

CABINET13 January 2026
5.00 - 6.40 pm

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

Other Councillors present:

Councillors Bick, Hauk, Porrer (Virtually) and Young

Officers Present:

Chief Executive: Robert Pollock

Sam Scharf: Communities Director

Strategic Community Investment Lead: Julie Cornwell

Democratic Services Manager: Dan Kalley

Deputy Democratic Services Manager: Claire Tunnicliffe

Also present (virtually):

Strategic Housing Advice Lead: Simon Hunt

Waste Policy, Change and Innovations Manager: Rebecca Weymouth Wood

Waste and Environment Planning Officer: Michelle Webb

Waste Policy Officer: Dee Wood

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**25/1/Cab Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Bird and Nestor.

25/2/Cab Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Reason
Councillor Moore	25/5/Cab	Personal: Daughter works at Kettle's Yard
Councillor Thornburrow	25/6/Cab	Personal: Daughter works for a Homeless Charity

25/3/Cab Minutes

The Leader made the following announcements since the last December Cabinet Meeting:

- i. Would write to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to confirm that Cambridge did not support postponing local elections, with the City Council elections taking place in May. While Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) was significant, the Council did not consider postponing elections necessary and maintaining democratic legitimacy essential.
- ii. The Council had signed the UNISON Anti-Racism Charter, promoted by Unison. Following a motion proposed by Councillor A Smith.
- iii. The Local Plan consultation remained open until 30 January 2026, which would help shape the future of Cambridge and surrounding areas.
[Draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan for consultation | Greater Cambridge Shared Planning](#)
- iv. An LGR consultation on Local Government was planned to take place early February, which focused on options for Cambridge and Peterborough.
- v. A **groundbreaking ceremony for the WREN Solar Farm** at Waterbeach had taken place.
 - The Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment informed the Cabinet that the solar farm would enable the expansion of the electric refuse fleet beyond the current grid limit, helping reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality, supporting the Council's 2030 net-zero target.

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2025 were signed as a correct record.

25/4/Cab Public Questions

There were no public questions.

25/5/Cab Community Grants 2026-27

The Cabinet Member for Communities introduced the report.

The purpose of the report was to approve grant funding decisions where the award was over £5,000 and information on the multi-year funding scheme.

In response to questions from Cabinet Members and those Councillors present, the Cabinet Member for Communities and Strategic Community Investment Lead said the following:

- i. An inflation uplift would be included to ensure consistency across all multi-year grants. The overall cost was modest, around £40,000 spread

over the full three years. This provided organisations the ability to plan for the uplift. Believed it represented good value for money.

- ii. The inflation uplift was seen as a managed level of risk. The Council would honour the inflation uplift set at the start of the multiyear grant scheme.
- iii. Grant funding was a significant level of funding for the Council. It was not possible to provide examples of district councils with a grants pot of this size.
- iv. This section of grant funding was only a part of the picture. The Council provided just over £2 million in grants overall, not all of which sat within the community grants programme.
- v. Alongside these grants, work was undertaken to support communities through the Community Development team, there was also work with council tenants and estates, and the activities delivered through the Estates and Facilities teams. As example, the Junction operated on a peppercorn rent from the Council, another way in which the Council supported local organisations.
- vi. The grants were only one element of a much wider programme of community support. It was important to recognise the substantial work that took place across the teams that was not often seen or attributed directly.
- vii. These services were discretionary, not statutory duties, nor were the Council required or instructed to provide them. While a small amount of funding came from government for specific purposes, the vast majority of what the Council delivered was entirely the Council's choice.
- viii. Noted the comments made by the Chair of the Services, Climate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Committee unanimously supported the introduction of multi-year settlements, with cross-party agreement. Members also recognised that several charities receiving annual council funding were included in this move. While not suggesting that Council support should stop, the Committee felt these organisations should be encouraged to diversify their income and strengthen their resilience rather than becoming overly reliant on the grant funding.
- ix. Stressed that reliance on grants was a natural and unavoidable aspect of the voluntary sector, particularly given current pressures.
- x. Highlighted the valuable role of Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service (CCVS) which the Council supported through grants, in helping voluntary and community groups build sustainability. While emphasising the shared commitment to strengthening the sector, many organisations would continue to need ongoing support through the grants system.

