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Cambridge City Council

Notice of Council

Date: Thursday, 1 October 2026

Time: 6.00 pm

Venue: Council Chamber, The Guildhall, Market Square, Cambridge, CB2 3QJ

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 on Thursday, 1 October 2026 at 6.00 pm and I hereby summon you to attend.

Dated 23 September 2026

Yours faithfully

Robert Pollock

Chief Executive

Agenda

1 Apologies for absence

2 Declarations of Interest

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 16 July 2026 (Pages 19 - 72)

4 Mayor's announcements

5 Petition - Greater Cambridge Partnership
The Issue
Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP), Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council

Born in Cambridge and having lived here all my life, I've watched our city change enormously. Change is inevitable, and many improvements have benefited Cambridge. But many residents now feel that the overall direction of transport, planning and development is making the city harder to access, harder to move around and less practical for the people who live, work and visit here.

Cambridge is one of the world's leading centres for education, science and innovation, and that success should be celebrated. But Cambridge is not London. We do not have an Underground network or the transport infrastructure of a major capital city. Many residents, carers, tradespeople, workers, families and visitors still rely on roads for everyday life.

The question is whether Cambridge's growth is being managed in a way that properly considers all the people who depend on the city every day.

This petition is about the bigger picture
This petition calls for a full independent review of the overall impact of transport policies, planning decisions and major developments on the future of Cambridge.

Many individual schemes and developments have been considered separately over the years. But many residents are asking a much bigger question:

Has anyone independently looked at the combined effect of all these changes on Cambridge?

The impact on congestion, accessibility, local businesses, parking, roads and pavements, public services, housing, community life and the character of the city should not simply be looked at one scheme at a time.

This petition is about looking at the bigger picture.

Who are the people signing?
One thing that has struck me while speaking to people who have signed this petition is the wide range of ordinary local people behind it.

There are shop workers, NHS staff, retired people, parents, tradespeople, office workers and people in professional and well-paid jobs. They have different backgrounds, different priorities and different political views.

Some may have voted Green, Liberal Democrat, Conservative, Reform or Labour. Some may not have voted at all.

This is not about party politics.

These are people living and working in Cambridge who are seeing the changes around them first-hand and have genuine concerns about the future of their city.

Most have busy lives, families and other commitments. They are not transport planners or council experts, and they should not need to spend hours trying to understand complicated council processes simply to have their concerns heard.

Their everyday experience of Cambridge matters too.

What are people concerned about?
Many residents are concerned about:

Increasing congestion and ongoing changes to the road network.
The loss of affordable and accessible shops, forcing more local people to travel to surrounding towns for everyday shopping.
Independent retailers struggling while the city centre offers fewer reasons for local people to shop there.
Increasing numbers of retail premises being replaced by offices and laboratories, changing the balance and purpose of the city centre.
Large-scale housing developments placing additional pressure on roads, healthcare, schools, parking and other essential services.
Rising housing costs making it increasingly difficult for younger people and families to remain close to their relatives and the communities they grew up in.
Parking and accessibility becoming increasingly difficult for people who need to drive into the city.
The combined impact these changes are having on residents, businesses, visitors and the long-term character of Cambridge.
People tell me they want Cambridge to remain affordable, accessible and welcoming.

They want places where families can buy reasonably priced clothes and everyday goods. They want independent shops to have a future. They want to be able to visit the city centre without feeling that parking and access make it unnecessarily difficult.

These may sound like simple things, but they are part of what makes a city work for the people who live here.

What happened to our city centre?
Having lived here all my life, I have seen many parts of Cambridge change.

When I walk through places such as Fitzroy Street, I sometimes find it genuinely sad to see how different parts of the city centre now feel compared with the Cambridge I remember.

If residents can see these changes, surely the people making decisions about the future of Cambridge can see them too.

That is why many residents feel they need to be listened to — not just through formal consultation processes, but by considering the real experiences of the people who live here every day.

Growth needs to be balanced
Cambridge's science and technology sector is one of the city's greatest strengths and should continue to thrive.

This petition is not against growth, science, technology or development.

But many residents believe there needs to be a better balance between commercial development and the everyday needs of local communities.

Offices and laboratories are essential to Cambridge's success, but future growth should also consider suitable locations outside the historic city centre, allowing the centre to continue providing the shops, services and facilities that local residents depend on.

A vibrant city centre should remain a place where people can shop, meet friends, access services and enjoy their city.

Supporting independent businesses, encouraging affordable shopping and improving accessibility are all important if Cambridge is to remain a city that works for the people who live here.

Get the basics right
Many residents believe Cambridge should focus on getting the basics

right first — maintaining roads and pavements, supporting local businesses, protecting accessible shopping, providing adequate infrastructure and ensuring public services keep pace with growth.

There is a growing feeling that we cannot keep introducing major schemes and large-scale development without properly understanding whether the city's infrastructure and services can cope.

This is not about stopping progress.

It is about asking whether progress is being managed in the right way and at the right pace.

We need to look at the combined effect
Transport schemes, road changes, housing developments, laboratories, offices and changes to the city centre may each have their own justification.

But when they are all added together, what does Cambridge look like and how does it work for the people who live here?

Many residents believe that question has never been properly and independently answered.

That is why this petition calls for a full independent review of the overall impact of transport policies, planning decisions and major developments on the future of Cambridge.

The review should look at the evidence, the real-world impact and the cumulative effect of these decisions — not simply whether individual projects meet their own targets.

Local voices should not be difficult to hear
If councils genuinely want to understand what local people are concerned about, they should make it easier for people to have their say, not harder.

People should not feel that their concerns matter less simply because they do not know how to navigate a complicated council system or because they expressed their views through a community petition rather than a particular official website.

1,902 people have now signed this petition, and many have taken the additional time to explain in their own words why they signed.

For me, the important thing is not which website they used.

It is that 1,902 local people have taken the time to come together and speak about the future of their city.

Those voices deserve to be heard and properly considered.

This petition is not against progress
It supports sustainable growth, better public transport, safer cycling, cleaner air and continued investment in Cambridge's world-leading economy.

But progress should also be balanced, practical and supported by the infrastructure and services needed for a growing city.

Cambridge should not have to choose between economic success and being a good place to live.

We should be able to have both.

Local residents deserve meaningful consultation, transparent decision-making and confidence that the overall impact of major changes is being properly considered before further schemes and developments are introduced.

1,902 people have signed this petition because they believe Cambridge deserves a future that is accessible, balanced, prosperous and works for everyone.

If you share these concerns, please sign and share this petition.

Together, we can help shape a Cambridge that remains a thriving city — not just for businesses and developers, but for the residents, families, workers and future generations who call it home.

6 Public questions time

7 To deal with oral questions

8 To consider the recommendations of the Executive for adoption

8a River Cam, Chalk Streams and Tributaries – Strategic Review and Environmental Projects (Pages 73 - 112)

Final recommendations to be tabled following Cabinet on 23

September.

Full Cabinet report attached.

8b Budget Outturn 2025-26 (Pages 113 - 140)

Final recommendations to be tabled following Cabinet on 23 September.

Cabinet report attached.

8c Development Loan to Cambridge Investment Partnership (Pages 141 - 148)

Final recommendations to be tabled following Cabinet on 23 September.

Cabinet report attached.

9 To consider the following notices of motion, notice of which has been given by:

9a Councillor Flaubert: From Commitment to Action on Racial Equality

Council notes
That Cambridge is a diverse city and that Black, Asian and other ethnic-minority communities make a significant contribution to the life, culture and economy of Cambridge.

That the Council supported the Black Lives Matter motion in July 2020 and recognises the significant work undertaken since then to address racial inequality, including workforce equality monitoring, engagement with staff and communities, and the development of the Race Equality Toolkit.

That the Council endorsed the UNISON Anti-Racism Charter in October 2025 and signed the Charter in January 2026, building on work already undertaken by the Council to promote racial equality within its workforce. The Charter includes commitments relating to workforce and ethnicity pay-gap reporting, anti-racism training, recruitment and promotion, and monitoring disciplinary and grievance outcomes.

That the Council's 2024/25 Equality in Employment Workforce Report demonstrates progress in some areas, including increased ethnic-minority representation among employees, apprentices and those receiving promotions. It also shows that ethnic-minority representation changes at different stages of the recruitment process.

That differences in representation at different stages of recruitment do not, by themselves, demonstrate discrimination. However, significant or persistent disparities should prompt the Council to understand whether barriers exist and whether existing measures are effective.

That legitimate scrutiny, political debate, journalism and freedom of expression are fundamental to a democratic society, while bullying, harassment, discriminatory abuse, intimidation and threats should not be confused with legitimate scrutiny.

Council believes

That the progress made since 2020 should be recognised and welcomed.

That commitments to racial equality are most meaningful when they result in measurable improvements in people's experiences and opportunities.

That the next stage should therefore be to move from commitment and representation towards measurable outcomes, action and accountability, building on the work already being undertaken by the Council.

That equality of opportunity does not mean lowering standards. It means ensuring that everyone has a fair opportunity to demonstrate their skills, experience and ability, with consistent and proportionate standards applied fairly.

That tackling racial inequality requires both good quality data and meaningful engagement with the people affected by inequality.

Council resolves

1. Strengthen accountability for existing commitments

To build on the Council's Anti-Racism Charter, Equality in Employment reporting and Inclusion and Equity Panel work by introducing a clearer annual assessment of progress on racial equality.

Using existing data wherever possible, and subject to legal requirements and appropriate statistical safeguards, the assessment should identify significant or persistent disparities across the employment journey, including:

- recruitment and appointment;
- progression and promotion;
- training and development;
- representation at senior levels;
- pay;
- disciplinary and grievance outcomes; and
- retention and departures.

2. Turn evidence into action

Where significant or persistent disparities are identified, the Council should adopt an "identify, analyse, act and evaluate" approach:

Identify the disparity -> Analyse possible causes -> Act to address potential barriers -> Evaluate whether the action worked.

Where appropriate and proportionate to the issue identified, the annual assessment should identify:

- the issue or disparity identified;
- the evidence considered;
- the action proposed or taken;
- the service or team responsible;
- the timescale for action; and
- the outcome or measurable change.

Progress should be reported to the Inclusion and Equity Panel and made publicly available.

3. Strengthen safeguards against harassment

To review existing arrangements for employees and elected Members to raise concerns about bullying, harassment, discriminatory abuse, intimidation or threats.

The review should consider whether reporting routes are clear, accessible and trusted, and whether staff and Members understand how concerns will be dealt with.
In doing so, the Council should expressly protect legitimate journalism, political debate, criticism, peaceful protest and democratic scrutiny.

The review should report its findings and any recommendations to the Inclusion and Equity Panel within six months of this motion being agreed.

4. Strengthen training and leadership

To build on existing anti-racism and equality commitments by ensuring that elected Members, managers and staff have appropriate opportunities to understand racial inequality, discrimination and harassment, and their responsibilities in addressing them.

Training should be practical, proportionate and relevant to people's roles, with particular attention where appropriate to recruitment, promotion, management, complaints and responding to concerns about discrimination or harassment.
The Council should periodically assess the effectiveness of this training and use feedback from staff and Members to improve future provision.

5. Widen opportunities for young people

To build on existing Council youth, skills and careers programmes by working with schools, colleges, young people, employers and community organisations to widen access to:
- mentoring;
- diverse role models;
- workplace visits;
- meaningful work experience;
- apprenticeships; and
- careers opportunities.

Particular attention should be given to young people who may have less access to professional networks and opportunities.

Young people should be involved in designing and evaluating this work.

The Council should identify potential funding sources, including external grant funding and partner contributions, to support the scale and pace of delivery, and report on funding secured as part of the annual update under resolve 7.

6. Work with Cambridge employers and business partners

To use the Council's civic, convening and partnership role to encourage employers, business partners, suppliers and organisations working with the Council to improve transparency around racial equality in employment.

Where appropriate and lawful, the Council should encourage organisations to publish or share anonymised equality data, including workforce representation, recruitment, progression, pay and retention, and to consider what action is being taken where significant disparities are identified.

The Council should promote the sharing of good practice and encourage organisations it works with to consider how their recruitment, work experience, apprenticeship, mentoring and progression opportunities can be made accessible to a wider range of people.

The Council should also consider, within the requirements of procurement law and its existing procurement policies, whether appropriate equality and transparency considerations can be incorporated into future commissioning and partnership arrangements.

The Council should report annually on the steps it has taken to engage with employers and business partners and, where possible, the progress achieved.

7. Make racial equality a continuing priority

To ensure that the work set out in this motion becomes part of the Council's continuing approach to equality rather than a one-off programme.

The Council should provide an annual update on progress against this motion and its existing Anti-Racism Charter commitments.

The update should clearly distinguish between:

- actions completed;
- actions underway;
- actions that have not delivered the intended outcome; and
- areas requiring further action.

The Council should continue to engage staff, residents, young people and community organisations in shaping and evaluating its approach, including people with relevant lived experience.

The Council should use the evidence from this annual review to inform future equality objectives, workforce planning and policy development.

8. Council notes that the majority of actions in this motion build on existing commitments, structures and programmes, and resolves that implementation of these actions should proceed within existing resources where possible and should not be made contingent on the outcome or timing of Local Government Reorganisation.

9b Councillor Payne: Herbicide-Free Weed Management

Herbicide-Free Weed Management

Council notes:

- That Cambridge Liberal Democrats called for the Council to adopt and trial herbicide-free weed management, both through the declaration of a Biodiversity Emergency in 2019 and through a motion proposing trials in two wards in 2021.
- That the Liberal Democrat motion received unanimous Council support and was welcomed by local environmental organisations and community groups.
- The important contribution made by Pesticide Free Cambridge and others in developing and supporting Cambridge's herbicide-free ambition.
- That the trials demonstrated the environmental benefits of reducing herbicide use, but also identified significant operational challenges associated with replacing chemical treatment with mechanical and manual methods.
- That mechanical and manual weed removal is more labour-intensive, is affected by weather, seasonal growth, parked vehicles and accumulated detritus, and requires repeat visits because it does not prevent regrowth.
- That, following the trials and investment in specialist equipment, the Council moved to extend herbicide-free weed management across the city.

- That, since then, implementation has been slow, reflecting the difficult and time-consuming nature of herbicide-free weed removal and the need to tackle years of accumulated detritus alongside the visible growth. Consequently, a substantial number of areas are still awaiting treatment, and residents are understandably concerned about the condition of streets and public spaces.

- That responsibility for weed management is divided between Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and other landowners, requiring stronger coordination and clearer information for residents.

Council believes:

- That the Council-led ambition to end the routine use of herbicides remains the right approach for Cambridge and should not be abandoned because its implementation has proved more difficult than anticipated.

- That herbicide-free weed management supports the Council's commitments to biodiversity, environmental protection and more sustainable management of public spaces.

- That environmental ambition must be matched by effective implementation, sufficient resources, suitable equipment and an honest assessment of what is required to deliver the service successfully.

- That Cambridge residents are entitled to streets and public spaces that are safe, accessible, properly maintained and attractive.

- That priority must be given to weed growth that obstructs footways, affects accessibility, restricts drainage, creates a safety concern or risks damage to highways and other infrastructure.

- That some vegetation can be tolerated where it does not affect safety, accessibility, drainage, infrastructure or the reasonable enjoyment of public space.

- That residents should be given clear information about the standards they can expect from an herbicide-free service, including the greater likelihood of seasonal growth and regrowth between treatments.

- That the present difficulties require decisive corrective action and additional support for the service, rather than any retreat from the Council's herbicide-free commitment.

Council therefore calls on the Leader and Executive Councillor to:

- Reaffirm the Council's commitment to the Liberal Democrat-led ambition of ending the routine use of herbicides on land managed by the City Council.

- Commission an urgent officer review of the current weed-management programme, identifying:
    - the reasons for departure from the original programme;
    - the extent of the outstanding work;
    - the staffing, equipment and financial capacity required;
    - the effectiveness and whole-life cost of the different mechanical and manual methods;
    - the frequency of repeat treatment needed;
    - seasonal and weather-related constraints;
    - the effect of parked vehicles and other access restrictions; and
    - opportunities for better coordination with the County Council, contractors, communities and other landowners.

- Bring forward a costed, non-recurring recovery programme to blitz outstanding priority areas and establish a manageable baseline for future maintenance.

- Ensure that any short-term intervention is supported by a sustainable annual maintenance programme, so that areas cleared through the recovery work receive appropriate repeat treatment.

- Develop a risk-based approach that prioritises safety, accessibility, drainage, transport routes and the protection of public infrastructure.

- Continue to test and evaluate new equipment and working methods, drawing on operational evidence from Cambridge and good practice elsewhere.

- Bring forward any necessary budget bid for 2027-28, clearly distinguishing between the one-off cost of recovering the service and the recurrent resources required to maintain it.

- Publish a clear statement for residents setting out responsibilities, priorities, expected service standards, seasonal constraints and how urgent concerns should be reported.

- Introduce transparent performance reporting covering areas completed, outstanding initial treatments, repeat visits, complaints, service requests, costs and operational learning.

- Report the findings of the review, together with costed options and a revised delivery programme, to the relevant scrutiny committee within an agreed timescale.

9c (Labour Motion) Councillor x: Impact Assessment and Data Sharing for Citywide Roadworks

As residents of Cambridge, City Councillors experience the impact of roadworks first hand, whether we are walking, cycling, using public transport or driving. We know that this causes frustration and delays, adds to the costs for businesses, makes parents late to pick up children, or simply adds to the friction of daily life. While proper maintenance of the city's infrastructure is vital, with better planning and clearer information at least some of the burden could be reduced. However, it appears that the County Council has no interest in limiting the impact of utility works and its own scheduled works on the residents of Cambridge, despite our significance within Cambridgeshire.

