



Cambridge City Council

**Performance, Assets and Strategy Overview  
and Scrutiny Committee**

**Date:** Tuesday, 9 December 2025

**Time:** 5.30 pm

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

**Contact:** [democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk), tel:01223 457000

**Agenda**

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declarations of Interest
- 3 Minutes (Pages 3 - 10)  
Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2025.
- 4 Public Questions
- 5 **Cambridge Growth Company - Update for  
Cambridge City Council Scrutiny**  
The Performance, Assets & Strategy Overview & Scrutiny Committee  
to receive an update and scrutinise the Cambridge Growth Company.
- 6 **Work Programme** (Pages 11 - 12)

## **Performance, Assets and Strategy Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Members:** Porrer (Chair), Gawthrope Wood (Vice-Chair), Clough, Dalzell, Davey, Griffin, Pounds and Sheil

**Alternates:** Bennett, Bick and Martinelli

## **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

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

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

## **PERFORMANCE, ASSETS AND STRATEGY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

9 September 2025

5.30pm-9.15pm

**Present:** Councillors Porrer (Chair), Gawthrope Wood (Vice-Chair), Clough, Dalzell, Davey, Griffin, Sheil and Pounds

**Officers:** Matthew Stickley, Sarah Michael, Ben Binns, Tom Conlon, Lynne Miles, Sean Cleary, Jane Whiteman-Turl, Jody Etherington  
**Other:** William Rooke, Julian Russell, Esther Warboys (all consultants for item 6 - Civic Quarter)

**In attendance:** Councillors Cameron Holloway, Martin Smart, Karen Young, Tim Bick, Rachel Wade, Rosy Moore, Richard Swift

The Chair welcomed those present, giving particular welcome to Councillor Dinah Pounds, newly appointed member of the committee.

The Chair thanked Councillor Dave Baigent, previous member of the committee, for his service to the committee.

The Chair advised the committee that she would reorder the agenda to take item 7 - Work Programme - prior to item 6 - Civic Quarter.

### **FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**

#### **25/12/P&A Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

#### **25/13/P&A Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **25/14/P&A Minutes**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 June 2025 were agreed as an accurate record.

**25/15/P&A Public Questions**

There were no public questions.

**25/16/P&A Cabinet: Update on Budget Setting Consultation 2025-26**

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

Officers explained that the draft consultation was still being finalised but would be circulated to members before publication. Members expressed concern that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had not yet seen the draft questions, though reassurance was given that any proposals requiring further consultation would be subject to additional scrutiny in due course.

The Committee noted that:

- i. The Council was ahead of its savings targets, having achieved £4.9m against a two-year requirement of £6m.
- ii. Updated government proposals on the fair funding review, reflecting population growth and changes in the balance of funding streams, placed the Council in a stronger financial position than previously anticipated.
- iii. The consultation would be high-level, accessible and strategic, with scope for bespoke consultations to follow if required.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To note the progress towards the Council's medium-term savings targets.
2. To request that Cabinet ensure Overview and Scrutiny Committee members are consulted on draft consultation questions at an earlier stage.
3. To recommend that Cabinet draw upon lessons from last year's consultation process to inform this year's design.
4. To recommend that Cabinet provide assurance that any budget bids requiring additional consultation will be subject to further scrutiny.

**25/17/P&A Procurement at Cambridge City Council**

Jane Whiteman-Turl, Chief Procurement Officer, gave a presentation.

The Committee noted:

- i. More notices would now be required at certain thresholds (7–12 compared with 3 previously).
- ii. Publication of a procurement pipeline was a requirement of the new procurement regime.
- iii. The new regime increased administrative requirements and oversight, while in some instances EU law obligations remained.
- iv. Around 200 contracts had been let in the previous year.

Members discussed the usefulness of:

- i. An overview to be available to councillors on the Council's procurement activity.
- ii. Training and development opportunities for members on procurement processes.

