

CABINET15 July 2025
5.00 - 7.48 pm

Present: Councillors Holloway (Chair), Wade (Vice-Chair), Bird, Moore, Nestor, Smart, A. Smith, S. Smith, Thornburrow and Todd-Jones

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**2025/9/Cab Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence.

2025/10/Cab Declarations of Interest

A non-pecuniary declaration of interest was made by Councillor Martin Smart in respect of item 13 as a bank employee of Addenbrooke's Hospital.

2025/11/Cab Minutes

There were no minutes.

2025/12/Cab Public Questions

The Chair noted that a public question had been received but that the questioner was not present. The Chair invited Councillor Nestor, Cabinet Member for Culture, Economy and Skills, to address the substance of the question during Item 11.

2025/13/Cab Shared Services Partnership Agreement

Councillor Simon Smith, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, presented the report.

In response to questions, officers clarified:

- The partnership had been established in 2015 and extended through 2020.
- Extending arrangements until 2030 would provide stability, with an exit clause in the event of local government reorganisation.

- The service had received awards, with particular success at Darwin Green, and had achieved improvements against key performance indicators.

The Cabinet discussed:

- The rationale for a further extension.
- The need to retain flexibility and oversight.

The Chair of the Performance, Assets and Strategy Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Katie Porrer, noted that while the matter had not been formally scrutinised, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would maintain oversight.

RESOLVED: To approve the partnership renewal agreement for 3C Shared Services (ICT, Building Control and Legal).

2025/14/Cab Stock Condition Survey Strategy

Councillor Gerri Bird, Executive Councillor for Housing, presented the report.

In response to questions, officers clarified:

- The Council managed 7,600 houses, around one in every seven homes in the city.
- The Council remained compliant with the Decent Homes Standard.
- Surveys would be undertaken on a rolling five-year cycle (around 1,500 per year).
- Oversight of the stock condition of council-owned properties would be improved through contract managers.

The Cabinet discussed:

- The new social housing regulations requiring higher standards and more accurate data.
- The importance of committing to stronger oversight on council-owned stock.
- The role of contract managers in overseeing council property standards.

Councillor Bird offered an apology for issues identified in maintaining council-owned stock, noting her own experience as a social housing tenant.

RESOLVED:

1. To approve the procurement and delivery of stock condition surveys to support long-term strategic asset management, and delegate authority to the Director of City Services to:
 1. Issue tenders and, following evaluation, award contract(s) to suitable contractor(s).
 2. Finalise procurement and contractual arrangements to implement the Phased Delivery Model.
 3. Approve necessary expenditure.
 4. Develop governance and reporting arrangements.
2. To approve the adoption of the Phased Delivery Model comprising:
 1. Phase 1 (Year 1): An externally resourced programme to eliminate the current backlog of approximately 3,000 stock condition surveys.
 2. Phase 2 (Year 2 onwards): A rolling stock condition survey programme operating on a five-year cycle, designed to provide robust assurance that the Council remains compliant with its statutory obligation to survey every home at least once every five years. This programme also ensures continued adherence to the Decent Homes Standard, supporting the Council's commitment to keeping tenants' homes well-maintained, dry, and safe.

2025/15/Cab Disposal of Grafton East (top two levels)

The non-exempt papers served to frame the decision and outline proposals.

- Cllr Simon Smith verbally introduced the proposed disposal strategy
- Cllr Simon Smith introduced detailed financial, risk, and commercial considerations.
- Members discussed valuation, market sensitivity, use of the site, and contractual safeguards.

RESOLVED:

1. To approve the disposal of the council's long leasehold interest in levels 8A/10A Grafton East Multistorey Car Park (MSCP) for [EXEMPT INFORMATION].
2. To delegate authority to the Director of Economy and Place or Acting Chief Property Surveyor to finalise the method of leasehold disposal.

2025/16/Cab Public Health Contract for Tier 1 & 2 Services

Councillor Mike Todd-Jones, Executive Councillor for Communities, presented the report.

Cabinet discussed the extent to which the contract would strengthen the Council's contribution to addressing poverty and inequality.

RESOLVED: To delegate authority to the Director of Communities, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet member, to enter into a contract with Cambridgeshire County Council for the delivery of the Healthy Behaviours Change Service for the City, should the City Council's bid be successful and subject to final due diligence.

2025/17/Cab Budget Outturn 2024-25

Councillor Simon Smith, Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources, presented the report.

In response to questions, officers clarified:

- Additional interest income had been received unexpectedly; this had been managed prudently and was not expected to recur at the same level.

RESOLVED:

1. To note the 2024/25 outturn report, including the final net underspend on the General Fund of £3.762 million which will be transferred to the Civic Quarter reserve as agreed by full Council in February 2025.
2. Recommend to full Council:-
 1. The approval of the carry forward of General Fund capital budgets totalling £55.172 million as set out in detail at Appendix A(iv), together with the carry forward of £2.145 million of associated General Fund revenue funding.
 2. The approval of the carry forward of £280,000 of Housing Revenue Account revenue budget allocated for transformation purposes (see paragraph 5.8).
 3. The approval of the carry forward of Housing Revenue Account capital budgets totalling £50.941 million as set out in detail at Appendix B(iv).

2025/18/Cab Budget Setting Context 2026-27

Councillor Simon Smith, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, presented the report.

In response to questions, officers clarified:

- The Government's Fair Funding Review was underway, with the second consultation expected later in the year.
- The Council could commit £1.9m to revenue by Year 5, but the cumulative effect of the changes would be a £1.5m reduction over two years.
- Reserves remained under pressure but were sufficient for planning assumptions.