The purpose of this motion is to create a closer working relationship between City and County Councils with a view to managing the process more effectively. It will also support the planned creation of a unitary authority.

This Council notes:

- Cambridge City Council receives regular roadworks bulletins, including 50 planned works and 18 full road closures between 16–30 September.
- These works affect roads, pavements and cycleways.

- There is currently no comprehensive modelling of how cumulative works and closures impact congestion, movement across the city, bus reliability, or air quality.

This Council believes:

- Robust data gathering, modelling and impact analysis are essential for effective transport planning.
- Uncoordinated closures without clear assessment place unnecessary strain on residents, public transport operators and businesses, and worsen air quality.

This Council resolves:

- To write to Cambridgeshire County Council, as Highway Authority, requesting full liaison with Cambridge City Council and the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority to ensure:

1. Systematic data gathering and impact analysis of roadworks and closures, shared between authorities.
2. Integration of this data into current and future transport and infrastructure planning.

- To request continued liaison with the CPCA on the best use of this data for forward planning.

9d Councillor Baigent: Greater Cambridge Partnership

Council notes that millions of pounds of public money are currently being committed through the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP), with limited transparency and scrutiny.

Council believes that significant expenditure decisions should be subject to appropriate democratic oversight and that elected members should have the opportunity to consider and approve major projects involving substantial public expenditure.

Council therefore resolves that, from the date of this motion, the Council's appointed board member on the Greater Cambridge Partnership shall not vote in favour of any GCP project involving expenditure of **£100,000 or more** unless that project has first been considered by Full Council.

Council further resolves that the relevant officer(s) shall establish an appropriate process to ensure that proposals meeting this threshold are brought before Full Council for consideration before the Council's board member is required to vote on them.

10	Proportionality Update	(Pages 149 - 152)

11 Written questions

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

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
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On some occasions livestreaming may not be possible. Whilst this is frustrating it is important to note that there is no legal requirement to record or livestream meetings. The meeting may proceed in person only should there be an ICT failure on the day.

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

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

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

COUNCIL

16 July 2026
6.00 - 10.12 pm

Present: Councillors Ashton, Baigent, Bick, Bird, Bennett, Blackburn-Horgan, Cleminson, Clough, Dalzell, Davey, Davison, Dryden, Fisher, Flaubert, Gardiner-Smith, Gawthrope Wood, Glasberg, Griffin, Grimwood, Haithcock, Hauk, Hossain, Illingworth, Martinelli, McPherson, Moore, Nestor, Nicmanis, Payne, Porrer, Sage, Sheil, Smart, Swift, Taylor, Thornburrow, Todd-Jones, Tong, Toye Scott, Wade and Whitmore

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

26/59/CNL Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Young.

26/60/CNL Declarations of Interest

Councillor	Item	Reason
Thornburrow	26/64/CNL	Personal: Lives in rented accommodation so affected by Renters' Right Act and has previously lived in an HMO
Nestor	26/65/CNL	Personal: Trustee of Museum of Cambridge
Moore	26/64/CNL	Personal: Child who lives in an HMO
Baigent	26/69/CNL	Personal: Member of River CamCycle and ACORN

26/61/CNL Minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2026 and reconvened meeting held on 1 June 2026

The Minutes of the meetings of 21 May 2026 and 1 June 2026 were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Mayor.

26/62/CNL Mayor's announcements

The Mayor noted that the funeral had taken place for honorary councillor and former mayor Terry Sweeney, who had died on the 26 June aged 85. Paying tribute, the Mayor said that he was known to many as a warm-hearted and generous man, was a long-term tenant rep for Lichfield Road residents, stood on the city's council housing committee and was mayor from 1987 to 88.

The Mayor reported on her chosen themes of community, biodiversity and heritage as well as her chosen charities: Abbey People, Cambridge Museum of Technology and the Museum of Cambridge.

Recent events of note in the Mayor's diary had included the 'Party in the Park' to celebrate the city's 75th anniversary, events celebrating different cultures in Cambridge (including India Day, the Chinese Dragon Boat Race and the Szeged Society), Refugee Week (which culminated in the 'Voices of Hope and Compassion' concert), the 'Beating of the Bounds' of Stourbridge Common, and the Independent Living Service's 'Summer of Love' party. The Mayor paid tribute to everyone involved in organising all the events she had attended.

Councillor Todd-Jones was then invited to speak and he paid tribute to the council's communities team for organising screenings of the football World Cup semi-final at the Meadows Centre and at Clay Farm.

The Mayor encouraged members to attend the 'Mayor's Day Out' on 11 August (a trip to Great Yarmouth), take part in painting the new murals at Crater Bridge on Friday 7 August, and to attend the screening of the 'People's Emergency Briefing' film on 29 July.

Finally, the Mayor highlighted the 'Little Free Libraries' project being run by Abbey People and noted that by the age of five, children from disadvantaged backgrounds may know up to 10,000 fewer words than their more affluent peers. The Mayor encouraged members to consider supporting similar initiatives in their ward.

26/63/CNL Public questions time

Question 1)
I am writing as a dad in East Chesterton, Cambridge, who feels strongly that the paternity pay offer from Cambridge City Council should be much better.
Proper paternity leave benefits all parents and their babies. Polling by the Dad Shift campaign showed that 90% of dads agree that fathers today want to be a bigger part of their children's lives, and 86% of the public agree it's better when both parents have equal opportunities to be caregivers.
You may know that the Government is currently reviewing the statutory offer for fathers and non-birthing parents, which is currently the worst in Europe. As

part of that review, The Dad Shift have researched paternity leave offerings from local authorities. You can find their league table here: https://tinyurl.com/local-gov-pat-leave.

As reported in Cambridge Independent, Cambridge City Council only offers 2 weeks full pay for paternity leave. Currently, 42% of births occur by caesarean section, for which doctors recommend birth parents need six weeks to recover. I have personal experience of this; my daughter was born by emergency c-section, and I am so relieved that I was able to take additional time to support her recovery and care for my new child, despite only receiving two weeks statutory paternity leave from my employer.

Cambridge city council has the opportunity to do far better for the dads you employ and their families, leading by example and enabling all parents to be fully involved in their children's lives with an enhanced paternity leave offering. For wider context, the European average is eight weeks at full pay.

In light of the above, my question is: will the council commit to improving its paternity leave offer to at least six weeks at 90% pay, and to officially call on the Government to introduce at least six weeks of fully paid statutory paternity leave nationally?

Thank you for your consideration and the work that you do.

The Cabinet Member Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Operations replied:

i. The Council was committed to its staff and supporting those that are growing their families.
ii. Following changes to the Employment Rights Act 2025, statutory paternity leave (two weeks at statutory pay) has become a day-one right from 6 April 2026. The council has welcomed this change and our policy has been updated to align with it.
iii. Therefore, if you have 26 weeks service but less than 1 year by the beginning of the 15th week before the due date, an individual will receive 2 weeks Statutory Pay or 90% of their average weekly earnings (whichever is lower). If the individual has 12 months or more continuous service by the beginning of the 15th week before the due date, they will receive 2 weeks at full pay (inclusive of Statutory Pay).
iv. Eligible employees could also request shared parental leave in line with statutory guidelines. This allowed parents to share the care of their child during the first year, choosing the arrangements that work best for their family.

In response to the Supplementary Question:

The Cabinet Member Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Operations responded:

i. The Council had recently undertaken benchmarking work on how our policy compares with other Councils and other private sector bodies leading in this area.
ii. The Council was considering options regarding any potential changes to its policy, particularly in the context of future Local Government reorganisation.
iii. Had asked for these options to be presented to myself as Lead Member for consideration over the summer and would ask for Officers to bring an update to any policy changes as part of a future Employment Committee meeting.

Question 2)
Our 2006 Local Plan took a significant amount of land out of the Green Belt in order to build an urban extension on the Southern Fringe. This was to address the problem facing a city with many more jobs than houses.
This has been very successful in Trumpington, where higher density housing has enabled us to create two large new public open spaces which are benefitting humans and wildlife alike.
Hobsons Park is the area to the east of Trumpington, between the new housing on Clay Farm and the railway line. It includes a children’s playground, a skateboard park, a large allotment site, an artificial hill, an all-age trim trail and a network of paths and benches for walkers, runners, and sitters.
It has also created significant new habitats for wildlife in the four balancing ponds, the new hedgerows, the hundreds of new trees and the grassland. The resulting Biodiversity Net Gain has been truly remarkable, but it’s future is far from guaranteed.
As in other new developments, the adoption of roads, drainage and public open spaces has been a major problem. Years of delay have caused some of these new neighbourhoods to deteriorate because they have not been maintained properly. Road and pavement surfaces are being damaged by weed growth, and new areas of open water are being choked by vegetation. Developers clearly lack the resources or incentives to develop adequate maintenance programmes, and handovers are further delayed.
My question is this: Is the City Council developing detailed written plans for the maintenance and management of the various areas of Hobson’s Park, and are they involving residents and groups to ensure that these plans are informed by local knowledge and sustained in future by active partnerships between paid officers and volunteers?

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport said the following:

i. Welcome the question and also recognise the motion before Council today regarding accountability and transparency on unadopted residential developments.
ii. Agree that Hobson's Park illustrates many of the issues that could arise where the delivery, maintenance and eventual adoption of new infrastructure involved a number of different organisations over an extended period.
iii. Management and maintenance plans for open spaces were an important consideration through the planning process and formed part of the long-term arrangements agreed as developments come forward. However, it was also recognised that as time moved on, sites mature, community expectations evolved and the management needs of open spaces could change as they become established.
iv. Following the adoption of Hobson's Park, the City Council was now responsible for its long-term management. The immediate priority had been to ensure that routine maintenance, inspections and operational arrangements were in place to provide a safe and well-managed public space.
v. Looking ahead, where resources allowed and taking account of priorities across the city, the Council would look at reviewing and developing management plans for significant open spaces, including Hobson's Park.
vi. Any future review would seek to reflect current best practice, the Council's Biodiversity Strategy and Urban Forest Strategy, operational experience gained through adoption, and opportunities to work with residents, Friends groups, allotment holders, environmental organisations and other stakeholders whose local knowledge can help shape the future management of the site.
vii. As with all the Council’s parks and open spaces, this work would need to be balanced against the Council's wider responsibilities and available resources. Nevertheless, the Council recognised the value of active community involvement in helping to care for these important public spaces and look forward to continuing to work with local people as Hobson's Park developed over the years ahead.

Supplementary Question:
Sadly, in the five years since Hobson’s Park has been handed over by the developers has been marred by delay and neglect.

For example, the hedges have never been cut by the Council, and we have now discovered that the ditches around the site make it impossible to reach many areas. No suggestions to help plot holders manage their hedges, or anything else, have been made. We have been left, to a great extent, to fend for ourselves.

Raised beds had to be removed because the timber was rotten, and only yesterday the entrance gate post finally broke off at ground level.

This is a new allotment site which, by now, should be a feature that Cambridge is proud of.

We should be welcoming visitors to see how allotments can contribute to the health and wellbeing of our residents and our city's wildlife.

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport said the following:

i. Was sorry to hear of the issues reported and would be interested to understand whether this meant the management plans that came under the planning consent was not effective.
ii. Would consider what had caused these issues and determine whether this was a planning matter or a wider maintenance issue.
iii. Would work with the Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Spaces and City Services and would be happy update the public speaker.

Question 3)
Speaking as chair of Trumpington Residents' Association.
The first residents on the Southern Fringe developments started moving in 14 years ago. They moved in with an expectation that the roads, green spaces, play areas, and so on, would be adopted by the relevant authority within a reasonable timeframe, an expectation that was encouraged by the developers' own sales teams.
Yet of the roads, only a handful on Trumpington Meadows have been adopted. Not a single road associated with the Clay Farm and Glebe Farm developments has been adopted yet, even though it's been 4 years since the last of the construction was completed. It's been 7 years since the demise of Southern Fringe Forum, which was our chance to have planners, developers and residents in the same place at the same time. Since then, the area committee meetings have also ceased. There are still green spaces that remain to be adopted. There are still recreation areas that aren't even accessible, let alone adopted.

- *How* has this been allowed to continue for 14 years?
- *Why* is it considered acceptable that chasing developers and their contractors, for example to fix street lights and enforce parking

restrictions, should be left to residents' associations and individual residents?

This is a major topic at meetings of Trumpington Residents' Association. As Chair, my inbox regularly fills up with complaints from residents and copies of messages that residents themselves are having to send to developers and even to the developers' own contractors.

- *Where* are we as residents supposed to go for updated information about plans for adoption?
- *What* should local residents be able to expect by way of support from Cambridge City Council now and potentially a development corporation in the future?

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport said the following:

i. Understood the frustration from the residents regarding these new developments.
ii. The adoption of streets by the County Council as Highway Authority and open spaces by the City Council was not always straightforward. However, as a result of technical, legal and resourcing issues, could take longer than expected until adoption occurred. Roads and public open space remained privately maintained, and responsibility for repairs would rest with the developers or owners of the land.
iii. In respect of the process of road adoption in these areas, it was understood that the developer of these sites submitted applications to agree the detailed design of the roads and ultimately their adoption to the County Council a number of years ago. Whilst these applications were granted a technical approval, the developer never completed the necessary legal agreements. This meant that there was no certainty of adoption, which should have been highlighted by a conveyancing solicitor when residents purchased their property.
iv. Understood that the County Council had, however, inspected the work and was still expecting to adopt the infrastructure with agreement from the developer. Before this could happen, the developers must undertake technical remedial work, mainly in relation to street lighting. In respect of the adoption of the open spaces, this had now taken place and the Council was reviewing its approach to future management and maintenance.
v. The adoption of highways was a matter for the County Council and residents seeking updates and clarification should take this matter up with their County Councillor. In respect of open spaces, this was a City Council responsibility and local Councillors should be able to assist in securing feedback on the progression of these works.

In response to the Supplementary Question:

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport said the following:

i. Previously had been a Councillor for Trumpington and recognised the issues that had been highlighted. Spent lots of time, chasing the developers and the County Council to get these issues moved forward and therefore understood the issues experienced.
ii. There would be a motion on this matter at the Council meeting and hopefully would be able to bring together some information about how residents can could obtain updates. However, there was also the issue of enforcement.
iii. Enforcement was very specific in terms of what could be done regarding explicit planning conditions. Unfortunately, many of the adoption issues related to the legal arrangements in place and to technical matters where standards were not being met.
iv. The matter was very complicated and could be very frustrating, but there would be a debate on the motion tonight and the Council would be taking this work forward and returning to it in the future.

Question 4)

The former Leader of Cambridge City Council, Cameron Holloway, met with ACORN Cambridge to discuss our concerns regarding bailiff use by the City Council. Will the new leader of the Council, Councillor Katie Thornburrow, continue negotiations with ACORN regarding the continuing issue of bailiffs being used to terrorise the most vulnerable members of the community, or will she be appointing another member to represent the Council in this issue?

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport said the following:

i. The language used in this question was unacceptable and had not been taken lightly. It was not appropriate to make an accusation that people were being terrorised and this would only make it harder to have a proper discussion and contributed to an overall angry and negative atmosphere that infected so much of today's politics. Would ask to be more thoughtful about this in the future.
ii. The Council had a responsibility to all residents to ensure that Council Tax was properly collected, not just for the services that were delivered directly, but for other local authorities that accounted for most of the Council tax collected.

iii. However, the Council also believed that where residents were genuinely unable to pay, they must get the support needed. Officers work hard to ensure that happened.
iv. If a resident was in arears, they were likely to feel vulnerable and totally understood the emotional aspects of being visited by an Enforcement Officer
v. In answer to previous questions on this subject given on 26 February this year, the Council had already set out that the use of Enforcement Agents by Cambridge City Council were an absolute last resort.
vi. There was very significant support available for any resident facing difficulties in paying their Council tax, including a Council tax reduction scheme that discounted the whole amount for residents on the lowest incomes.
vii. Comprehensive information about the available support was available on the Council's website, and in all written communications to residents.
viii. Customer Services staff, who were often the first point of contact, were trained and able to refer people on to the right support.
ix. Would be more than happy to offer a follow up meeting as originally agreed by the former Leader and looked forward to hearing from representatives.

Supplementary
Thank you for agreeing to meet.

Would like to emphasise that the group could be contacted by e-mail to arrange this meeting to discuss the concerns raised.

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport replied:
i. Would respond via e-mail to agree a time to meet.

Question 5)
Could the Council mandate, as a condition for future Planning Permissions most widely and immediately for
- City Council WCs,
- Public Buildings
- Schools + Colleges
- Churches
- Pubs and Clubs
- Cubicled Toilets with Hand-washing Sinks atop the cistern to flush directly?

This spares our fragile Chalk Streams, as well as Saving Space Architecturally, as Greywater from hand-washing would immediately flush the

Toilet, thus halving water abstracted from our precious aquifers for wasteful WCs which needlessly and sacrilegiously guzzle expensive potable water, in relieving inordinate numbers of Transients (9 million plus Tourists per annum, 60,000 University students) periodically swelling our Water-Stressed Town's Resident population for free unsustainably.
We are highly indebted to our Cam River System and must stop using it as a sewer. Massive reduction in water usage could easily be achieved by installing loo flushes of this kind. Art Work Posters could educate the world as to why Cambridge has made this choice in the extreme heatwave of 2026 - to Save our Chalk Streams.
Examples of such facilities:
Sisters Grimm Theatre off the Tottenham Court Road in London.
Increasingly switched-on individuals, and now the real possibility Cambridge Councils could thereby spearhead Chalk Stream Recovery. The Japanese have been doing this, (respecting Water, instead of flushing inordinately excessive amounts down the pan), since 1953!
Please consider and implement this most urgently.
Architects back to the drawing board.
It's a No-Brainer, so obvious when you think about it. Do-able now.