The Chair noted that the Services, Climate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee might consider the subject of Community Wealthbuilding in the future, and noted that this may include reference to the council's intentions to secure social value through its procurement processes.

### **RESOLVED:**

1. To note the update on the new procurement regime.
2. To request that officers provide councillors with an overview of procurement activity.
3. To recommend that Cabinet consider member training opportunities on procurement and contract oversight, including for non-Cabinet members.

### **25/18/P&A Cabinet: Strategic Procurement Pipeline for Repairs, Maintenance, and Compliance Contracts**

Sean Cleary, Strategic Delivery Manager, presented the report.

Officers explained that an internal procurement dashboard was in place and that a KPI reporting process was being developed.

In discussion, the Committee raised:

- i. The need for clarity on success criteria and measurable metrics.

- ii. The importance of customer experience in service delivery.
- iii. The ability of the Council to amend or terminate contracts where performance was unsatisfactory.

Officers confirmed that termination clauses were included in all contracts.

- i. That KPI models and parameters should be shared with members. Officers confirmed that a workshop on the subject would be provided in the autumn with members being able to shape the design of the performance management dashboard.
- ii. That wider sharing of KPI data (for example with the Housing Board) would be valuable.

### **RESOLVED:**

- 1. To note the report and broadly support the proposed procurement pipeline.
- 2. To recommend that Cabinet ensure that:
  - Clear and measurable KPIs are established and shared with members, with models and parameters circulated at the earliest opportunity.
  - Customer experience outcomes are given appropriate weight in monitoring performance.
  - Contract provisions remain flexible to allow amendment or termination in cases of underperformance or new requirements.
- 3. To request that officers explore options for wider sharing of KPI data (for example, with the Housing Board).

The meeting was adjourned from 19:02 - 19:15. Councillor Dinah Pounds left the meeting at 19:27.

### **25/19/P&A Cabinet: Civic Quarter**

Councillor Simon Smith (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources), Jody Etherington (Chief Finance Officer - Section 151 Officer), and Ben Binns (Assistant Director of Development) presented the report supported by external consultants.

Open Session

The Committee discussed:

- i. The importance of full consultation with Camcycle cycling charity and Living Streets Cambridge pedestrian charity.
- ii. Ensuring that bus services were rerouted appropriately and that Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) provided for traders, taxi access and disabled users.
- iii. Strong support for a circular horseshoe chamber with tiered seating, and full accessibility.
- iv. The need for demountable stalls in the market to be fit for purpose; confirmation was provided that there remained time to refine designs after planning permission.
- v. Broad support for submitting the scheme to planning, which could unlock grant funding.
- vi. Opportunities for the Guildhall to better showcase the city's history, including potential partnership with the Museum of Cambridge.
- vii. The need for improved ventilation in the Guildhall's chamber and meeting rooms.
- viii. That the "Do Nothing" option would still require expenditure of around £60m while delivering fewer returns.

The Committee noted that the consultants considered their cost estimates and project viability to be strong and felt the information provided to the committee was robust.

Closed Session:

The Committee resolved to exclude the press and public under paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 in order to consider exempt financial information.

The Committee considered detailed financial modelling and business cases. Officers confirmed that borrowing would not affect service provision.

In discussion:

- i. A majority of members supported Option 4 as the preferred approach.
- ii. Members emphasised the importance of the Guildhall as the civic heart of the city, particularly in the context of potential local government reorganisation. It was noted that the project represented an investment rather than a cost, with opportunities for revenue from the Corn Exchange and from high-quality office accommodation.
- iii. There was majority support for the use of the Guildhall as the heart of any future local authority following local government reorganisation, and

members supported ensuring flexibility of design and use to accommodate a future unitary chamber.