RESOLVED:

1. To accept the proposed updated savings targets for the General Fund for the next five years, as set out at paragraph 4.1, and a new headline target to save £1.5 million per year over the next two years.
2. To endorse the proposal to undertake a detailed review of the 30 Year Business Plan for the Housing Revenue Account over the summer, using external advice where appropriate.
3. To agree the high-level approach to budget setting for 2026/27 set out in section 4.
4. To agree the high-level approach to public consultation set out in section 6.

2025/19/Cab Folk Festival

Councillor Antoinette Nestor, Executive Councillor for Culture, presented the report.

In response to questions, officers clarified:

- Options considered included: revised greenfield model at Cherry Hinton Hall; a multi-venue citywide model (recommended by officers); outsourcing festival delivery to an external partner; and permanent closure.
- The recommended approach was a scaled-down, two-day festival centred at Cherry Hinton Hall, supported by local folk clubs and artists.
- Costs and income would be closely monitored, with lessons taken from the consultants' report on financial management of the festival in previous years.

The Cabinet discussed:

- The financial deficit from previous festivals and the importance of preventing escalation thereof.
- The wider context of over 150 other festivals closing nationally.
- The cultural value of the event for the city.

RESOLVED:

1. To approve the relaunch of the Cambridge Folk Festival from 2026 as a city-wide multi-venue, multi-day festival as described at para 3.1.
2. To endorse the principle that Cherry Hinton Hall, the spiritual home of the festival, should remain the anchor venue.
3. To approve in principle a contingency budget of up to £215,000 to be used if necessary to fund the risk of income loss in the first year as the new format establishes itself; and an additional investment of £60,000 to enhance marketing, infrastructure, local audience and artist development; subject to a budget bid to full council as part of the 2026/27 budget setting process.
4. To note the importance of maintaining the festival's identity, community links, and programming quality, including through ongoing engagement with Folk Clubs, artists, and cultural stakeholders.
5. To delegate authority to the Director of Communities to finalise a business plan and implement delivery, in consultation with the Cabinet Lead; and,
6. To note that officers would like to encourage the Chair of O&S (Services, Climate and Communities) to consider a review of progress to deliver the refreshed festival format at its meeting in February 2026.

2025/20/Cab Annual Customer Feedback Report

Councillor Cameron Holloway, Leader of the Council, presented the report.

Cabinet discussed and noted:

- Overall performance in customer satisfaction remained strong, with improvements on a number of measures.
- No Local Government and Housing Ombudsman complaints had been upheld.
- Opportunities existed to use tenant representatives to support officers in gaining access for inspections.
- Sector trends, with Cambridge performing well against comparators.
- That complaints received were taken seriously and used to improve services.

RESOLVED:

1. To approve publication of the Customer Feedback reports online.
2. To approve the findings of the self-assessment process documented in appendix two, Housing Complaints and Self-Assessment Report.

2025/21/Cab Housing Performance 2024-25

Councillor Gerri Bird, Executive Councillor for Housing, introduced the report.

Cabinet discussed and noted:

- Fire safety and compliance by tenants.
- Suggestions were made to allow tenant representatives to accompany officers when access was difficult. Fire safety compliance by tenants was also discussed.
- The Chair of the Performance, Assets and Strategy Overview and Scrutiny Committee advised Cabinet that a Task and Finish Group would be established to review housing services, including consideration of out-of-hours coverage.

RESOLVED:

1. To note the Housing Service's year-end performance results in operational delivery, health and safety, customer satisfaction and engagement.
2. To note the report on damp, condensation and mould as at June 2025, and the measures being put in place to help combat DCM in tenants' homes.
3. To note the results of the 2024-25 Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's), from customer perception (Tenant Satisfaction Survey) and management data.

12c New Build Update

Officers reported that the 1,000-homes milestone had been reached, with 1,145 homes delivered. Cabinet noted the acknowledgement of delays in completing repair works, noting that repairs work would resume in August, with an update to be provided in September 2025.

The Cabinet welcomed the 1,000-home milestone and discussed lessons learned on repairs and contract management.

RESOLVED: To note the report.

2025/22/Cab The Cambridge South East Transport Order

The Cabinet discussed the importance of future-proofing infrastructure in the same way as the guided busway.

RESOLVED:

1. To note the progress on resolving the outstanding matters raised by the Council for further work/dialogue with the applicant.

2. To delegate authority to the Joint Director of Planning in consultation with the Lead Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport to finalise and submit the Statement of Case based on the report within Appendix 1.

2025/23/Cab S106 Projects for Sports, Communities and Open Spaces

Mike Todd-Jones, Cabinet Member for Safety, Wellbeing and Tackling Homelessness, presented the report.

RESOLVED:

1. Approves the use of Generic and Specific S106 contributions for the following capital projects:
2. Chesterton Indoor Bowls Club: Changing Room & Toilet Facilities Upgrades - £80,000
3. Kelsey Kerridge Sports Centre: Creation of new Studio - £60,000.
4. Guildhall Main and Small Halls: AV kit and equipment - £7,000.

Prior to closing the meeting, the Leader recorded the Cabinet's thanks for Councillor John Hipkin's many years of public service, noting his 29 years as a councillor. The Cabinet extended condolences to his wife and family. Councillor Bird confirmed that a card would be sent on behalf of the Cabinet.

2025/24/Cab Committee Decisions

The meeting ended at 7.48 pm

CHAIR