The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Spaces and City Services, outside of the meeting as the public speaker was not present:

i. The existing Cambridge Local Plan had already set the highest possible requirements for water efficiency for new non-residential development, seeking at least a 55% reduction from baseline water use using the BREEAM methodology. This required a range of measures to reduce water use, including water efficient fixtures and fittings and the use of either rainwater recycling or grey water reuse. Planning conditions were already in use to require these levels of water use.
ii. The Council would also be seeking high levels of water efficiency through the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan. There were regulatory limitations, currently being reviewed alongside a pilot in Eddington on use of its existing Grey Water system, about the re-use of grey water in buildings that the Council would also be monitoring to determine what else may be possible in future years.
iii. The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, backed by Government funding of over £5 million was supporting the implementation of a water retrofit programme across a number of Council properties to deliver part of the Greater Cambridge Water Efficiency Programme and helped address water scarcity locally by installing water saving devices in existing Council-owned buildings.

iv. The Council would continue to explore how, through integrated water management (outlined in the Local Plan evidence base) but also working with the Cambridge Growth Company and the Governments "Water Scarcity Group" for Greater Cambridge, further mitigation of demand could be achieved to help safeguard existing supplies and minimise potential adverse environmental effects. https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/news/2026/02/25/councils-awarded-5-million-to-install-water-saving-measures-in-council-buildings

Question 6)

Questions: 1) Why is the Council not including all areas of Cambridge, in controls of over concentration of HMOs. Focus seems to be in the city centre residential areas.

Surrounding areas such as Cherry Hinton, Queen Edith's and Trumpington are part of Cambridge and not receiving an A4 with ABC, sandwiching, and the 100m rule, maybe that's the same for all of Cambridge - who knows.

2) Why is the data on HMOs not up to date, and accurate on the number of HMOs in CH and surrounding areas, indeed for Cambridge as a whole! Is this not a high priority to ensure that all who live and work here have good quality housing. It should be registered, regulated and up to standard, monitored and price controlled.

3) Main employers: not in the city centre, such as ARM, Addenbrookes, the New Hospitals and the Biomedical Campus deserve and
require good honest purpose-built regulated HMOs, why are they not being built or funded by these corporations who take much out of our city?

4) This problem concerns the residents of the outer regions of CH, Queen Edith's and Trumpington and probably central Cambridge. Over concentration of HMOs have a negative impact on local communities and decreases the supply of family homes. We ask why has Cambridge resisted being more responsible for HMOs, rather than giving in to opportunist developers or unscrupulous landlords? Oxford and other large cities embraced this long ago so why hasn't Cambridge. We want to know is Cambridge the city of GREED not NEED for this situation is appalling!

The following response was provided by the Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport outside of the meeting as the public speaker was not present:

ii. To inform the Greater Cambridge Local Plan the Council commissioned a new study to explore the role of HMOs in meeting the housing needs of Greater Cambridge, the impacts of HMOs, and the potential solutions. The report provided updated data and made clear the important contribution that HMOs played in meeting a part of the Cities existing and future housing needs.

iii. The emerging Local Plan policy focused on ensuring HMOs were of a suitable quality, amenity impacts were managed and required appropriate management arrangements to be demonstrated.

iv. The Council kept a register of licenced HMOs and other known HMOs, which have used this alongside other data sources to inform the new study.

v. Whilst outside the Plan making process, there was a strong case for developing an Article 4 Direction, so that small HMOs would also require planning permission. The Council was currently exploring the case for and extent of an Article 4 to bring greater control to the establishment of small HMO's. It was expected to bring a report to Cabinet later in the year seeking authority to consult on an Article 4 to support the better management of this tenure. Alongside the proposed Joint Local Plan policy, this would ensure that the quality of this important housing tenure could be more successfully secured across Cambridge.

Question 7)
Cambridge's Planning Safeguards

Why are residents doing the Council's scrutiny?

The Christ's College library is a documented test of Cambridge's planning safeguards. Those safeguards have repeatedly failed.

FOUR ERRORS. CONSENT TO QUASH.
Four serious errors reached the Planning Committee. Residents brought a judicial review. The Council and Christ's College conceded all four grounds. They consented to quash the permission; the Council agreed to pay residents' legal costs. The High Court gives its reasoned judgment on 20 October.

APPLICATION RE-RUN. ERRORS RECUR AND GROW.
On the first application, the Planning Committee was never told that Historic England had warned of harm from the building's excessive bulk and massing. On the identical re-run, the Council failed to consult Historic England at all. Again, residents discovered the omission and pressed the Council to correct it.

FOUR ERRORS. ANSWER REFUSED.
Residents asked the Council to confirm that its new officer report would address every conceded ground and explain how each error had been corrected. The Council said it was "not obliged to respond.

PUBLIC SCRUTINY CANCELLED.
Seventy-five residents met every published requirement for a Development Control Forum. Christ’s College refused to attend. The Council treated that refusal as a veto and cancelled the Forum, although no such veto appears in its rules. Residents were forced to issue a formal legal challenge. The Council reinstated the Forum.

The pattern is systemic: the Council’s safeguards fail. Residents identify the failures. Residents force their correction.

The questions

1. Did any Council safeguard identify the failures in officer advice, consultation or public participation before residents did? If yes, which safeguard identified which failure, and when?
2. Did the Council change any planning safeguard after four errors reached the Planning Committee? If yes, what changed and when? If no, was the identical application re-run without any safeguard being changed?
3. How many other planning decisions has the Council audited for similar undetected errors? If none, does the Council have any other evidence that these failures are confined to the Christ’s College applications?

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport replied with the following:

i. Limited to what could be said as this was a current planning application and the matter before the high court.
ii. The Shared Planning Service always sought to learn from all complaints and comments received through the planning process or decisions that had been made.
iii. Where changes to the systems or processes we required, Officers worked through the services independently, audited quality management system to program changes, which were then implemented alongside the planning system and process changes as appropriate.
iv. The Council’s in-house and external Legal Advisers carefully considered the outcomes of planning appeals and judicial proceedings and discussed these with Officers, Leadership team of the service and Councillors to identify areas that required change of policy or approach and that would be the case here.

Supplementary Question:

i. Would like the Council to turn to a safeguard that cannot fail to be considered following the High Court's decision.

ii. The Council had already consented to the closure of the first College Library. Why is it now deciding a second application concerning the same library, the application due to be determined in September.
iii. On 20 October, the High Court was expected to issue its reasoned judgment, which would only be a few weeks after this application was scheduled for determination. That judgment would set out what went wrong and exactly what people are right.
iv. The Council can extend the determination deadline through a simple written agreement. Would the Council ask the applicant to agree to an extension until after the High Court's judgment. If not, what safeguards are the Council relying upon?

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport replied that they could not comment due to the matter being a live planning application and the ongoing legal process.

Question 8)
I’ve just come back from Warrenpoint in Northern Ireland, where I met up with fellow campaigners Fionnuala McKinley and Colum Sands. We discussed Cambridge’s recycling contract with Re-Gen over there in Newry.
There is a recent development. On the 19th of May, Cambridgeshire County Council discussed a possible project to build their own MRF (Materials Recovery Facility) in this county. This would obviously avoid the huge level of carbon emissions generated by the Re-Gen lorries taking all our blue bin recycling 400 miles to Northern Ireland for sorting. (And almost all of this is then brought back well over 400 miles to England, Belgium, Sweden and the Netherlands for actual recycling.)
There are several difficulties involved with building an MRF here. Ros Hathorn, chair of the Environment and Green Investment committee, particularly mentioned that local residents might object to an MRF near them. But campaigners over there could introduce her and you to hundreds and hundreds of residents, particularly in Warrenpoint, who object to Re-Gen’s storage of rotting bales a few hundred metres from their town square. Re-Gen are allowed to store up to 21,000 tonnes at the harbour for (each bale for up to 3 months,) and they spray it daily with toxic insecticide and deodoriser to try to kill the flies and disguise the smell. For comparison, the equivalent distance from Market Square here would be if those 21,000 tonnes of bales were dumped on Christ’s Pieces.

A new MRF here would mean Cambridge would no longer be exporting its problem for another country to deal with. It is the solution that should have

been decided on right at the beginning. Many British councils do own their own local MRFs.
I know this period of transitioning to unitary authorities makes all change more difficult and uncertain. But please could you tell me what you and the Cambridge City council think of this plan? Do you agree that it could be a much better solution for dealing with our recycling than the way we export it now? If so, are there things this council will actively do to support it?

The Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment responded with the following:

i. Cambridge City Council was the waste collection authority for the City and Cambridgeshire County Council the waste disposal authority.
ii. Therefore, the County Council were responsible for disposing of the residual black bin waste here in Cambridge which is sent to landfill in Water Beach.
iii. The Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service held a contract with Re-Gen for dry materials recycling only which was sorted at Re-gen's waste's materials recovery facility known as MRF.
iv. None of the waste referenced at Warren Point mentioned in the public question was generated by a contract with Cambridge City Council or the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service.
v. Regarding the Council having its own MRF in Cambridgeshire, the plan referred to in the question at County Council was a shared proposal being developed through RECAP, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership.
vi. It was through RECAP that the Council signed the Re-Gen contract and as a group are investigating all options for the future including an in-house option.
vii. Personally favoured having a publicly owned and run MRF. However, a lot of work was needed to be done to investigate this and would require a large capital investment if the options appraisal recommends it.
viii. The Council had recently signed the new RECAP waste and resources and waste strategy 2025 to 2031 which provided an overview of the collection and disposal arrangements for waste management for all local authorities within the RECAP partnership area. One of the strategies eight themes was waste management infrastructure which would fall under this strategy.

In response to the Supplementary Question:

The Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment responded with the following:

i. The Council's recycling went to the new modern energy efficient site in Newry.
ii. The Shared Waste Service worked hard to reduce contamination in recycling collections. Contamination referred to items placed in blue bins that should not be there, such as dirty nappies, food waste and other materials that cannot be recycled.
iii. One of the benefits of the Re-gen contract is that they can recycle much more. They can recycle what's called the findings, such as little bottle tops and things.
iv. Any residual waste that cannot be recycled is baled and transported via Warrenpoint Port. It was not stored at the Warrenpoint facility but passed through the port and is loaded for onward transport to an energy-from-waste facility.
v. As said previously in public at a meeting of Services, Climate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3rd February 2026, that no recycling or waste collected by the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste service was sent to the Warrenpoint refuse centre. Any contamination such as dirty nappies, food and clothes that is separated out and cannot be recycled, was stored at Re-Gen's Derryboy Road site and then sent to Sweden to an energy-from-waste facility. The importance of the waste hierarchy (reduce, re-use, recycle) was emphasised along with the extended producer responsibility (EPR) scheme.

Question 9)
Red Cross Areas in Queen Edith's has an over concentration of HMOs, many lived in by our valuable NHS. How can these be improved and still have small flats and family housing in the same neighbourhood for them to be able to move on to and stay part of the community keeping their networks of support for work, children's schooling, family, friends and health services like their local GP?

The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Housing outside of the meeting as the public speaker was not present:

i. The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport had spoken on the matter of HMOs in question 6.
ii. The Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) development at Newbury Farm which was Council led would be offering 60 Council homes with some at 80% market rent targeting local workers such as nurses.

iii. Residents, including nurses that currently lived in that area were welcome to approach the Council in order to be made aware when these homes would be available.

Question 10)
How much longer do families and members of the public have to wait for new public toilets on Jesus Green?
The existing toilets date back almost a hundred years and are totally inadequate, particularly as Jesus Green is so heavily used by families and visitors. This does our City no credit whatever.
Jesus Green Association and ward councillors have been pressing the Council and recommending very suitable alternatives for some 10 years but there has been no progress at all.

The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Space and City Services outside of the meeting as the public speaker was not present:

i. The Council shared the concerns regarding the existing public toilets on Jesus Green. They were approaching 100 years old and, despite repair and improvement works over recent years, increasing vandalism and their age meant they did not provide the standard of facility that people rightly expect.
ii. Rather than continuing to invest significant sums in a building that had reached the end of its useful life, the Council's long-term ambition was to provide new, modern and accessible public toilets as part of the wider redevelopment of the Jesus Green Lido site.
iii. Alongside this, the Council were developing a coordinated investment plan for Jesus Green that would also consider the future of the Rouse Pavilion, wider public realm improvements, accessibility, event infrastructure and the best use of available Section 106 funding. Bringing these projects together would enable Members to consider a single long-term vision for the park rather than a series of disconnected schemes.
iv. In the meantime, the Council recognised that people continued to rely on the existing facilities. Therefore, repairs were being undertaken, improving their appearance, using more durable replacement materials where appropriate and applying anti-graffiti coatings to ensure they remained safe and operational while permanent replacement facilities were progressed

Question 11)
I have a query about houses of multiple occupation in my area and wondered if you could tell me what the council's stance is on them?

I understand that many Addenbrookes staff reside in the shared accommodation in the Red Cross area but wonder what provision is set out for them to move up into more individual accommodation - are there any smaller affordable flats/houses in the areas being built now?

The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Housing outside of the meeting as the public speaker was not present and gave the same response provided to question 9:

i. The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport had spoken on the matter of HMOs in question 6.
ii. In addition, the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) development at Newbury Farm which was Council led would be offering 60 council homes with some at 80% market rent targeting local workers such as nurses.
iii. Residents, including nurses that currently lived in that area were welcome to approach the Council in order to be made aware when these homes would be available.

Question 12)

Will Council commit to instruct officers to begin immediate work on implementing an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights for the conversion of family homes into HMOs across the City to include RedCross Areas in Queen Edith's Ward? How is Council committing to introduce strict saturation policies and thresholds in planning policy, including maximum numerical density limits and buffer zones to prevent clustering of HMOs on individual streets e.g. no 3 in a row, an adjacency rule for housing most at risk small, terraced houses not designed for HMO living, to ensure Council strengthens licensing and enforcement?

Will Council commit in 12 months to in RedCross Areas:

- To listen to Cambridge residents first and not the lobbying of institutions, employers Landlords
- An Article 4 - to include 2+ HMOs
- SPD
- Additional Licencing
- A Register of all HMOs including 2+ available to residents
- A rogue Landlord register available to residents
- No 3 HMOs in a row, 100m rule, adjacency rule, no sandwiching of a family home between 2 HMOs
- Tougher licence conditions on landlords covering noise, waste, antisocial behaviour, and property standards so our residents in RedCross Areas have decent well-maintained homes?

- Increasing inspections and resourcing enforcement teams to ensure compliance?
- Pursuing maximum penalties against rogue landlords, including licence revocation?
- To stop the creeping overconcentration of HMOs taking out family housing and unbalancing communities

Question 13)
When Government Directives and other leading Cities across the UK have developed HMO planning policy from 2010, why are Cambridge City Council HMO Controls not in place in line with these in 2026?
RARA welcomes Cllr Thornburrow stating as the new Leader of Cambridge City Council at full Council Committee 2026
"I am looking immediately at options for control on concentration of smaller Homes of Multiple Occupation"
But RARA asks Council, Cambridge Council and its members knowing these issues from 2010 another consultation is not required actions are, is this Council committed to address the City as a whole to achieve decent housing in all tenures including HMOs avoiding overconcentration of HMOs whilst not allowing any caveats to enable non compliance by any one Landlord?
Can Council commit to:

- Article 4 being put in place means planning is required for new 3+ HMOs, across Cambridge and in RedCross Areas?
- Special Planning Documents put in place (help know how many HMOs in any one street with the Register available to public)?
- Additional Licensing Scheme for over concentrated areas including RedCross Areas?
- The Government Guidelines of numerical thresholds 10% (some at 20/25%) within 50m or 100m?
- No sandwiching a family house between 2 HMOs?
- No ABC 3 HMOs in a row?
- An adjacency rule so inappropriate terraced housing are not continued to be taken our of the family housing market?
- Proactive A4 that protect and stop overspill of one or key Landlords need dominating and breaking down a cohesive community?
- Protections of amenity by inspections and clear strict enforcement
- To ensure mixed tenure of both 10% HMOs and all housing are available on every street in Cambridge, avoiding overconcentration and the ensuing negative impacts like those in RedCross Areas?
- Not allowing any caveats to enable non compliance by any one Landlord?

Question 14)
Many NHS live in HMOs in Red Cross Areas how is the current over occupation going to be managed so they can move on into their own or family home locally near their vital work.

The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Housing outside of the meeting as the public speaker was not present and gave the same response provided to question 9 and 11:

i. The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport had spoken on the matter of HMOs in question 6.
ii. In addition, the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) development at Newbury Farm which was Council led would be offering 60 council homes with some at 80% market rent targeting local workers such as nurses.
iii. Residents, including nurses that currently lived in that area were welcome to approach the Council in order to be made aware when these homes would be available.

Question 15)
The renewed proposals to build housing on the park adjacent to St Thomas's Road risk reopening a deeply divisive chapter in our community's history. Previous plans, confusing communication, and uncertainty over property, garages and demolition caused anxiety, division and a loss of confidence in the council's decision-making. BARA's position is clear: we support the park as a vital community asset and are committed to protecting and enhancing it for everyone. Working alongside residents and the Friends of the Park, we champion biodiversity, community engagement, cultural capital and inclusive development. BARA's priority is a commitment to developing a non-religious community space that serves the community covered by the Birdwood Area Residents Association. This should be an integrated priority, not an afterthought. The park is a valued community asset, should its protection and enhancement not be placed at the heart of any future plans and ensured for the rest of this century?
We recognise the significant pressure on local authorities to deliver much-needed housing and support growing demand. However, a larger population also requires investment in the facilities, services and shared spaces that enable communities to thrive. As the park celebrates 75 years of serving local people, it is fair to ask whether our community has also spent 75 years waiting for the resources and infrastructure it deserves. BARA believes that any future development must place community provision at its heart, ensuring that homes are matched by accessible, inclusive spaces and facilities that strengthen

community life for generations to come. Should any new development proceed without first ensuring that the community infrastructure needed to support both existing and future residents is delivered alongside it?