**RESOLVED:**

1. To support the principle of proceeding to the planning stage of the Civic Quarter project, recognising that this may unlock future funding opportunities.
2. To recommend that Cabinet:
  - Ensure full consultation with Camcycle, Living Streets and other key stakeholders.
  - Safeguard bus service provision in Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) and provide for adequate wayfinding and space in the market area.
  - Confirm that demountable stalls are fit for purpose and that their design can be refined post-planning.
  - Retain the chamber in a horseshoe layout with tiered seating, ensuring it remains accessible and central to the city's civic life.
  - Deliver improved ventilation and accessibility within the Guildhall.
  - Develop opportunities for celebrating the civic history of the Guildhall, including potential collaboration with the Museum of Cambridge.
3. To note that while some reservations were expressed about aspects of the scheme, the majority of members supported Option 4, recognising the proposals as financially resilient even in the context of local government reorganisation.

**25/20/P&A Work Programme**

The Committee reviewed the work programme.

Members agreed to:

- i. Note that Peter Freeman, Chair of the Cambridge Growth Company, had accepted an invitation to the committee's 4 November 2025 meeting.
- ii. Consider the Local Plan at either the 4 November 2025 meeting or a meeting close to that date, subject to confirmation of the dates the Local Plan would be presented to the Cabinets of both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils.
- iii. Hold a Member workshop on KPIs in October, with formal review in the new year.
- iv. Establish a Task and Finish group on Housing in due course.
- v. Note that a review of the 3CICT improvement plan would be scheduled for March 2026.



**RESOLVED:**

1. To agree the updated Work Programme as set out above.

The meeting ended at 9.15pm

**CHAIR**

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# Work Programme: Performance, Assets and Strategy Overview and Scrutiny Committee

*Items and dates are provisional and will be confirmed on the agenda for each meeting.*

*Business previously considered by the Performance, Assets and Strategy Overview and Scrutiny Committee can be found on the council's website:*

[Committee details - Performance, Assets and Strategy Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Cambridge Council](#)

Name of Item	Description of Item	Suggested Meeting Date	Service Area	Lead Officer
Update on Budget 2026/27 consultation	To provide an update to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the progress of developing the 2026-27 budget.	Tuesday 9 September 2025	Corporate Hub	Jody Etherington, Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer)
Update on council implementation of Procurement Act 2023 changes	To outline the potential for conflict between legislative requirements and council aims (e.g., social benefit)	Tuesday 9 September 2025	Corporate Hub	Jane Wilson, Chief Operating Officer
Civic Quarter	To consider the technical report and provide recommendations to Cabinet in September 2025.	Tuesday 9 September 2025	Economy and Place	Ben Binns, Assistant Director for Development
Greater Cambridge Local Plan	Draft plan to be submitted to both Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Councils in autumn/winter 2025 for agreement to consult.	Tuesday 4 November 2025	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning	Stephen Kelly, Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development

Name of Item	Description of Item	Suggested Meeting Date	Service Area	Lead Officer
Report of Cambridge Growth Company	Peter Freeman, Chair of the Cambridge Growth Company, has accepted an invitation to attend the committee to discuss the work of the Cambridge Growth Company.	Tuesday 9 December 2025	Economy and Place, Shared Planning	Stephen Kelly, Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development and Lynne Miles, Director Economy and Place
Budget 2026-27 update	To receive the latest update on the 2026-27 budget ahead of recommendations to Cabinet and Council.	Tuesday 27 January 2026	Corporate Hub	Jody Etherington, Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer)
Update on 3C ICT improvement programme and external review	To provide an update on the shared ICT service improvement plan.	Tuesday 3 March 2026	3C ICT	Simon Oliver, Chief Digital Information Officer (CDIO)
<b>WATCHING:</b> Outcome of Housing Review	To follow report of Regulator of Social Housing in autumn 2025 with establishment of Task and Finish Group likely to follow.	TBC	Communities	Samantha Shimmon, Assistant Director of Housing and Homelessness
<b>WATCHING:</b> Local Government Reform	To discuss the latest update on Local Government Reform in Cambridgeshire as it relates to the City Council and the remit of the committee.	TBC	TBC	TBC