[CCVS \(Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service\) | VolunteerCambs!](#)

- xi. The Communities Investment Team fully supported helping groups diversify their income and this was encouraged through the grants process.
- xii. Applicants were asked to list other funding sources, almost seen as match funding, though decisions were not changed, if those other external applications were unsuccessful
- xiii. Larger, well-established organisations were expected to demonstrate efforts to secure additional income.
- xiv. Officers provided support where needed.
- xv. The Resettlement Grant Fund required match funding, set at 5% for grants over £30,000, and this had not proved a barrier.
- xvi. The key message was that while the Council remained committed to providing financial support, it also aimed to help groups build their capacity and resilience.
- xvii. Had expressed disappointment at the lower number of sports and active-lifestyle grant applications. There had been some organisations who had gone through different routes: one opted for the under £5,000 scheme, and another decided to revisit its business plan before submitting a stronger application in a future round.
- xviii. For those sports and active applications that were not successful, two main issues emerged. First, none of the organisations had discussed their proposals with the Active Lifestyles team, resulting in bids that were not always aligned with areas of greatest need. Second, some groups did not meet the Council's eligibility criteria. To address this, the Council has strengthened guidance on partnership working, encouraging groups that did not meet the criteria to collaborate with eligible organisations, for example, local sports clubs partnering with a community group in their area.
- xix. The Active Lifestyles team run its own small and organisational grant schemes, which were expected to be integrated into the main grant's portal, giving a clearer overall picture.
- xx. Regarding Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) allocations, the Council often received in-year funding at short notice from the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority, which the grants team then administered for other departments. Last year funding was focused in Abbey Ward, with learning now applied in North Cambridge. Current allocations supported capacity-building in the voluntary sector, including family and youth services and the food bank.
- xxi. Thanked the Finance Team for their support on the grant funding work.
- xxii. The grants recommended by Officers were awarded strictly on evidence, data, and the quality of the applications. It was a robust and thorough assessment process.

Post Meeting Note:

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is managed by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) as the accountable body to MHCLG for the funding. Following a three year UKSPF funding round in 2022-25, the programme was extended by the new Labour government for a further transitional year in 2025-26 to bridge to new arrangements under the Pride in Place fund and the Local Growth Fund (which replace UKSPF).

This year UKSPF grant is enabling the City Council to fund:

- work to extend the community wealth building approach taken in Abbey to North Cambridge (£143,000).
- a new strand of work on Inclusive Innovation, enabling the development of our Included project to improve outcomes for young people in the city (£60,000).
- continued work to support markets and market traders in the city, working in partnership with South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire District Councils (£110,00 across three districts).

The CPCA is also using the UKSPF funds allocated to the region to:

- funding for the Region of Learning team, working as part of the CPCA skills team, to extend digital badge delivery across the region.
- support the visitor economy, including progressing work to establish a Local Visitor Economy Partnership, a Destination Management Plan and place brand development for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and funding for Baits Bite Lock repairs.

The bidding and reporting to the CPCA is managed in the Economy and Place Group but the projects are developed and delivered with teams from across the council e.g. the work in North Cambridge is led by the Communities Group and the work to support markets is managed by the Inclusive Economy and the Markets team in City Services.

Head of Economy, Energy and Climate

Cabinet unanimously resolved to:

- Approve the Community Grants to voluntary and community organisations for 2026-27, as set out in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report, subject to the budget approval in February 2026 and any further satisfactory information required of applicant organisations.

- ii. Approve the expanded direction of travel for the Community Grants Programme, using a 3-Tier approach starting 1 April 2027 as set out at 4.6 and at Appendix 2 of the Officer's report.
- iii. Approve an additional multi-year grant for Food Poverty Infrastructure starting 1 April 2026, as set out at 4.5 of the Officer's report.