The Cabinet Member for Housing replied with the following:

i. Noted the concerns raised and would like to thank you for all the work that Birdwood Area Residents Association undertook in the park.
ii. The Council want to look at the garage site only.
iii. The approved Cabinet papers stated proposals for these council homes would review what was possible in utilising the garage space area only and to minimise impact on the park.
iv. Officers would work with residents to ensure that all changes to the green space were clearly agreed before designs were progressed to planning.
v. Officers would also look at how the space could be adopted as a park as part of the Council's portfolio.
vi. The planning process would in due course assess the merits of any proposal and present a report to the Planning Committee to make the final decision on the planning merits in the usual way.

In response to the Supplementary Question:

The Cabinet Member for Housing responded:

i. When the Council were first looking at the sites of the garages, it was for both side of the road and there was a thought that perhaps a community centre could be included in the design.
ii. However, it is on the right-hand side only which is being developed with either three or four homes.
iii. Have instructed that the park should be protected and have publicly said this before to those who came to the last Cabinet meeting.
iv. Would be happy to meet outside of this meeting to discuss this matter further.
v. Have lived in the area so understood the importance of the park and know exactly where the park was located.

Question 16)

How is Council addressing the negative impacts of HMO overconcentration in RedCross Areas reported and increasing over the last decade resulting in a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme needing to be set up in 2020? How will Council address the ongoing and increasing anti-social behaviour from this overconcentration of this tenure of housing negatively affecting the previously balanced and cohesive community?

The concentration of shared housing in areas like RedCross In Queen Edith's have created several key challenges for the local community how is Council going to address these?

- Community Cohesion: The erosion of family-oriented streets, long-term neighbourhood stability, removal of single-family homes meaning residents cannot move from a HMO to the next stage on the housing ladder in their community. Will Council introduce a Article 4, SPDs, 100m rule, additional licensing, ABC, sandwiching, adjacency rule in RedCross Areas as recommended by Cllr Davies?
- Environmental Strain: Increased issues with waste, overflowing bins, vermin and obstructed bicycle storage. Will Council introduce more inspections and enforcement actions in Red Cross Areas as the 2022 Place Based Review brought in to address overconcentration and its negative impacts on the neighbourhood found not 15% HMOs as believed but over 50% HMOs with many inspected failing fire and Health & Safety requirements in place up to 7 years previously.
- Parking Stress: Higher vehicle density creating severe local parking congestion, anti social behaviours parking on and blocking neighbouring properties and rights of egress including compromising 24/7 emergency vehicles access.
- Excessive comings and goings: 1 family home average 20 vehicle journeys a week to 1 HMO 100 vehicle journeys per week. When garages are removed for more HMO rooms this creates more comings and goings onto others parking areas.
- Noise and anti social behaviours: when more than 1 HMO in 100m the issues are exacerbate exponentially. When residents are from the same 3 local key employers residents state it is impossible to complain within or living externally to a HMO. As fears around continuing to live in the HMO, living in the community, job security, tenancy security and the ability to receive a reference to move on to their next home/job. Can Council assure residents their needs are being put first and lobbying from local employers, institutions and Landlords for HMOs and higher profit is not put first? Additionally, noise is not just from the overconcentration but that the design of the house was for a single-family and single storey use, now a HMO some with adjacent HMOs noise transmission is excessive house to house how will Council address this?
- Overcrowding: HMO management not addressing over occupation in double rooms, families living in living rooms, sub-letting and residents doing hot sheeting or offering bed and breakfast off the books.
- Housing Imbalance: In RedCross Areas there is now reduced availability of affordable single-family homes as landlords take out family homes valued at 1.6-2.4 as returns for HMOs are 3.2-7K in RedCross Areas.

Housing pressure and insecurity for families as their homes are targeted to buy by local HMO consortiums and Landlords. What is Council putting in place to stop the erosion of a balanced community in RedCross Areas?

The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Housing outside of the meeting as the thirty minutes for public questions had expired

i. Referred to the Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport regarding HMOs in question 6.
ii. In addition, the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) development at Newbury Farm which was Council led would be offering 60 council homes with some at 80% market rent targeting local workers such as nurses.
iii. Residents, including nurses that currently lived in that area were welcome to approach the Council in order to be made aware when these homes would be available.

Question 17)

I am writing regarding the housing situation in the Red Cross area of Queen Edith's ward near Addenbrookes Hospital.

The area has a mix of residents including families with school age children, pension age/older vulnerable residents, and many NHS and key workers providing vital services and living in houses of multiple occupancy. The latter make up a large proportion of the local population in the area, and many find themselves living in poor quality accommodation for short term lets before they move on to more permanent homes, at some distance from their place of work. The situation creates a problem for all residents in the area. The key workers and NHS residents who feel they have to move on due to the poor quality of accommodation in their HMOs do not get a chance to settle and make friends and connections in the local community. The families and older members of the community also find the constant high level of change in the local population and poor housing conditions a challenge for creating a strong and stable sense of community. In addition, it takes considerable effort from more permanent residents to ensure that anti-social behaviour is appropriately managed.

I urge you to consider this and put in place plans that will bring more stability and balance to the area better serving the needs of the permanent local residents as well as the transient NHS/key workers, some of whom would likely choose to settle rather than move on if their housing situation was improved.

The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Housing outside of the meeting as the thirty minutes for public questions had expired

i. Referred to the Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport regarding HMOs in question 6.
ii. Would refer to the earlier response to questions 9, 11,14 and 16. The Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) development at Newbury Farm which was Council led would be offering 60 council homes with some at 80% market rent targeting local workers such as nurses.
iii. Residents, including nurses that currently lived in that area were welcome to approach the Council in order to be made aware when these homes would be available.

Question 18)
I understand that the Council have brought in a rule banning the public bringing in soft drinks and food to the main arena at this year's Cambridge Folk Festival. I have been to and planned to go to a number of folk festivals this year, they include Ely, Folk East, Cropredy, and Shrewsbury Folk Festivals. I have never seen or heard them having such a policy. Please do all you can to get the council to rescind this ruling.

The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Communities, outside of the meeting as the thirty minutes for public questions had expired

i. Had considered the comments by the public speaker, and other comments, and the information that had been presented at first point of sale and are happy to review the previous statement.
ii. One of the things the Council valued most about Cambridge Folk Festival was the incredible community that surrounds it.
iii. After hearing feedback, Officers have reviewed the Council's policy and this year would be allowing festivalgoers to bring food & soft drinks into the festival arena for personal consumption.
iv. The Council simply ask that it's kept modest – boxes or hampers within reason please, there would not be a measurement check. Would allow sealed soft drinks (no glass) and would love to keep single use plastic to a minimum.
v. Empty, refillable bottles would also be allowed and due to the current weather conditions, more water points around the festival site have been installed.

vi. No BYO (Bring Your Own) alcohol would be permitted into the main arena.
vii. Hope that the public would continue to support our amazing independent food and drink traders. They were a much-loved part of the festival and play a huge role in creating the atmosphere and experience that makes Cambridge Folk Festival so special.
viii. With any new or revised event, Officers were working with the public and stakeholders to help them adjust to the new festival format and different measures and were working to make sure the Council can develop the future festival sustainably with their support and all feedback is so valuable as part of this process so thank you for your comments.

Question 19)
Can I welcome the family-friendly, alcohol-free screening of the England Argentina World Cup semi-final, possible final, and ask if the Council are planning such events in the future.

The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Communities, outside of the meeting as the thirty minutes for public questions had expired.
i. The Council continued to develop the programme of events at our community centres across the City.
ii. The success at the World Cup has presented an opportunity to compliment the great support the public and businesses had given the team with a different offer to the pubs in the City.
iii. The Council would review the demand for the showing of the semi-final and possible final before considering a plan for future events such as these.

Question 20)
Question to the Leader about potholes
The state of our roads is a major concern for all of us in Cambridge and beyond. Whether we walk, cycle, take the bus or drive, poor road conditions affect us all. I’ve spent months walking my local roads with county councillor Bry Goodliffe, logging hundreds of issues on the County Council website, and even bringing the Under Secretary of State for Transport to Coleridge, where I live, to see for himself how poor the roads are.
Clearly the City Council is not responsible for the state of our roads – it is a County Council function. But I know that it is an issue that affects us all, and that therefore it is something many councillors at the city care deeply about.

The County Council are getting the best part of £188 million over 4 years to fix our roads. They have a highways budget this year of £58 million. The people who live, work and study here don't expect a magic wand, but they do expect to see results, and they expect the money to be spent wisely.

And yet as residents, we are still seeing far too many degraded surfaces. We are fed up with waiting months for a fix that, when it finally comes simply patches the largest hole and leaves several around it unfixed because they aren't deemed 'serious enough. We are fed up with roads which had very little degradation being resurfaced whilst roads in a much worse state are still waiting to be fixed. And we are fed up with that surfacing being poor quality, impeding access to drains and leaving roads without markings for weeks.

This is an issue that impacts all of us.

Many of us were shocked to discover that the County Council has recently renewed their pothole contract with the same contractors. We need reassurance that this is not going to mean 'more of the same'.

Can the leader tell us what is being done to hold the County Council to account on the state of our roads, and will she write to the County Council to ask what public scrutiny there will be of contractor performance so that residents can understand how wisely the £58m budget for highways repairs is being spent?

Question 21)

Councillors, please listen to traders and to the public: what our City wants and needs is a viable thriving traditional Market.

For 10 years, the Council has been talking about improving the Market Square, but has not listened to its public, or to its market traders. The City Council proposals continually ignore what traders need – both for the continuation of a viable market, as well as for their livelihoods. The Council also ignores what is plain to see – when traders bring their produce and goods to the market, people come to buy. (see change.org petition "Please help us to save Cambridges tradition locals' market -and its traders", now with over 2,800 signatures).

The Council's proposals cannot be implemented without a fit-for-purpose demountable stall (not yet found despite years of searching!) and a viable strategy for decanting the traders during the works.

These crucial issues have been raised repeatedly, but not resolved, in trader liaison meetings. Meetings from which the public were excluded, and whose outcomes have not been made public. These issues were again raised by traders, public and councillors at the 25th March Planning Committee, at which the applications were deferred.

Council Officers presented the demountable stalls and the trader decant as being entirely separate matters from the current application. Leaving both of these issues totally unresolved.

Officers have acknowledged that a separate planning application will be required for the trader decant. The proposal is for this to be submitted in the late Autumn, in the lead up to Christmas which is the traders' busiest time. Making the proposed timescale totally unrealistic, as well as showing a total lack of consideration for the traders, and their livelihoods.

Making this the complete opposite of "One Council: fair for all".

The minute reasons for deferral on 25th March included "4. Clarification on why there was a lack of support for the proposal from market traders." No such clarification has been provided. The only feedback in the currently proposed amendments is "7.2 Market trader engagement has continued, and ongoing feedback has informed the enclosed proposals to introduce a third stall type. Positive sentiment towards the changes was expressed by some market traders, although the team recognises that some traders still have reservations about the project." (Design and Access Statement "Design Evolution", 7.2. There is no clarification of issues raised or how they are to be resolved.

It's not just that the current amendments do not address these key issues. It's also that they continue to demonstrate that, by failing to even report on the nature and extent of concerns raised by the traders, the City Council is just not listening.

Councillors, this project has been a fiasco due to years of mistaken "divide and rule" rather than involving traders and public as key partners together.

Our question remains – when will our City Council begin to listen to its constituents – both the public who use the market and the traders who make it possible?

The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Skills, outside of the meeting as the thirty minutes for public questions had expired.

i. As you know, as you have been present for some of the meetings, there have been monthly trader meetings for the last two years to go through the proposed designs, the decanted market proposals and the market business plan.
ii. The Council needs to take into consideration public views which expressed concern about anti-social behaviour on the market square as well taking into consideration future proofing the market for the next fifty years to ensure it continued to thrive.
iii. Traders were asked their preference for the decanted location and were clear in their choice of location which was to be close where the market

is now. They chose this location fully in the knowledge of the challenges this option presented. We are working hard to deliver their choice.

iv. The Council has tested demountable stalls on the market and was confident that it can deliver one for Cambridge that has worked in many other markets in the UK and abroad.

v. Finally, the latest planning proposals took into consideration market traders feedback, highways feedback and the results of the demountable trials.

Question 22)

Thank you, Leader and Cabinet members. My name is Alex Smaridge and I am here as the Director of the Museum of Cambridge to raise an urgent matter regarding the White Horse Inn—a unique Grade II listed asset within this council's building stock.

Recently, the council decided that imminent structural repairs are required, which would force the temporary closure of the building's occupier, the Museum of Cambridge. Shockingly, these specific repairs were earmarked and identified several years ago. Yet only now are they being pushed forward.

For years, the Museum has been an exemplary tenant. They have repeatedly engaged with officers to find solutions, manage the building's condition, and attempted to establish a proactive maintenance relationship with the City Council. Despite these efforts, to our knowledge, the council still has no Conservation Management Plan in place for the care of this historic, 17th-century timber-framed asset.

Now, the council is using the imposed cost of these self-inflicted building works to stall and delay negotiations over the Museum's future lease.

In a city that prides itself on being on the brink of major growth—championed by the Cambridge Growth Company and massive expansions over the coming years— Why has the council neglected its fundamental duty of care toward its listed building stock, and when will it stop using its own maintenance delays to block the future of the Museum of Cambridge?

The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Communities outside of the meeting as the thirty minutes for public questions had expired.

i. The Council was certainly not trying to block the future of the Museum of Cambridge.

ii. Indeed, Cambridge City Council had provided consistent and significant financial support to the Museum of Cambridge for at least 28 years, with grant records confirming funding from 1998 onwards. Over this period, the Museum has relied significantly on Council support to remain operational, and the Council had funded significant repairs in recent years.

iii. As discussed, when Officers met privately with you, whilst the Council had already begun discussion options with you already for an early renewal of your current lease with seven years remaining, we cannot complete any discussions without clarity on the details and costs of repairs required to the structure.

iv. We had already discussed with you in private that new information obtained by recent surveys suggests costs may be considerably higher than had been budgeted.

v. Officer have instructed more detailed survey work to firm up those costs and would keep in contact in coming weeks more is learnt what this means for the timing and duration of works, and for the lease renewal.

26/64/CNL Petition

The Petition organiser spoke in support of the petition highlighting the following points:

i. The petition called on the Council to introduce stronger planning controls on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) by setting a 10% HMO threshold within a 100m radius and introducing Article 4 Directions for small HMOs (3 to 6 occupants).

ii. Cambridge was unusual compared with other major university cities such as Oxford, Manchester and Bristol, as it currently had no defined HMO concentration threshold and no Article 4 Direction, limiting the council's ability to manage the spread of HMOs.

iii. The lack of controls had led to the rapid conversion of family homes into HMOs, contributing to concerns about issues such as parking, waste management, housing quality, neighbourhood stability and the loss of balanced communities.

iv. Some areas of Cambridge had already exceeded the commonly recognised 10% tipping point at which high concentrations of HMOs can begin to negatively affect residents and tenants.

v. The proposed measures were widely used planning tools adopted by many UK councils, and would provide clearer guidance for planners, reduce speculative property conversions, and help to maintain sustainable mixed communities while still allowing HMOs where they are needed.

Members debated the petition calling for stronger controls on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) across Cambridge.

The Leader of the Council raised the following points:

vi. The Cabinet acknowledged the concerns raised in the petition and noted that HMO issues had featured prominently in responses to the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation.
vii. Updated Local Plan policies relating to larger HMOs had recently been considered at scrutiny.
viii. Officers had spent the past year gathering evidence to support consideration of an Article 4 Direction, with a report expected to be presented to Cabinet in the autumn.
ix. The Council was committed to progressing work on Article 4 Directions, and engaging with residents on the issue.

Key points raised in the wider debate included:

x. Several councillors welcomed the petition and expressed support for the introduction of Article 4 Directions as a way to improve oversight, enable better management of HMOs, and help ensure balanced communities.
xi. Multiple speakers stressed that HMOs remained an important component of Cambridge's housing mix as they provided accommodation for students, young professionals, lower-income residents, NHS workers, care workers and people new to the city.
xii. Councillors raised concerns about poor quality HMO accommodation, including overcrowding, inadequate communal space and poor property management.
xiii. Councillors reported significant resident concerns with HMOs including concentration, pressure on parking and waste services, anti-social behaviour, loss of family housing stock, and changes to neighbourhood character.
xiv. Residents' associations were recognised for their role in highlighting these issues and bringing them before the Council.
xv. Some members argued that the growth in HMOs reflected wider housing shortages and an insufficient supply of social and affordable housing.
xvi. Some concerns were raised about the effectiveness of a fixed 10% threshold, with suggestions that improving housing standards and increasing affordable housing provision may be more effective in addressing underlying issues.
xvii. The Council's forthcoming Article 4 report and emerging Local Plan policies were identified as important next steps.

26/65/CNL To deal with oral questions

1. From Cllr Payne to the Cabinet Member for Communities

Do they agree that anti-social behaviour in Cambridge is increasing and can they outline any steps the council are taking to support the police in addressing this?

The Cabinet Member responded with:

There had been a consistent theme of reports of antisocial behaviour into the public safety team, although the trend did fluctuate at times. Officers in the team tackling antisocial behavior worked very closely with the police, especially around hotspot areas in the city and bring cases to the multi-agency group. Cases can be very complex and take a long time to resolve.

