clearing the national backlog of accounts • Updates on Global Internal Audit Standards in the Public Sector • New legislation on measures to tackle fraud and counter fraud briefings from CIFAS and the Public Sector Fraud Authority • Updates on the National Fraud Initiative • Nolan Principles at 30 Years

Areas where the committee can have impact by supporting improvement	Examples from the year
Supporting the development of robust arrangements for ensuring value for money.	As the Civic Affairs committee we considered the External Auditors completion reports for the 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 financial years. These include Value For Money assessment across areas of financial sustainability, governance and improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Actions for improvement and assurance are incorporated into the Annual Governance Statement.
Helping the authority to implement the values of good governance, including effective arrangements for countering fraud and corruption risks.	We were briefed and discussed topical matters which helped us to support and promote counter fraud arrangements. This included updates on the National Fraud Initiative and a briefing on how we prepared for new legislation that introduces a “failure to prevent” offence as part of the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023.
Promoting effective public reporting to the authority’s stakeholders and local community and measures to improve transparency and accountability.	The Committee have produced this annual report summarising the work completed in the year. The Committee reviewed proposed amendments to Member Allowances and made recommendations to Council. The Committee reviewed and discussed the development of a quarterly performance report for Cabinet. The Committees review of the new framework, including its Principles and Approach and report, supports the Committee in fulfilling its role in reviewing corporate governance arrangements.

Continuous improvement



Our focus for the following year

We will continue to review the effectiveness of the Committee by maintaining awareness of emerging best practice guidance on governance from CIPFA, the Local Government Association, and the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.

We will also start planning for Local Government Reorganisation and how we can provide the assurance during the period of change.

Good practice

As a Committee we promote good practice in governance risk and control to those charged with governance.

Seven principles of public life

Our governance framework is supported by the [seven Principles of Public Life](#), and apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in the Civil Service, local government, the police, courts and probation services, non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), and in the health, education, social and care services. All public office-holders are both servants of the public and stewards of public resources. The principles also have application to all those in other sectors delivering public services.

Selflessness	Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
Integrity	Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
Objectivity	Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
Accountability	Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
Openness	Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
Honesty	Holders of public office should be truthful.
Leadership	Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Cambridge City Council

Record of Officer Decision

Capital Allocation: Demolition of Council Owned Buildings

Decision of: Jody Etherington, Chief Finance Officer

Reference: Capital Allocation - Demolition of Council buildings, North East Cambridge

Date of decision: 08/05/2026

Date Published on website: 12/05/2026

Decision Type: Non Key

Is Subject to Call in? No

Purpose

To confirm capital budget allocation to enable demolition of Council's buildings Orwell House and Orwell Furlong (Cowley Road, North East Cambridge), to be funded from the GF development fund set up for this purpose by the Council.

Record of Decision to be included within AGM pack for information for Council.

Officer decision:

Approval of capital budget of up to £285,000 + VAT for the demolition of the Council's current buildings at North East Cambridge.

Reasons for decision: As set out in recommendations.

Any alternative options considered and rejected:

A number of alternative options were considered and reviewed.

Scrutiny Consideration: The Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, Chair and Deputy Chair of the Performance, Assets and Strategy Scrutiny Committee were consulted.

Background and Recommendation

Following the Government's decision to terminate the proposals to relocate the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant, the Council has been considering alternative options for the site. Given changing market conditions, and the expected Anglian Water proposals to upgrade the Cowley Road plant, which is likely to impact any redevelopment scheme, the Council is still considering future redevelopment options.

In the meantime, the options for the current buildings have been reviewed. The recommended decision included a review of the current and future costs for securing, maintaining and improving the buildings in line with legislation, legal advice in relation to compliance with the vacant possession strategy that was required to progress the then Hartree scheme, alongside consideration of ongoing liabilities in relation to the current buildings.

The recommended option is to demolish the current buildings and perform associated works to leave the site in appropriate condition for possible future redevelopment. An initial draft quote has been received (£260,000 plus VAT) and a formal Request for Quote is being registered to the contracts portal in line with Procurement Legislation.

The approval of £285,000 (plus VAT) capital funding requires confirmation before completing the planning application for the demolition works, and also provides additional contingency in advance of the final formal tender process. VAT is complex, and currently considered irrecoverable but remains within the Council's exemption level. Residual liabilities would, however, cost the Council in excess of the VAT.

The Council has secured the site since vacant possession on 31st March 2026 and it is monitored.

A prior approval demolition application is being developed in line with Shared Planning Team advice and is due for submission in June 2026. Subject to capital budget and planning approval, demolition would be completed by November 2026.

The demolition will be funded from the GF development fund. The remit of the fund, as approved by Council in February 2018, includes GF investment in commercial or residential property or for enabling works. These works constitute essential enabling works in advance of future redevelopment, and therefore fall within the remit of the fund.

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