25/6/Cab Homelessness Prevention Grants to Agencies

The Cabinet Member for Safety, Wellbeing and Tackling Homelessness introduced the report.

The report referred to the annual bid round for grants made to organisations providing homelessness prevention services. It provided an overview of the process, the grant eligibility criteria, and the budget.

In response to questions from those present the Cabinet Member said the following:

- i. Noted the Cabinet Member for Finance & Resources stated the Government had honoured its commitment to increase funding for homelessness, rough sleeping, and domestic abuse. Under the Fair Funding element of the local government settlement, the Council's allocation was set to rise to £2.2 million by 2028/29. This provided continuity of support for homelessness services, prevention work, and pathways that helped people move into stable accommodation and employment.
- ii. Welcomed the comment from the Cabinet Member for Communities who emphasised the vital impact of the homelessness prevention grants, noting the strong overlap between communities work and homelessness support. Expressed confidence that the projects funded through this programme would provide valuable assistance to some of the most vulnerable residents.
- iii. Cambridge City Council unseen partnership work supported rough sleepers, fostering relationships with the Street Pastors, St John Ambulance, and others, who regularly checked on rough sleepers in the city centre, ensuring they have accommodation and support.
- iv. Crossways was open with twenty beds under the Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP): welcomed the extension of this provision into the summer months emphasising the importance of raising public awareness of the significant amount of work taking place.
- v. Confirmed that support and accommodation were available throughout the year and that, in principle, no one should have to sleep rough, assistance was always offered wherever possible.

vi. The Street Outreach Team was the primary point of contact for rough sleepers. Information about how to reach them was widely publicised on the Council's website. The Team provided excellent and supportive response when contacted and it was important to promote this route for anyone wanting to help people sleeping rough.

<https://www.changegrowlive.org/service/cambridge-street-outreach/info>

There was also the StreetLink app to assist in reporting concerns.

Cabinet unanimously resolved to:

- i. Approve the award of homelessness prevention grants to voluntary and community organisations for 2026-27, as set out in Appendix 1 of the Officer's report.

25/7/Cab Transformation and Re-investment Fund Update

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources introduced the report.

The report highlighted in February 2025, Full Council approved transferring £3.149million into the Transformation and Reinvestment Fund (TRF) to support initiatives aligned with the Council's transformation programme.

Under the Officer Scheme of Delegation, Officers were authorised to make detailed decisions on how these funds were used. However, to ensure transparency and accountability, the report updated Cabinet on allocations made to date and outlined the benefits these investments would deliver for the Council and the wider city.

Cabinet unanimously resolved to:

- i. Note progress with the allocation of funds from the Transformation and Reinvestment Fund

25/8/Cab RECAP Resources and Waste Strategy 2025 - 2031

The Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment introduced the report.

The report referred to Cambridgeshire County Council, as the Minerals and Waste Authority, had approved publication of a consultation on the Draft RECAP Interim Resources and Waste Strategy 2026–2031 on behalf of the

RECAP Waste Partnership (RRWS). The consultation would close on 26 January.

Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service was seeking the Cabinets approval for the draft document and agreement to delegate sign-off of the final post-consultation version to the Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment.

In response to questions and statements from those present, the Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment said the following:

- i. The strategy had been extensively discussed across all councils within the Combined authority area, representing a wide range of political groups. A significant amount of work had gone into agreeing wording that all partners could support.
- ii. The strategy focused on improving waste and recycling facilities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, strengthening communications, and reducing emissions from waste collection and disposal.
- iii. Did not anticipate major changes arising from the consultation. However, if any significant amendments were proposed, this would be brought back to Cabinet.
- iv. There were two elements to the proximity principle referenced in both the strategy and the report. Some councils had struggled to find local solutions specifically in relation to transfer stations (sites where collected waste is unloaded and then transported for further processing or disposal).
- v. Previously, the Council did not require a transfer station for blue-bin recycling but did now. In contrast, councils located further away, such as in Fenland, required transfer stations to transport material to Waterbeach. Each authority therefore had different operational needs.
- vi. The second aspect concerned a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF). Ideally, a modern and environmentally efficient facility would be in Cambridge and used by all partners at an affordable cost. The report highlighted that, with stronger cross-council cooperation, the RECAP partnership could potentially deliver such a major project in future if councils agreed.
- vii. Supported in principle exploring a Cambridge-based MRF in the longer term, but it would require substantial upfront investment, higher risk, and technical expertise that councils currently lacked. These issues would need collective consideration. This underlined the value of a shared waste and recycling strategy, providing a coordinated basis for future planning and investment.

- viii. The strategy set out a high-level approach to improving recycling facilities and strengthening joint working across Cambridge and Peterborough, while also aiming to reduce overall waste. Ideally, recycling should form a greater proportion of waste, but the strategy also emphasised avoiding unnecessary waste generation altogether.
- ix. The Supplementary Planning Document (next item on the agenda) focused on practical measures such as improving bin stores, ensuring adequate access for collection vehicles, and other requirements for new developments. These improvements will be particularly significant for residents of new apartment blocks. Officers worked closely with developers to achieve good outcomes for both residents and collection crews, ensuring bin stores were accessible and waste and recycling can be collected efficiently.

Cabinet unanimously resolved to:

1. Approve the Draft RECAP Resources and Waste Strategy 2026-2031 (RRWS).
2. Grant delegation of approval to Cabinet Member for the final post consultation version of RECAP Resources and Waste Strategy 2026-2031 (RRWS) in February 2026.

25/9/Cab RECAP Waste Design Guide

The Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment introduced the report.

The updated Draft RDG was a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) designed to guide residential developers in ensuring new developments were operationally compliant for waste collection authorities.

In response to questions, the Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment and Waste and Environmental Planning Officer said the following:

- i. The RDG had previously formed part of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan (WMLP). While it continued to be linked to the WMLP, the approval timetable for the SPD was now being decoupled at county level to allow for quicker adoption.
- ii. The revised SPD aimed to ensure bin stores were easily accessible for residents, as well as avoiding overly complex locking systems, provide sufficient space for waste and recycling storage, support efficient access for waste collection crews and provide clarity on

existing issues with shared bin stores, particularly regarding recycling access.

- iii. The document was an update to the existing design guide, reflecting lessons learned including new waste infrastructure such as underground bins.
- iv. Noted the Cabinet's request for feedback on the consultation currently underway, referenced on page 124 of the agenda pack. Any significant changes would be report back to the Cabinet if required.
- v. Underground bins would be installed at the Fanshawe Road development.
- vi. Would continue to explore opportunities to expand underground storage in new schemes.
- vii. Retrofitting underground bins in the city centre would be costly and complex due to existing underground utilities.
- viii. Underground bins were being adapted to accommodate weekly food waste collections.
- ix. Noted the concern regarding accessibility for wheelchair users, particularly lifting bags into large, shared bins and would provide an answer outside of the meeting if there were any specific requirement for height of a refuse bin.

Post Meeting Note:

Building regulations did not specify any requirements for the height of refuse bins. Greater Cambridge Shared Waste provides an assisted collection service for residents with mobility or disability issues if it not possible for anybody within the household to take the waste to the normal collection point. The service can also provide residents with their own small 140 litre bins which are lower in height if this is their preference. Residents with concerns should contact the waste service so that their individual needs can be discussed and a suitable solution agreed.

Waste and Environmental Planning Officer

Cabinet unanimously resolved to:

- i. Approve the Draft RECAP Design Guide-Policy Update (RDG).
- ii. Grant delegation of approval to Cabinet Member for the final post consultation version of RECAP Design Guide-Policy Update (RDG) in February 2026

The meeting ended at 6.40 pm

CHAIR