I have attended the ‘coffee with a cop’ initiative, which is available to all our residents in the city. Meanwhile, ‘Operation Alleviate’ is a joint operation scheme to prevent young people ending up in the criminal justice system.

I also attend the Cambridge Community Safety Partnership. This brings together several agencies and organisations concerned with tackling and reducing crime and antisocial behaviour in Cambridge. Once again, the police were a key partner.

For reference, the three priorities that the Cambridge Community Safety Partnership recently set were: preventing violence and exploitation, a neighbourhood approach, and tackling acquisitive crime.

2. From Cllr Grimwood to the Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Space and City Services

Last year, the Liberal Democrat Group submitted a council motion calling for a concerted rethink, involving the public and the many stakeholders, about the future of our city centre. The aim was to ensure that it maintains its meaning, diversity and vitality for all, including local residents, at a time of significant change on high streets across the country.

The motion attracted wide support and was passed. It called for a placemaking project, together with a scoping exercise and a report back by summer 2026. We were pleased that this was subsequently supported by a budget provision to take the work forward.

As it is now summer 2026 and nothing has so far been brought forward, could the Cabinet Member explain to the Council what this project will look like and what the timeline is for its delivery?

The Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Skills responded with:

The council approved additional funding for 2026 and 2027 and for the period 2027-2028 to support this work alongside the wider visitor economy programme.

That funding was being used to recruit a new city centre and visitor economy partnership manager and to develop a city centre performance dashboard, which would give a much stronger evidence base for understanding how the city centre is performing economically, socially, and environmentally. The new post would be advertised shortly while work on the dashboard was already underway.

The aim was to develop a shared evidence-led vision together with a practical action plan, with the involvement of residents, businesses, stakeholders, and elected members throughout the process. Over the summer there would be engagement with all political groups to agree the detailed scope of the work.

The project will be delivered in three phases: the first phase focuses on gathering and reviewing the available evidence, the second phase will focus on developing the vision and action plan including public stakeholder engagement, and the final phase will focus on securing the necessary approvals and then adoption through the Council's normal governance processes.

3. **From Cllr Davison to the Cabinet Member for Communities**

Following the council's commitment to responding to the (draft) EHRC code of practice, for residents in the meantime who are vulnerable, afraid, and have learned to expect persecution from certain political fringes, will the council make clear, now, on record, that in whatever form and at whatever time this code of practice comes to pass, and within whatever legal requirements are placed on this council, that we will seek to do as much as we can to protect vulnerable residents, and in this instance particularly trans residents?

The Cabinet Member responded with:

Officer teams across the council were working hard to develop a response to the draft Equality and Human Rights Commission’s Code of Practice, and this would be coming through to scrutiny in the autumn.

There was also the first Inclusion and Equity Panel in October, and work was underway on developing an equity strategy, with the aim that to involve all councillors in this work.

In 2016, the council hosted the national showcase for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans history month, from which resulted the equity pledge. As the pledge stated: “We believe in the dignity of all people and their right to respect and equality of opportunity. We value the strength that comes with difference and the positive contribution that diversity bring to our community. Our aspiration is for Cambridge and the wider region to be safe, welcoming, and inclusive."

Our intention is for everyone to feel safe, welcome and included and this very much includes our trans residents.

4. From Cllr Tong to The Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment

I would like to thank council officers for their prompt outreach work to protect rough sleepers in the current heat wave. With the increased risk of extreme weather because of the climate emergency, will the leader commit to working cross party and cross council on a heat resilience plan and bring it back to full council by February 2027.

The Cabinet Member responded with:

Our street outreach teams and homelessness partners have been providing practical support, including access to cooling spaces, cold water, sunscreen, and other measures to help people stay safe. Where rough sleepers are identified as particularly vulnerable, overnight accommodation had also been offered.

As temperatures rise and extreme weather events become more frequent, we need to consider how we build greater resilience to the impacts of climate change. The council already recognised climate adaptation as a core part of our response to the climate emergency; alongside the work we are doing to reduce emissions.

On your specific suggestion of a heat resilience plan, I would highlight work already underway through existing council strategies and plans. In 2024, we adopted a climate risk and vulnerability assessment and adaptation plan, which specifically considered risks associated with extreme heat, overheating, water shortages, and other climate impacts.

Our new climate change strategy embedded climate adaptation across all its objectives and included a wide range of actions being delivered across council services.

5. From Cllr Sage to The Cabinet Member for Communities and/or Inclusive Economy and Skills

The Museum of Cambridge is at risk of closure because the council has still not renewed its lease. Will the cabinet member explain why and say what she proposed to do about it?

The Cabinet Member for Communities responded with:

There are seven years remaining on the Museum of Cambridge's current lease and we have, at their request, initiated discussions about an early lease renegotiation. We have a variety of in-principle options that we want to discuss with them.

Before we can complete those negotiations, we need to gather information on the details and costs of repairs required to the structure they inhabit; this is to discharge our duty and secure best value in terms of public funds.

We recently instructed more detailed survey work and if there are significant cost implications, they will need to be discussed with cabinet and potentially be put through the budget process.

26/66/CNL To consider the recommendations of Committees for adoption

26/67/CNL Civic Affairs & Audit Committee - Constitution Updates

The Council considered a report from the Civic Affairs and Audit Committee recommending several amendments to the Council's Constitution.

Councillor Bick requested that it be recorded that he had formally asked officers not to make any change to his Group Leader's allowance as a consequence of the constitutional amendments and that any resulting saving should accrue to the Council.

On being put to the vote, the recommendation was approved by 35 votes to 0, with 3 abstentions. It was therefore **Resolved** to approve the constitutional amendments as recommended by the Civic Affairs and Audit Committee.

26/68/CNL Reports to Note

9a Update report on the Development Corporation
Members noted the update report on the proposed Development Corporation. Concerns were raised regarding the consultation findings, which showed a majority of respondents opposed its creation, and about the potential transfer of planning powers away from locally elected councillors.

The Leader of the Council advised that discussions with Government officials were ongoing and reiterated her commitment to protecting the Council's planning function, maintaining community engagement in planning decisions, and ensuring any Development Corporation would complement rather than replace existing local arrangements.

9b Local Government Review
Members discussed the Government's decision to defer a decision on local government reorganisation (LGR) in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough until October 2026. Concerns were expressed regarding the lack of clarity surrounding the delay and the uncertainty it creates for local authorities, residents and partner organisations.

Resolved: Following a vote, 12 members voted to note the report, 16 voted against noting the report and 8 abstained.

It was confirmed by the Monitoring Officer that as the report was presented for information, the outcome of the vote had no substantive effect on the recommendation but nevertheless reflected members' views on the matter.

26/69/CNL To consider the following notices of motion, notice of which has been given by:

10a Councillor Hauk:Improving Accountability and Transparency on Unadopted Residential Developments
The following amended motion was proposed by Councillor Hauk, Seconded by Councillor Payne.

The alteration included both the Labour and Green proposed amendments to the original Motion (additional text underlined and deleted text struck through).

Council notes:

That many residents move into new developments expecting to become part of established communities yet can spend many years living with unresolved issues such as roads awaiting new markings or safety features, waiting for adequate street lighting, lack of facilities and upkeep of open spaces, play areas, drainage, signage and other community infrastructure such as health provision, community spaces and libraries.

That responsibility for such infrastructure is often divided between developers, management companies, Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and other public bodies. As a result, residents can face considerable difficulty in identifying who owns or maintains particular assets, who is responsible for resolving issues, whether infrastructure is intended for adoption, and what barriers remain to adoption.

Council recognises that adoption of highways, open spaces and other infrastructure can only occur where the relevant standards have been met and the responsible authority is satisfied that legal and technical requirements have been fulfilled.

That lengthy periods of uncertainty and unclear accountability can delay the resolution of problems, reduce confidence in the stewardship of developments and undermine trust in the planning and delivery of new communities.

That Cambridge City Council already works with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council and local ward councillors to help resolve issues where appropriate, recognising that statutory responsibilities remain with the relevant landowner, developer, management company or adopting authority.

That not all infrastructure is intended to be adopted by a public authority and, in some developments, the long-term management of open spaces and communal infrastructure by management companies or trusts is an intended outcome secured through the planning process. In such cases, transparency over ownership, maintenance responsibilities and resident engagement is particularly important.

Council believes:

That residents should be able to understand who is responsible for the places in which they live, how issues can be reported, and what progress is being made towards long-term management and adoption arrangements.

That improving transparency, accountability and communication on existing developments will help build public confidence in the delivery and stewardship of future developments and demonstrate that growth is accompanied by clear responsibilities and effective community engagement.

That the City Council's powers in relation to privately managed developments are limited and many responsibilities rest with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council, statutory undertakers and other public bodies. The Council's role is therefore to influence, coordinate and advocate where appropriate rather than to direct or assume responsibility for infrastructure owned or managed by others.

That residents living on existing developments should benefit from improved transparency and communication now, using the powers, partnerships and information already available to the City Council and its partner organisations, rather than waiting for future governance arrangements to be established.

That Cambridge is a growing city that will continue to see significant housing and infrastructure development in the coming years, and in future that this is proposed to be the responsibility of a Development Corporation.

Council therefore requests that the Leader works with relevant officers to make clear and timely representations to the Cambridge Growth Company Development Corporation on behalf of the council, as the Dev Co establishes itself and its role in larger developments, to request that any proposals include:

1. Working with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council, and the Cambridge City Council Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service to improve, for residents, transparency, accountability and coordination between the relevant responsible organisations.

2. Exploring the establishment of a code of engagement for developers and management companies operating occupied developments within the city;

3. Considering mechanisms to ensure residents have access to clear and publicly accessible information on:

   - ownership and maintenance responsibilities for community infrastructure;
   - adoption intentions and adoption status;
   - clear signposting to routes for addressing issues;
   - barriers preventing adoption or transfer to public or private bodies;
   - expected timescales for resolution where known, <u>and</u>
   - <u>Property Management Company governance models which make estate management providers directly accountable to residents for performance against specified services, standards and agreed budgets.</u>

4. Exploring mechanisms to improve visibility of progress on issues, including response and progress monitoring, making use of existing reporting systems wherever possible.

5. <u>Exploring the creation of a publicly accessible source of information for occupied major developments within the city, bringing together, where available, information on ownership, maintenance responsibilities, adoption status, reporting routes and the organisations responsible for resolving issues.</u>

6. Considering how successful elements of any code could be incorporated into future planning policy, planning conditions, management arrangements or future Local Plan policies for major developments.

In addition, in the near term, Council requests that the Leader works with planning officers, and with relevant cross-party ward and planning members to:

1. Identify opportunities working with relevant partners to reduce unnecessary delays in the current adoption of infrastructure by the relevant public and private bodies and to highlight any barriers that may require further action by local government, developers or management companies;

2. To remind developers and management companies of their responsibilities to maintain positive engagement throughout the development of new sites and once these are established;

3. To consider whether existing planning guidance**,** supplementary planning guidance and conditions could be strengthened to bring this forward;

4. Within existing resources and in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, developers and management companies, explore the establishment of a publicly accessible information resource for occupied major developments within the city, bringing together, where available from the relevant responsible organisations listing:

- who is responsible for maintaining key infrastructure;
- whether roads, open spaces and drainage are intended for adoption;
- the current stage of any adoption process;
- how residents can report issues; and
- the organisation responsible for responding.

Consider how the stewardship of open spaces, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems can be strengthened during the period between occupation of developments and formal adoption or transfer, including:
- ensuring public open spaces are maintained to an appropriate environmental standard before transfer;
- protecting biodiversity features and ecological enhancements during the period before adoption; and
- ensuring sustainable drainage systems and green infrastructure are properly maintained and monitored throughout the transition from developer responsibility to the adopting body.

5. To report back to the relevant scrutiny committee Council within six months with an update on progress on all of the above.

On being put to the vote, it was approved unanimously, and it was therefore **RESOLVED** to adopt the following motion:

Council notes:

That many residents move into new developments expecting to become part of established communities yet can spend many years living with unresolved issues such as roads awaiting new markings or safety features, waiting for adequate street lighting, lack of facilities and upkeep of open spaces, play areas, drainage, signage and other community infrastructure such as health provision, community spaces and libraries.

That responsibility for such infrastructure is often divided between developers, management companies, Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and other public bodies. As a result, residents can face considerable difficulty in identifying who owns or maintains particular assets, who is responsible for resolving issues, whether infrastructure is intended for adoption, and what barriers remain to adoption.

Council recognises that adoption of highways, open spaces and other infrastructure can only occur where the relevant standards have been met and the responsible authority is satisfied that legal and technical requirements have been fulfilled.
That lengthy periods of uncertainty and unclear accountability can delay the resolution of problems, reduce confidence in the stewardship of developments and undermine trust in the planning and delivery of new communities.

That Cambridge City Council already works with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council and local ward councillors to help resolve issues where appropriate, recognising that statutory responsibilities remain with the relevant landowner, developer, management company or adopting authority.

That not all infrastructure is intended to be adopted by a public authority and, in some developments, the long-term management of open spaces and communal infrastructure by management companies or trusts is an intended outcome secured through the planning process. In such cases, transparency over ownership, maintenance responsibilities and resident engagement is particularly important.

Council believes:

That residents should be able to understand who is responsible for the places in which they live, how issues can be reported, and what progress is being made towards long-term management and adoption arrangements.

That improving transparency, accountability and communication on existing developments will help build public confidence in the delivery and stewardship of future developments and demonstrate that growth is accompanied by clear responsibilities and effective community engagement.

That the City Council's powers in relation to privately managed developments are limited and many responsibilities rest with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council, statutory undertakers and other public bodies. The Council's role is therefore to influence, coordinate and advocate where appropriate rather than to direct or assume responsibility for infrastructure owned or managed by others.

That residents living on existing developments should benefit from improved transparency and communication now, using the powers, partnerships and information already available to the City Council and its partner organisations, rather than waiting for future governance arrangements to be established.

That Cambridge is a growing city that will continue to see significant housing and infrastructure development in the coming years, and in future that this is proposed to be the responsibility of a Development Corporation.

Council therefore requests that the Leader works with relevant officers to make clear and timely representations to the Cambridge Growth Company on behalf of the council, to request that any proposals include:

1. Working with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council, and Cambridge City Council to improve, for residents, transparency, accountability and coordination between the relevant responsible organisations.

2. Exploring the establishment of a code of engagement for developers and management companies operating occupied developments within the city;

3. Considering mechanisms to ensure residents have access to clear and publicly accessible information on:
   - ownership and maintenance responsibilities for community infrastructure;

- adoption intentions and adoption status;
- clear signposting to routes for addressing issues;
- barriers preventing adoption or transfer to public or private bodies;
- expected timescales for resolution where known,
- Property Management Company governance models which make estate management providers directly accountable to residents for performance against specified services, standards and agreed budgets.

4. Exploring mechanisms to improve visibility of progress on issues, including response and progress monitoring, making use of existing reporting systems wherever possible.

5. Exploring the creation of a publicly accessible source of information for occupied major developments within the city, bringing together, where available, information on ownership, maintenance responsibilities, adoption status, reporting routes and the organisations responsible for resolving issues.

   6. Considering how successful elements of any code could be incorporated into future planning policy, planning conditions, management arrangements or future Local Plan policies for major developments.

In addition, in the near term, Council requests that the Leader works with officers, and with relevant cross party members to:

1. Identify opportunities working with relevant partners to reduce unnecessary delays in the current adoption of infrastructure by the relevant public and private bodies and to highlight any barriers that may require further action by local government, developers or management companies;

2. To remind developers and management companies of their responsibilities to maintain positive engagement throughout the development of new sites and once these are established;

3. To consider whether existing planning guidance, supplementary planning guidance and conditions could be strengthened to bring this forward;

4. Within existing resources and in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, developers and management companies, explore the establishment of a publicly accessible information resource for occupied major developments within the city, bringing together, where available from the relevant responsible organisations listing:

- who is responsible for maintaining key infrastructure;
- whether roads, open spaces and drainage are intended for adoption;
- the current stage of any adoption process;
- how residents can report issues; and
- the organisation responsible for responding.

Consider how the stewardship of open spaces, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems can be strengthened during the period between occupation of developments and formal adoption or transfer, including:
- ensuring public open spaces are maintained to an appropriate environmental standard before transfer;
- protecting biodiversity features and ecological enhancements during the period before adoption; and
- ensuring sustainable drainage systems and green infrastructure are properly maintained and monitored throughout the transition from developer responsibility to the adopting body.

5. To report back to the relevant scrutiny committee within six months with an update on progress on all of the above.

10b Councillor Toye Scott: Rights of the River Cam 2026
The following amended motion was proposed by Councillor Toye-Scott and seconded by Councillor Nicmanis.

The alteration included both the Labour and Liberal Democrat proposed amendments to the original Motion (additional text underlined and deleted text struck through).

1.Declaration of the Rights of the River Cam

This council declares that the River Cam and its tributaries should have the following rights arising from their existence in nature:

- The right to flow and be free from over-abstraction

- The right to perform essential functions of flooding, moving sediment,recharging groundwater and sustaining biodiversity
- The right to be free from pollution
- The right to feed and be fed by sustainable aquifers
- The right to native biodiversity
- The right to restoration
- The right to maintain connections with other streams and rivers

~~This council undertakes to assess the impact of all its decisions on the health of the river and ensure that all its decisions support these rights~~.

~~This Council calls on all residents and organisations to act as guardians of the River Cam and engage with the river in a relationship of respect and stewardship.~~

This Council recognises the River Cam and its tributaries as vital environmental, ecological, recreational and cultural assets and so will continue to have regard to the impact of its decisions on the health of the river, consistent with its statutory duties, powers and responsibilities.

Cambridge City Council is a significant riverbank landowner and undertakesriverbank management, biodiversity enhancement, sustainable drainage, flood resilience, public access management, river infrastructure projects and partnership working to improve the River Cam.

2 Responsibility

This Council notes that the ~~responsible bodies are~~: responsibility for the health of the River Cam is shared between:

- the Environment Agency – general oversight, including preventing environmental damage to water and associated biodiversity
- Cambridge Water – ensuring adequate water supply
- Anglian Water – management and treatment of sewage
- the Conservators of the River Cam - the statutory navigation authority for the river, responsible for the locks, weirs and sluices that hold up the water level of the Cam
- Natural England
- the University of Cambridge and its Colleges
- riverbank landowners including the City Council
- and local communities.

The Council proposes to write to all three of these bodies to share its concerns over the state of the river and call upon them for their assistance.

~~The Council further notes that there are other bodies and institutions whose actions have significant impacts on the health of the river, and particularly highlights the importance of:~~

~~· The University of Cambridge and its associated colleges, through the maintenance of their assets and the management of their activities~~

~~The Cambridge Development Corporation –~~

~~The Council proposes to write to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge and the Chief Executive and Chair of the Cambridge Development Corporation to share its concerns over the state of the river and call upon them for their assistance.~~

The Council further notes that the Cambridge Development Corporation – through its influence over the scale, location and water efficiency of new development, ~~there are other bodies and institutions whose actions~~ will have significant impacts on the health of the river, ~~and particularly highlights the importance of:~~
~~· The University of Cambridge and its associated colleges, through the maintenance of their assets and the management of their activities~~
~~The Cambridge Development Corporation –~~
So the Council proposes to write to ~~the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge~~ ~~and the~~ Chief Executive and Chair of the Cambridge Development Corporation to share its concerns over the state of the river and call upon them for their assistance.

3. Interaction with the Council's own actions and the growth of the city
The Council ~~proposes to set up a small cross-party group to draw up a plan for the actions that it can specifically undertake to contribute to protection of the river. This will include:~~
~~· considering the impact of future growth in buildings and infrastructure in the city on the depleted state of our river~~
~~· recognising the limits that may be necessary to respect the rights of the river~~
~~· reporting back to full Council preferably prior to updating the Local Plan.~~
requests an officer report to be presented to one of the council's overview and scrutiny committees to review current Council activity, partnership arrangements, opportunities for improvement and alignment with the Biodiversity Strategy, Climate Change Strategy, Urban Forest Strategy and Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

~~The group~~ Officers will consult with the various environmental organisations currently actively involved in working for the improved health of the river. ~~For the avoidance of doubt, it is intended that this group will supplement rather than displace the work of existing scrutiny committees.~~

Council notes the extensive evidence prepared to support the Greater Cambridge Local Plan on water scarcity, abstraction reduction and sustainable growth. These matters have been considered throughout the Local Plan process and will be reported to scrutiny committee and to Full Council as part of the Submission Local Plan. All future development_should continue to be informed by evidence demonstrating sustainable water supplies, reduced abstraction, water efficiency and environmental capacity.

The Council ~~proposes to initiate a publicity campaign to create wide awareness of the current water crisis and the urgent need to address both the increasing over-abstraction of water and the decreasing quality of water.~~ supports continued collaboration through the Cambridge Water Scarcity Group, Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project, Water Resources East, the Environment Agency, Cambridge Water, Anglian Water and the Conservators of the River Cam and will work to promote all communication campaigns regarding water quality and scarcity using the council's media channels and press releases.

The Council will actively publicise the Environment Agency's recommendations to take early action (e.g, water companies to reduce leakage as a priority, and initiate actions required under their drought plans), and encourage the public to do all it can to use water wisely.

4 What the River Cam needs

This Council believes that the aspirations set out in Section 1 must be matched by action.

4.1 Water in the river

This Council notes that Cambridge Water introduced a temporary hosepipe ban on 9 July 2026, enforceable from 17 July - the first in over thirty years; that the Environment Agency declared the Cam and Ely Ouse catchment to be in prolonged dry weather on 22 June 2026; and that new supply for the Cambridge area is not expected from the Grafham Water transfer until 2032, or from the Fens Reservoir until the mid-2030s.

This Council further notes that the emerging Local Plan phases new development against the arrival of that infrastructure, but that no equivalent plan exists to improve water efficiency in the years before it arrives. This Council therefore resolves to:

- request a report to the relevant committee on water efficiency within the Council's own estate and its council housing retrofit programme, ~~so that homes retrofitted for carbon are also retrofitted for water;~~
- support Cambridge Water's programme to reduce leakage and demand, and press for the Grafham Water transfer to be brought forward wherever possible;
- work with Cambridgeshire County Council on over-abstraction and on the restoration of the chalk streams of the Cam catchment.

4.2 Sewage out of the river

This Council notes that consent for the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant was granted in April 2025 but the funding for the escalation costs for it was withdrawn in August 2025, with no funded alternative brought forward ~~by the government~~ since; and that the emerging Local Plan, and the scrutiny committees of both councils, identify wastewater treatment capacity as the principal unresolved risk to the health of the river. ~~No local plan, however carefully prepared, can build a treatment works with a withdrawn cheque.~~ This Council therefore resolves to:

- call on Anglian Water to resolve the uncertainty ~~it has created,~~ and to fund a treatment solution for Greater Cambridge;
- press Anglian Water for a published timetable for the upgrade of the Haslingfield Water Recycling Centre, and for the reduction of storm overflow discharges into the Cam and its tributaries;
- use the water quality data from the Designated Bathing Area at Sheep's Green to demand action.

4.3 Locks that work

This Council notes that Baits Bite Lock and Jesus Green Lock were closed in June 2024 because of the risk of structural failure; that Baits Bite has since been stabilised following a £500,000 grant led by the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, which met around one third of the cost, with the Conservators meeting the rest from their own reserves; that Jesus Green Lock remains at risk and full reconstruction is estimated at over £5 million per lock; and that the Conservators, funded principally through navigation charges, have stated that they do not have the money. Comparable navigations elsewhere in England receive government funding for their infrastructure. The River Cam receives none. This Council therefore resolves to:

- write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs seeking a sustainable, long-term funding settlement for the Conservators of the River Cam, and asking the Government to set out how navigation

<u>infrastructure of national significance is to be funded where it sits outside the Environment Agency and Canal & River Trust estates;</u>

- <u>write to the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to welcome the funding secured for Baits Bite Lock and to seek his support in securing the future of Jesus Green Lock;</u>
- <u>request a report on this Council's powers under the legislation governing the Conservators to contribute to their funding, and on the liability arrangements preventing the recruitment of new Conservators;</u>

On being put to the vote, it was approved unanimously, and it was therefore **RESOLVED** to adopt the following motion:

1 Declaration of the Rights of the River Cam

This council declares that the River Cam and its tributaries should have the following rights arising from their existence in nature:

- The right to flow and be free from over-abstraction
- The right to perform essential functions of flooding, moving sediment,recharging groundwater and sustaining biodiversity
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- The right to restoration
- The right to maintain connections with other streams and rivers

This Council recognises the River Cam and its tributaries as vital environmental, ecological, recreational and cultural assets and so will continue to have regard to the impact of its decisions on the health of the river, consistent with its statutory duties, powers and responsibilities.

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- Natural England
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- riverbank landowners including the City Council
- and local communities.

The Council proposes to write to all three of these bodies to share its concerns over the state of the river and call upon them for their assistance.

The Council further notes that the Cambridge Development Corporation – through its influence over the scale, location and water efficiency of new development, will have significant impacts on the health of the river,
So the Council proposes to write to Chief Executive and Chair of the Cambridge Development Corporation to share its concerns over the state of the river and call upon them for their assistance.

3. Interaction with the Council's own actions and the growth of the city
The Council requests an officer report to be presented to one of the council's overview and scrutiny committees to review current Council activity, partnership arrangements, opportunities for improvement and alignment with the Biodiversity Strategy, Climate Change Strategy, Urban Forest Strategy and Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

Officers will consult with the various environmental organisations currently actively involved in working for the improved health of the river.

Council notes the extensive evidence prepared to support the Greater Cambridge Local Plan on water scarcity, abstraction reduction and sustainable growth. These matters have been considered throughout the Local Plan process and will be reported to scrutiny committee and to Full Council as part of the Submission Local Plan. All future development_should continue to be informed by evidence demonstrating sustainable water supplies, reduced abstraction, water efficiency and environmental capacity.

The Council supports continued collaboration through the Cambridge Water Scarcity Group, Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project, Water Resources East, the Environment Agency, Cambridge Water, Anglian Water and the Conservators of the River Cam and will work to promote all communication

campaigns regarding water quality and scarcity using the council's media channels and press releases.
The Council will actively publicise the Environment Agency's recommendations to take early action (e.g, water companies to reduce leakage as a priority, and initiate actions required under their drought plans), and encourage the public to do all it can to use water wisely.

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This Council believes that the aspirations set out in Section 1 must be matched by action.

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This Council notes that Cambridge Water introduced a temporary hosepipe ban on 9 July 2026, enforceable from 17 July - the first in over thirty years; that the Environment Agency declared the Cam and Ely Ouse catchment to be in prolonged dry weather on 22 June 2026; and that new supply for the Cambridge area is not expected from the Grafham Water transfer until 2032, or from the Fens Reservoir until the mid-2030s.
This Council further notes that the emerging Local Plan phases new development against the arrival of that infrastructure, but that no equivalent plan exists to improve water efficiency in the years before it arrives. This Council therefore resolves to:

- request a report to the relevant committee on water efficiency within the Council's own estate and its council housing retrofit programme;
- support Cambridge Water's programme to reduce leakage and demand, and press for the Grafham Water transfer to be brought forward wherever possible;
- work with Cambridgeshire County Council on over-abstraction and on the restoration of the chalk streams of the Cam catchment.

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This Council notes that consent for the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant was granted in April 2025 but the funding for the escalation costs for it was withdrawn in August 2025, with no funded alternative brought forward since; and that the emerging Local Plan, and the scrutiny committees of both councils, identify wastewater treatment capacity as the principal unresolved risk to the health of the river. This Council therefore resolves to:

- call on Anglian Water to resolve the uncertainty, and to fund a treatment solution for Greater Cambridge;

- press Anglian Water for a published timetable for the upgrade of the Haslingfield Water Recycling Centre, and for the reduction of storm overflow discharges into the Cam and its tributaries;
- use the water quality data from the Designated Bathing Area at Sheep's Green to demand action.

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- write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs seeking a sustainable, long-term funding settlement for the Conservators of the River Cam, and asking the Government to set out how navigation infrastructure of national significance is to be funded where it sits outside the Environment Agency and Canal & River Trust estates;
- write to the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to welcome the funding secured for Baits Bite Lock and to seek his support in securing the future of Jesus Green Lock;
- request a report on this Council's powers under the legislation governing the Conservators to contribute to their funding, and on the liability arrangements preventing the recruitment of new Conservators;

10c Councillor Ashton: Darwin Nurseries and Farm Shop

Resolved (unanimous) to approve the Darwin Nurseries and Farm Shop Motion.

10d Councillor Baigent: Planning Arrangements

The following amended motion was proposed by Councillor Baigent seconded by Councillor Thornburrow.

The alteration included the Labour amendments to the original Motion (additional text underlined and deleted text struck through).

This Council commits ~~resolves that in line with its aspirations~~ to keep building more council homes to ~~achieve~~ the highest quality and affordability ~~most affordable homes in Cambridge,~~ in order to help tackle the housing crisis in Cambridge and to reduce the number of families living in temporary accommodation or on the housing register. From the date of this resolution being agreed that no residential development in which the Council has an ownership interest, financial interest or development role shall proceed unless it achieves the following standards

- ~~on~~ across all sites, as per the Portfolio Strategy ~~of 10 or more dwellings that~~ at least ~~40%~~ 50% of the homes shall be affordable homes, with rents set as follows:
  - 10% at social rent: 40% - 45% of the median market rent
  - 65% at affordable rent: 60% of the median market rent
  - 25% at intermediate rent: 80% of the median market rent

This Council notes that the Labour government has now prioritised funding for social rents, so for schemes being built with grant funding from Homes England - this tenure mix will be changed to 60% of council homes for social rent (45% of market rent) and 40% at intermediate rent (80% of market rent).

Furthermore, this Council resolves that on any development that this council has an ownership interest, financial interest or development role:

1. All homes shall be developed to the ~~highest recognised sustainability standard at the time that they are built.~~ Council's Sustainable Housing Design Guide which targets CamStandard for council homes being built now and to net zero standard from 2030.

2. ~~No single aspect homes shall be built.~~ Layouts must prioritise providing dual aspect homes and avoid single aspect where possible, whilst also ensuring for a maximum number of council homes to be built

3. As per current planning policy all sites shall have disabled parking, by right.

4. Subject to the provision of disabled parking, all developments shall be designed following the Cambridge sustainable housing design guide with a target of 0.5 car parking spaces per home. ~~as car free by default~~. Where possible, car parking ~~is considered necessary, it~~ shall be provided in a separate stand-alone car park (so that in due course this can gradually be used for building more homes).

5. Any ~~No~~ council land, or property, ~~shall be~~ that is due to be sold ~~without the approval of the full Council~~ will be done so, as per the Council's constitution.

On being put to the vote, it was approved unanimously, and it was therefore **RESOLVED** to adopt the following motion:

This Council commits to keep building more council homes to the highest quality and affordability, in order to help tackle the housing crisis in Cambridge and to reduce the number of families living in temporary accommodation or on the housing register. From the date of this resolution being agreed that no residential development in which the Council has an ownership interest, financial interest or development role shall proceed unless it achieves the following standards

- across all sites, as per the Portfolio Strategy at least 50% of the homes shall be affordable homes, with rents set as follows:
  - 10% at social rent: 40% - 45% of the median market rent
  - 65% at affordable rent: 60% of the median market rent
  - 25% at intermediate rent: 80% of the median market rent

This Council notes that the Labour government has now prioritised funding for social rents, so for schemes being built with grant funding from Homes England - this tenure mix will be changed to 60% of council homes for social rent (45% of market rent) and 40% at intermediate rent (80% of market rent).

Furthermore, this Council resolves that on any development that this council has an ownership interest, financial interest or development role:

1. All homes shall be developed to the Council's Sustainable Housing Design Guide which targets CamStandard for council homes being built now and to net zero standard from 2030.

2. Layouts must prioritise providing dual aspect homes and avoid single aspect where possible, whilst also ensuring for a maximum number of council homes to be built

3. As per current planning policy all sites shall have disabled parking, by right.

4. Subject to the provision of disabled parking, all developments shall be designed following the Cambridge sustainable housing design guide with a target of 0.5 car parking spaces per home. Where possible, car parking shall

be provided in a separate stand-alone car park (so that in due course this can gradually be used for building more homes).

5. Any council land, or property, that is due to be sold will be done so, as per the Council's constitution.

26/70/CNL Written questions

Members noted the response to the written questions.

26/71/CNL Information pack 2

The meeting ended at 10.12 pm

CHAIR

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TITLE: River Cam, Chalk Streams and Tributaries – Strategic Review and Environmental Projects

To:
Cabinet 23rd September 2026

Report by:
Alistair Wilson – Assistant Director for Public Realm and Environment
Tel: 01223 458514 Email alistair.wilson@cambridge.gov.uk

Wards affected:
All

Director Approval: Director James Elms 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 Cabinet/Cabinet Member for decision.

1.	**Recommendations**
1.1	It is recommended that Cabinet: **a. Chalk-stream restoration and external funding** i. **Note** the significant programme of existing Council and partnership activity to protect, restore and improve the River Cam, its chalk streams and tributaries. ii. **Note** the evidence emerging from the Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project and **support** its transition into a Cambridge city-wide chalk-stream restoration programme. iii. **Approve** the acceptance of grant funding of up to **£1.9 million from South Staffordshire Water (Cambridge Water)** to support the development and delivery of restoration projects across Cambridge's chalk-stream network, including Coldham's Brook, Cherry Hinton Brook, Hobson's Brook, Vicar's Brook

and associated springheads and connections to the River Cam.

iv. **Approve** officers to secure grant funding of approximately **£600,000**, to develop and deliver a resilient, nature-based pollution-mitigation scheme for Hobson's Brook, subject to final agreement of the funding terms.

v. **Delegate authority** to the Assistant Director for Public Realm and Environment, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer, to finalise the necessary grant and partnership agreements relating to the South Staffordshire Water and Hobson's Brook pollution-mitigation scheme provided that the final terms do not create material unfunded liabilities for the Council.

vi. **Support** the continued development of an evidence-led restoration programme across Cambridge's chalk-stream network, with individual interventions determined by hydrological, water-quality, ecological and other relevant evidence.

b. River infrastructure and Jesus Green

i. **Note** progress on the Council's River Cam infrastructure, including the proposed stabilisation and replacement of the Jesus Green river wall and its relationship with the future repair and management of Jesus Green Lock.

ii. **Recommend to Council to approve** an increase in the Jesus Green river wall project budget from the **£850,000 approved in October 2024 to a maximum of £2.441 million**, to enable the stabilisation and replacement works to proceed and the competitive procurement process to commence.

iii. **Approve** an open, two-stage procurement process comprising:

a. the appointment of a preferred contractor under a Pre-Construction Services Agreement; and
b. subject to an acceptable final design, construction methodology, cost plan and contract sum, entry into the main construction contract.

	iv. **Support** the Council using its convening role to work with the Conservators of the River Cam, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, relevant public bodies, businesses and other partners to: a. explore sustainable financial and commercial opportunities for the repair and future management of Jesus Green Lock; and b. strengthen the longer-term financial sustainability and resilience of the Conservators of the River Cam. **c. Water quality, water resources and environmental projects** i. **Note** the work undertaken and planned at Sheep's Green, and the importance of Designated Bathing Water monitoring data in informing continued engagement with the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and other relevant partners. ii. **Note** the work being undertaken through the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service in relation to water scarcity, abstraction, water efficiency, wastewater capacity and sustainable growth. iii. **Support** the continued development of externally funded environmental improvement projects, including opportunities available through the Cambridge Water Pebble Fund, subject to the Council's normal governance, financial and approval arrangements. iv. **Support** the development, consultation and adoption of watercourse land drainage model byelaws, subject to the necessary consultation and approval processes, to strengthen the protection and management of the River Cam, associated chalk streams, water environments and adjacent public spaces. **d. Coordination and partnership working** i. **Support** continued partnership working with statutory bodies, catchment

	organisations, voluntary and community groups, academic institutions and other partners to protect and improve the River Cam and its tributaries. ii. **Agree** that future river and chalk-stream activity should increasingly be developed and managed as a coordinated programme, enabling the Council and its partners to identify shared priorities, funding opportunities, intended outcomes, dependencies and gaps in provision.
2.	**Purpose and reason for the report**
2.1	This report responds to the resolution of Full Council in July 2026 requesting an officer report reviewing current Council activity relating to the River Cam and its tributaries, existing partnership arrangements, opportunities for improvement, and alignment with the Council's Biodiversity Strategy, Climate Change Strategy, Urban Forest Strategy and the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The motion recognises the River Cam and its tributaries as important environmental, ecological, recreational and cultural assets and confirms that the Council will continue to have regard to the impact of its decisions on the health of the river, consistent with its statutory duties, powers and responsibilities. The Council has an important role as a significant riverbank landowner, local planning authority, open-space manager, land drainage authority, project funder and delivery partner. It undertakes riverbank management, biodiversity enhancement, sustainable drainage and flood resilience work, manages public access and assets adjoining the river and is directly involved in a growing programme of river and chalk-stream restoration. Responsibility for the health and management of the River Cam is distributed between several organisations. These include the Environment Agency, Cambridge Water, Anglian Water, the Conservators of the River Cam, Natural England, Cambridgeshire County Council, universities and colleges, other riparian landowners and local communities. This report therefore considers both the activity for which the City Council is directly responsible and the wider partnerships through which the Council can influence water quality, water quantity, biodiversity, river infrastructure and the long-term resilience of the Cam catchment.

	The report also covers investment in river infrastructure, including the Council-owned river wall and work relating to Jesus Green Lock; activity at Sheep's Green; planning and water-resource work through the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service; and collaboration with statutory, voluntary, academic and community partners.
3.	**Background and Key Issues**
3.1	Full Council considered a motion concerning the River Cam and its tributaries in July 2026. The adopted motion recognised a series of aspirations for the river, including its ability to flow, sustain biodiversity, remain free from pollution, connect with other watercourses and be capable of restoration. The amended motion recognises that the Council must act within its statutory duties, powers and responsibilities and that responsibility for the river is shared between several organisations. Full Council specifically requested an officer report reviewing current Council activity, partnership arrangements, opportunities for improvement and alignment with relevant Council strategies and the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The motion also recognises the extensive evidence already prepared through the Local Plan process concerning water scarcity, abstraction reduction and sustainable growth and supports continued collaboration with relevant partners. The purpose of this report is not to establish a new body responsible for the River Cam. It brings together activity already being undertaken by the Council and its partners, identifies the areas in which the Council can make the greatest contribution, and considers how that work can be better coordinated. The environmental conditions described in the motion are interacting processes rather than separate issues. Flow, groundwater recharge, sediment movement, water chemistry, temperature, pollution and ecological connectivity all influence the ability of freshwater habitats to support characteristic plants and wildlife. An observed environmental problem does not necessarily establish its principal cause. For example, evidence of low river flow may raise legitimate concerns but will not, by itself, establish the relative contributions of abstraction, groundwater levels, recharge, augmentation or groundwater-river exchange. Determining causation and selecting an effective response requires appropriately integrated and specialist evidence. The Council's approach is therefore based on distinguishing between identifying a problem, establishing its cause and determining the most effective and sustainable

	intervention. It also recognises that pollution, nutrients and sediment entering a springhead, tributary or drainage network can subsequently move through the connected freshwater system towards the River Cam.
4.	**Strategic Context**
4.1	The Council's work to protect and enhance the River Cam, its tributaries and the wider chalk stream network sits within an increasingly strong national and local policy framework for nature recovery, climate resilience and sustainable water management. The work described in this report contributes directly to the Council's Biodiversity Strategy 2022–2030, Climate Change Strategy, Urban Forest Strategy 2026–2036 and emerging planning policy, while also supporting wider sub-regional priorities. **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy** Of particular significance is the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), published in December 2025. Local Nature Recovery Strategies are a statutory component of the Environment Act 2021 framework and are intended to identify priorities and opportunities for recovering and enhancing biodiversity and to provide a spatial framework for coordinated action. The LNRS is particularly relevant to Cambridge because it recognises rivers, streams, drains and their associated floodplains as an important connected ecological network. All rivers and their floodplains within the strategy area are identified as local priorities for nature recovery, reflecting their role as landscape-scale corridors for wildlife and their potential to deliver wider benefits including improved water quality, natural flood management, climate resilience and public access. The strategy gives prominence to the upper Cam catchment and its chalk streams. These are internationally rare habitats which have been affected by a combination of water abstraction, modification of river channels, drainage, pollution and wider pressures on water quality and quantity. The LNRS includes a specific priority to conserve and restore chalk streams and their associated habitats, alongside measures aimed at improving their ecological function. These include creating and enhancing natural or semi-natural buffers alongside rivers and chalk streams, reducing sediment and pollutant run-off, reconnecting rivers with their floodplains, restoring more natural river processes and improving riparian habitat. This provides an important strategic context for the Council's work on the River Cam and its tributaries. Activities described elsewhere in this report – including partnership

	working on chalk streams, biodiversity enhancement, water-quality initiatives, management of riverside open spaces, natural flood management and collaboration with voluntary and community organisations – can therefore contribute directly to delivery of the LNRS. The LNRS also provides an opportunity to move from individual projects towards a more connected, catchment-based approach. Future projects should, where appropriate, consider the LNRS Local Habitat Map and identified nature-recovery opportunities when developing proposals, seeking external funding or collaborating with landowners and partner organisations. **Alignment with Cambridge City Council Strategies** Within the **Biodiversity Strategy 2022–2030** the protection and restoration of the River Cam and its tributaries are aligned. Rivers, chalk streams, wetlands, springheads and riparian habitats form important parts of Cambridge's ecological network. Water quality is itself a biodiversity issue. Characteristic chalk-stream plants, macroinvertebrates and fish depend upon suitable combinations of nutrients, dissolved oxygen, temperature, flow, sediment and physical habitat. The physical appearance of a watercourse, or the completion of habitat works, cannot therefore demonstrate ecological recovery on its own. Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project (GCCSP) and Cambridge Chalk Stream Project (CCSP)[1] combine physicochemical monitoring with biological and habitat evidence so that interventions can be designed and evaluated according to ecological function as well as physical outputs. This supports the Biodiversity Strategy's emphasis on larger-scale connected projects, long-term monitoring and measurable nature recovery. CCSP will consequently be one of the Council's principal delivery mechanisms for freshwater biodiversity recovery, subject to individual interventions being supported by appropriate evidence, consents and long-term management arrangements. Cambridge Chalk Street Project (CCSP) should be understood as multifunctional green-blue infrastructure rather than solely as a biodiversity or physical river-restoration project. Its intended functions include biodiversity recovery, pollution mitigation, improved water quality, drought and flood resilience, wetland and riparian habitat

[1] CCSP is the next, larger-scale phase arising from the Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project (GCCSP). It will apply the evidence, monitoring and practical lessons developed through GCCSP across Cambridge's connected chalk-stream network.

	management, ecological connectivity, community participation and long-term freshwater stewardship. There is also a strong relationship with the **Urban Forest Strategy 2026–2036**. Riparian trees can provide shade, temperature moderation, woody habitat, bank stability and ecological connectivity. However, chalk streams also support aquatic plants that require appropriate light conditions. The appropriate approach is therefore evidence-led riparian tree management rather than an assumption that either additional planting or canopy removal will be beneficial in every location. Decisions about retention, planting, coppicing or selective canopy opening should be made reach by reach, taking account of temperature evidence, channel characteristics, aquatic vegetation, bank stability, public safety and ecological objectives. This reflects the wider principle of CCSP: an intervention should not be applied uniformly simply because it may be beneficial under some conditions. The Council's **Climate Change Strategy** is similarly relevant. Climate change is increasing pressure on freshwater environments through changes in rainfall, groundwater recharge, drought, temperature and the frequency of extreme weather. The resilience of the Cam catchment is therefore both a biodiversity and climate-adaptation issue. CCSP will contribute to this work by integrating evidence concerning groundwater and springhead behaviour, seasonal flow, geology, topography, water quality and biological condition. Proposed technical work will also consider drought and flood scenarios so that interventions can be assessed against a range of future conditions. The programme is therefore intended to contribute to biodiversity recovery, drought and flood resilience, water-quality resilience and climate adaptation. This does not mean that individual restoration measures will provide all these benefits automatically; the relevant benefits and limitations will need to be established for each location through design, assessment and monitoring. **Planning and Development** The planning system also has an increasingly vital role in delivering nature recovery. The Greater Cambridge planning framework, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements

	and the LNRS together provide opportunities to ensure that development contributes to a coherent ecological network rather than delivering isolated habitat interventions. The LNRS should therefore increasingly inform consideration of opportunities associated with development, Biodiversity Net Gain, Section 106 contributions and other environmental investment, particularly where these can strengthen the River Cam corridor, chalk streams and their wider catchments. This strategic alignment provides an opportunity for Cambridge to connect Council-owned land, planning interventions, externally funded projects and community-led activity into a broader programme of nature recovery across the River Cam catchment. The Cambridge City Council Biodiversity Strategy 2026–2031 provides an important strategic framework for the Council's work to protect and enhance the River Cam, its tributaries and associated wetland and riparian habitats. The river corridor is one of the city's most important ecological assets, connecting internationally important chalk stream habitats with commons, parks, Local Nature Reserves and the wider countryside. A key objective of the Strategy is to restore and enhance chalk streams and river habitats, recognising healthier chalk streams, riverbanks and associated wetlands as an important biodiversity outcome for Cambridge. This includes improving the ecological condition and connectivity of priority habitats along river corridors, enabling wildlife to move more freely through the city and between Cambridge and the surrounding countryside. The River Cam and its tributaries also have an important role in strengthening the Cambridge Nature Network[2]. The river, its tributaries, riverside commons and Local Nature Reserves provide a connected network of green and blue infrastructure through the city. Protecting and enhancing these corridors can increase the resilience of habitats and species to climate change and other environmental pressures while providing wider benefits for landscape, recreation and people's connection with nature. The Strategy supports delivery of the LNRS and provides a local mechanism through which opportunities identified by the LNRS can be translated into practical action. This is particularly relevant to the restoration of chalk streams, enhancement of riparian

[2] The Cambridge Nature Network is a landscape-scale spatial vision and partnership seeking to protect, enhance and connect important habitats across Cambridge and its surrounding countryside. The River Cam, its chalk streams, wetlands, springheads and riparian corridors form important elements of this connected ecological network. GCCSP and CCSP contribute to its objectives by improving freshwater habitats and strengthening ecological connections from Cambridge’s springheads and tributaries towards the River Cam.

	habitats, wetland creation and improved ecological connectivity across the wider Cam catchment. The Council has already demonstrated how targeted interventions can improve river and wetland habitats. Projects such as the Logan's Meadow wetland creation and the Rush fish pass at Sheep's Green provide examples of practical habitat restoration and enhancement. The Strategy provides a framework for building on these interventions and identifying further opportunities on Council-owned land and through work with partners and other landowners. There is also a particular focus on improving the condition of designated sites and Local Nature Reserves associated with the Cam corridor. Appropriate management plans, monitoring and targeted habitat interventions have been developed to ensure that these sites improve in ecological condition over time and function as part of a connected network rather than as isolated areas of habitat. Development and green infrastructure planning also have an important role. The application of Biodiversity Net Gain, alongside planning policy and other developer contributions, provides opportunities to create, restore and connect habitats associated with rivers and watercourses. Where appropriate, investment should be directed towards strengthening green and blue corridors and delivering interventions that complement wider nature recovery priorities. The Strategy recognises that many of the pressures affecting rivers cannot be addressed within administrative boundaries or by individual organisations. The Council therefore supports catchment-scale partnership working, including the principles of the Catchment Based Approach (CaBA), bringing together local authorities, environmental organisations, water companies, landowners, community groups and other stakeholders. This approach can help coordinate action on water quality, biodiversity, climate resilience, natural flood management, and habitat restoration across the Cam catchment. Through our CCSP funding we are supporting the Cam Catchment partnership Coordinator role hosted at the Wildlife Trust. Finally, the Council is itself an important riverside landowner. Its parks, commons and open spaces along the River Cam and other watercourses provide significant opportunities for nature recovery. Management of these areas should therefore seek opportunities to improve riparian and wetland habitats while recognising that many are also highly valued and intensively used public spaces. The long-term approach will need to balance biodiversity enhancement with recreation, navigation, events, grazing, heritage, landscape and public access. Taken together, these priorities provide a clear strategic basis for the activities and projects described in this report. They also support a shift from individual site-based

	interventions towards a more coordinated river and catchment-scale approach, linking the Council's management of its own land with planning, external investment, community activity and the work of partner organisations.
5.	**Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project**
	The Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project represents one of the Council's most significant programmes of direct intervention in the Cam catchment. The project was established because the Council identified a gap between the local identification of potential physical restoration measures and the evidence required to determine which interventions would be most likely to produce sustainable ecological benefits. The 2019 Greater Cambridge Chalk Streams Audit provided useful observational information and identified potential works, but subsequent Council-led assessment concluded that further evidence was required to justify and prioritise effective in-channel intervention confidently. The Council therefore assembled funding from Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority, water companies and Council sources to create an evidence-led case-study programme investigating the principal factors affecting Greater Cambridge's chalk streams. GCCSP combines water-quality and biological monitoring, sediment and erosion assessment, hydraulic and ecological evidence, practical restoration, academic expertise and citizen science. Its central purpose is not to delay intervention but to reduce the risk of inappropriate or ineffective investment. The methodology moves the starting question from "what physical feature should be installed?" to "what processes are preventing ecological recovery, what evidence demonstrates this and what intervention can sustainably address them?" GCCSP has combined this investigation with substantial practical delivery. Within Cambridge, approximately 1,300 metres of in-channel restoration, 1,200 metres of bankside stabilisation, 2,400 square metres of bankside habitat improvement and 1.4 hectares of springhead and spring-system restoration have been delivered. The Cambridge case-study works and associated springhead restoration have been completed. Remaining River Granta works at Abington and Linton are expected to conclude the practical GCCSP programme in October 2026, with monitoring intended to continue to provide an early post-restoration dataset. **Water-quality evidence** A comprehensive monitoring framework has been established in partnership with Anglia Ruskin University and a network of citizen scientists. Monitoring covers rural and urban chalk-stream sites and examines nutrients alongside pH, temperature, dissolved oxygen, conductivity and turbidity.

The quarter one 2026 evidence identifies significant pressures across the network. Nitrate exceeded the project's indicative chalk-stream target at every monitored site. Cambridge City sites were also affected, with Cherry Hinton Brook and Coldham's Brook commonly recording nitrate concentrations around 13 mg/l N. Phosphate frequently exceeded the project's threshold, while ammonia was lower but with episodic spikes.

The evidence demonstrates why river condition cannot be assessed from appearance alone. Turbidity, dissolved oxygen, pH and bacterial indicators can identify short-lived events and localised pressures that would otherwise be missed. The emerging picture is of chalk streams under pressure from nutrient enrichment, low flows, fine sediment, urban runoff, thermal stress, localised pollution pathways, invasive species and historic channel modification.

This evidence is increasingly being used to inform restoration design. Rather than applying generic chalk-stream solutions, interventions are developed according to flow, sediment behaviour, water quality, channel form and ecological need.

The monitoring programme combines regular physicochemical sampling, laboratory nutrient analysis, continuous logging and biological evidence. This is important because short-duration pollution events, first-flush runoff, temperature changes, dissolved-oxygen stress, turbidity and sediment movement may occur between occasional site visits.

The absence of visible pollution, or the presence of apparently attractive physical habitat at a particular moment, cannot therefore be treated as evidence of ecological health.

Regulatory classification and ecological restoration design also answer different questions. Water Framework Directive and UKTAG[3] classifications provide an essential regulatory framework, while restoration design may need to consider episodic, cumulative or reach-specific pressures affecting sensitive species or life stages. Project ecological benchmarks should therefore be presented as restoration and risk-management tools, not as alternative statutory compliance standards.

This evidence increasingly allows the Council to examine not only whether pollution is present, but where and when it enters the system, the load involved, the ecological response and where it may most effectively be intercepted or mitigated before progressing towards the River Cam.

Moving from project to long-term programme

The current GCCSP delivery phase is due to conclude in October 2026 following completion of the remaining River Granta habitat and visitor-access works at Abington and Linton. Water-quality monitoring at these locations is intended to continue until July 2027 to establish a stronger post-restoration dataset.

[3] UK Technical Advisory Group (UKTAG), which develops the technical standards and assessment methods used by the UK environmental regulators to classify the ecological and chemical condition of water bodies.

	A funding agreement with Cambridge Water has been confirmed whereby the project will deliver part of Cambridge Waters' statutory obligations in its Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP) to undertake river restoration, providing up to £1.9 million for chalk-stream restoration within Cambridge City. The overall programme is intended to cover the connected urban network including Coldham's Brook, Cherry Hinton Brook, Hobson's Brook and Vicar's Brook, working from springhead to main river. The programme will include interventions such as in-channel restoration, appropriate gravel augmentation, woody material, marginal and wetland habitat creation, riparian planting and management, buffer creation, pollution mitigation and improved fish passage. The precise intervention at each location will depend upon the evidence identifying the factors limiting ecological recovery. The work will also strengthen the evidence base for effective river restoration interventions through hydrological modelling, geomorphological profiling, flow monitoring, and further water-quality investigation. **Logan's Meadow Wetland Creation Project**  The Logan's Meadow Wetland Creation Project provides a strong example of how partnership working, external funding and community-led action can deliver significant biodiversity and wider environmental benefits along the River Cam corridor. Located

	within Logan's Meadow Local Nature Reserve, the project has created new wetland habitats designed to enhance biodiversity, strengthen ecological connectivity, improve floodplain function and increase the resilience of the site to climate change. The scheme contributes directly to the objectives of the Cambridge Nature Network, the Council's Biodiversity Strategy and wider nature recovery ambitions for Greater Cambridge. The project originated from a vision developed by the Friends of Logan's Meadow, working with Cambridge City Council and a range of environmental and community partners, including the Cambridge Nature Network and Natural England. Importantly, the project demonstrates how different sources of external investment can be brought together around a shared nature recovery objective. Funding was secured from a number of sources, including National Lottery funding to support design and consultation, Natural England Green Recovery funding for woodland buffer creation, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority funding, and developer contributions secured through Section 106 agreements. Bringing these different funding streams together enabled a more ambitious and integrated scheme than would have been achievable through a single source of funding. Construction of the new wetland features has created a mosaic of aquatic, marginal and surrounding terrestrial habitats, increasing opportunities for wetland-dependent wildlife and improving the ecological diversity and connectivity of the reserve. Early monitoring has recorded species including water vole, otter and kingfisher, illustrating the potential for appropriately located habitat creation and restoration to produce rapid ecological benefits. The project also demonstrates the importance of the Council's riverside parks, commons and nature reserves as places where nature recovery can be delivered alongside public access and recreation. In addition to biodiversity enhancement, the scheme provides benefits associated with climate adaptation, floodplain restoration, community involvement and improved access to nature. Logan's Meadow therefore provides a practical example of the approach advocated elsewhere in this report: combining community initiative, Council land management, partnership expertise, external grant funding and developer contributions to deliver nature recovery at a strategically important location. The lessons from the project can help inform future opportunities for wetland creation, riparian habitat enhancement and river restoration elsewhere along the River Cam and its tributaries.
6.	**Community Participation and Citizen Science**
	A significant strength of GCCSP has been the combination of community participation with professionally governed monitoring and evidence.

Volunteers provide regular local monitoring, observations, practical support and longer-term stewardship. Anglia Ruskin University and other specialist partners provide scientific protocols, laboratory analysis, biological monitoring, quality assurance, interpretation and evidence synthesis.

The project has supported training in river-habitat assessment, data-logger maintenance, aquatic-plant identification, non-native species management, safe working and the leadership of practical work parties. Through the PEBBLE[4]-supported programme, 46 volunteers contributed 368 hours of practical support, with an indicative in-kind value of £4,493.28.

This model increases monitoring and practical capacity without lowering the evidential standard. Citizen science supplements and strengthens professional evidence; it does not replace it.

Water quality monitoring

[4] Cambridge Water's Pebble Fund provides grants for community-led projects that support water conservation, biodiversity and improvements to the local water environment. It may offer a potential funding route for smaller-scale river and chalk-stream restoration, monitoring, education and community-engagement projects

7	**River Cam - Council Land and Riverbank Management**
	Cambridge City Council is a significant riparian landowner. Its responsibilities extend beyond biodiversity projects and include management of major public open spaces and sections of riverbank adjoining the Cam. These responsibilities include vegetation and tree management, public access, bank management, drainage and flood resilience, biodiversity enhancement, management of recreational activity and maintenance of Council-owned infrastructure. Major riverside open spaces include Jesus Green, Midsummer Common, Stourbridge Common, Sheep's Green/Lammas Land, Coe Fen, Paradise Local Nature Reserve and other sites through which the Cam and its tributaries pass. These areas need to fulfil several functions simultaneously: important ecological corridors, floodplain, highly used recreational spaces, historic landscapes and routes for walking, cycling and access to the river. The Council's management approach therefore needs to balance ecological enhancement with public safety, access, recreation, flood management, heritage and operational requirements. Council-owned riverbanks, commons and open spaces should increasingly be considered as parts of a connected green-blue ecological network, while recognising their equally legitimate recreational, heritage, navigation, access and operational functions. Evidence generated through CCSP can help inform decisions concerning bank stability, erosion, sediment, vegetation, shade, water quality and ecological connectivity. The intention is not for biodiversity to override every other use, but for routine land-management and capital decisions affecting river corridors to take appropriate account of freshwater ecological function. **Residential Moorings** The Council has a long-established role in managing residential moorings on sections of the River Cam where it is the riparian landowner. This forms part of the wider management of the river corridor and requires the Council to balance the needs of the residential boating community with navigation, biodiversity, public access, recreation and the amenity of adjoining open spaces. The Council currently provides 75 licensed residential moorings, comprising 60 narrow-beam and 15 wide-beam spaces. Residential mooring is permitted alongside areas including Jesus Green, Midsummer Common and Stourbridge Common, with pontoon

provision at Riverside. Moorings are allocated and managed in accordance with the Council's River Moorings Policy and associated rules and regulations.

The Council's responsibilities include the allocation and annual renewal of licences, management of waiting lists, setting and collecting licence fees, management of designated residential, visitor and temporary mooring areas, and addressing breaches of mooring conditions. Licence conditions also help protect the river and adjoining open spaces, including controls relating to waste and sewage discharge, nuisance, obstruction, smoke, generators and the use of moorings for business activity.

This role is distinct from that of the Conservators of the River Cam, who are the statutory navigation authority. Residential vessels therefore operate within a framework in which the City Council manages use of its riverbank and mooring spaces as landowner, while the Conservators regulate navigation and vessels on the river. This illustrates the wider theme of this report that effective management of the Cam frequently requires different organisations to exercise complementary responsibilities.

Residential moorings also represent an established community on the river and need to be considered when significant river infrastructure or environmental projects are developed. Projects affecting riverbanks, access, navigation or water levels should therefore consider potential effects on residential moorings at an early stage, alongside ecological, engineering and public-access requirements.

Commercial Punt Stations

Commercial punting is another important use of the River Cam and is integral to Cambridge's visitor economy and the character of the city centre. As with residential moorings, responsibility is shared between the Council and the Conservators according to their respective roles.

The Conservators recognise and license six punting stations in Cambridge, including stations at La Mimosa/Jesus Green, Quayside, Trinity College, the Mill Pond at Silver Street, Mill Lane and the Granta mill pond near Sheep's Green. Not all of these are on City Council land.

Where commercial punt stations operate from Council-owned land or landing stages, the Council acts principally in its capacity as landowner and commercial property owner. Long-standing arrangements at the Jesus Green/La Mimosa punt station, for example, have allowed operators to trade from Council-owned landing stages under agreements granted by the Council as landowner, while the Conservators separately regulate navigation and grant commercial punt licences.

	The letting and management of commercial punt stations therefore provides the Council with a further mechanism for managing activity associated with the river. Commercial arrangements need to secure appropriate use of Council assets while also considering public access, congestion, environmental impacts, neighbouring uses and the quality of the riverside environment. Commercial punting and residential moorings demonstrate that the Cam is not solely an environmental asset. It is simultaneously a habitat, navigation, home, workplace, visitor attraction and recreational space. The Council's role as riparian landowner consequently requires these uses to be managed alongside the biodiversity, water-quality and climate objectives described elsewhere in this report, **Industrial water offtakes** Several decarbonisation projects are being developed across Cambridge to support the transition to net zero. These include proposals for river-source heating, such as the Darwin College scheme granted planning permission in 2025, and the larger city-centre heat network being explored by the Council in partnership with city-centre colleges. River-source heat systems abstract water temporarily, extract heat through a heat exchanger and return the water to the river at a lower temperature. Subject to their design, scale and operating conditions, such schemes may contribute to the decarbonisation of heat while potentially helping to moderate some of the artificial warming experienced by the River Cam as it passes through the developed city centre. These potential benefits should not be assumed or considered in isolation. Each proposal must assess its effects on river flow, water temperature, water quality, ecology, fish and other aquatic species, navigation and the cumulative impact of other abstractions and discharges. Any scheme must be designed and operated sensitively and obtain the necessary planning permission, Environment Agency licences and environmental permits before it proceeds. The Council should continue to engage with the Environment Agency and scheme promoters so that the carbon benefits of river-source heat are considered alongside the protection and, where practicable, improvement of the River Cam’s ecological condition.
9	**Sheep's Green and Bathing Water**
	Sheep's Green and Coe Fen Local Nature Reserve is an important location for the interaction between public access, recreation, biodiversity and river water quality.

	The Council has undertaken and is progressing works at Sheep's Green to improve the site and its relationship with the river. The delivery of The Rush fish pass at Sheep’s Green Local Nature Reserve represents a significant achievement in the restoration and enhancement of the River Cam corridor within Cambridge. The scheme was developed to improve fish passage around the historic mill structures and water control features that can impede the movement of aquatic species. By reconnecting sections of the river and creating more natural flow conditions, the project has enhanced habitat connectivity, supported biodiversity, and contributed to the ecological resilience of the River Cam. The project demonstrates the value of partnership working and has become an exemplar of how targeted infrastructure improvements can deliver benefits for both wildlife and people.  The Rush Fish Pass, Sheep’s Green Building on the success of The Rush, partners are now progressing the Sheep’s Green Watercourse Creation scheme, which will further enhance the ecological value of Sheep’s Green and the wider river corridor. Supported by funding from the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP), the project will restore and create watercourse habitats, improve wetland features, and increase opportunities for aquatic and riparian species. The scheme is expected to deliver biodiversity gains, improve habitat connectivity between the River Cam and adjacent green spaces, and increase the resilience of the site to future environmental pressures, including climate change.

	The project has successfully completed its development and design stages and is currently progressing through the costing and procurement phase, with delivery anticipated following contractor appointment. Once implemented, the scheme will complement previous investments in the area, helping to establish Sheep's Green as a key component of the Cambridge Nature Network and a flagship example of urban river restoration that contributes to local biodiversity, water management and public enjoyment of the River Cam landscape Sheep's Green also provides an important source of evidence through its status as a Designated Bathing Water. The Full Council motion specifically resolved that water-quality information from Sheep's Green should be used to press for action to improve the quality of the River Cam. Responsibility for regulating water quality does not rest with the City Council. However, as landowner and a representative of residents and river users, the Council has an important role in using monitoring evidence to engage with the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and other responsible bodies. Sheep's Green remains formally classified as having Poor bathing-water quality for the 2025 assessment year, and the associated advice remains that bathing is not advised. Monitoring during 2025 nevertheless showed some improvement compared with 2024, with many E. coli results within the range of 200–300 colonies per 100ml. However, several elevated results meant that the overall statutory classification remained Poor. Monitoring continues during the 2026 bathing season. The latest publicly accessible Environment Agency-derived record, from early August 2026, reported intestinal enterococci at 36 CFU per 100ml, with a pH of 8.1 and water temperature of 21°C. An accompanying E. coli result was not available within the published record reviewed. This individual result is encouraging but cannot be used on its own to determine whether water quality has improved sufficiently to alter the annual classification. Environment Agency investigations have identified both human and ruminant bacterial markers, indicating that the sources of faecal pollution are likely to be complex. The Council should continue to use statutory monitoring evidence to press the Environment Agency, Anglian Water, and other responsible bodies for completion of source-apportionment work and delivery of measures capable of securing a sustained improvement in water quality. Bathing-water and ecological monitoring provide different but complementary forms of evidence. Designated Bathing Water monitoring is particularly important for assessing public-health risks and identifying faecal contamination. It does not, on its own, provide a complete assessment of freshwater ecological condition. GCCSP and CCSP provide complementary evidence concerning nutrients, dissolved oxygen, temperature, conductivity, turbidity, sediment, flow and biological response.

	Bringing the two evidence streams together, where relevant, will provide a stronger basis for the Council's engagement with the Environment Agency, Anglian Water and other responsible organisations.
10	**River Infrastructure - River Wall**
	The City Council is the riparian owner of the river wall at Jesus Green. The affected section lies between Jesus Green Lido and Jesus Green Lock. Inspections and investigations have confirmed that the wall is actively moving and rotating, creating a gap of up to two feet between the concrete capping beam and the soil embankment and indicating ongoing structural failure. In October 2024, a budget of £850,000 was approved for repair works. That estimate was based on a high-level assessment of the length of wall requiring repair and assumed that conventional construction plant could operate from the bankside. Subsequent arboricultural, engineering and geotechnical investigations have demonstrated that this delivery assumption is not achievable. The wall adjoins an avenue of mature trees. The scale of land-based plant required for the piling works would cause unacceptable impacts on root-protection areas and tree canopies. The works must therefore be undertaken from the river using floating plant and pontoons. Low bridge clearances restrict the type and size of equipment that can reach the site and require specialist river access, plant and construction solutions. These constraints materially increase the complexity and cost of the project. The technical assessment has identified steel sheet piling as the most viable solution capable of meeting the site's geotechnical and load-bearing requirements while maintaining the required river frontage alignment. Alternative hard-engineering solutions would incur higher costs, longer installation periods and greater embodied carbon. Softer revetment approaches would not provide the necessary structural performance or maintain the required river alignment, particularly given the proximity of existing infrastructure and the adjacent lock. The enhanced total project budget estimate is up to £2,411,000. This reflects the revised water-based delivery methodology, specialist plant requirements and appropriate risk allowances identified following the site investigations. The original £850,000 provision is already included within approved budgets and the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy. The additional budget requirement and its funding source should be confirmed through the Council's financial decision-making arrangements.

	An open tender using a two-stage procurement approach is proposed. At Stage 1, a preferred contractor would be appointed under a Pre-Construction Services Agreement to work with the Council and design team to develop the detailed design, temporary works, river logistics, construction methodology and final cost plan. Stage 2 would involve negotiation and entry into the main construction contract. If an acceptable contract sum cannot be achieved, the Council would retain the ability to re-tender the developed scheme. A reliable cost estimate will be available for the Councils Budget Setting Report 2027/28. This approach reflects the lessons from previous major infrastructure projects by securing specialist contractor involvement before the Council commits to the main works. It is intended to improve buildability, cost certainty and risk allocation and to reduce the likelihood of inflated tender prices or substantial variations during construction. Subject to approval of the enhanced budget, the programme anticipates commencement of the competitive tender process by October 2026. Failure to intervene would create a risk of localised collapse and potential impacts on Jesus Green Lido, Jesus Green Lock, the boat-user foul-water pump-out facility, adjoining footpaths and strategic cycle routes, underground fibre-optic and drainage infrastructure, mature trees and the riverbank environment. Continuing reactive maintenance or delaying the project would not provide an acceptable response to the active structural movement. The Council has explored opportunities to coordinate the wall works with the adjacent Jesus Green Lock Island repairs being progressed by the Conservators of the River Cam. Shared access arrangements could provide efficiencies, but the Conservators' programme is progressing more slowly than is compatible with the condition of the Council-owned wall. The Council's project should therefore continue to be coordinated with the Conservators but should not be delayed where that would increase the risk of structural failure. Any shared arrangements must clearly allocate cost, liability and future maintenance responsibilities.
11	**Jesus Green Lock and the Conservators of the River Cam**
	The Conservators of the River Cam are a statutory corporate body and remain the navigation authority for the River Cam. Under the legislation governing the Conservators, they are responsible for the regulation of navigation and river traffic and for the maintenance and operation of navigation infrastructure, including locks, weirs and sluices. Those responsibilities remain with the Conservators unless and until the governing legislation is amended or repealed. Jesus Green Lock and Baits Bite Lock have required intervention because of structural concerns. A longer-term solution is required for Jesus Green Lock, and the Full Council

	motion recognises that the cost of major navigation infrastructure can exceed the resources normally available to the Conservators through navigation income alone. The City Council has therefore been working with the Conservators and other partners to understand the condition of Jesus Green Lock, potential engineering solutions, funding requirements and its relationship with the adjacent Council-owned river wall. The Council has an important interest in this work as a riparian landowner and because failure of significant river infrastructure could have wider consequences for navigation, water levels, recreation, biodiversity and the management of adjacent public land. The Council also appoints seven of the thirteen Conservators and consequently has a significant governance interest. This does not, however, make the Council directly responsible for the Conservators' finances, operations or statutory navigation functions. Section 12 of the Cambridge City Council Act 1985 provides that the Council may, if it thinks fit, pay money to the Conservators. Legal advice records that this is a discretionary power, rather than a statutory duty to fund the Conservators or make good any deficit. The 1985 Act removed the Council's historic responsibility to make up deficits incurred by the Conservators. Any proposal for a Council contribution would therefore require a separate decision under the Council's normal financial and governance arrangements, having regard to the purpose, benefits, affordability, risks and any conditions attached to the funding. The Conservators cannot be dissolved, wound up or have their statutory functions transferred through a simple governance decision by the Council or the Conservators. Advice obtained by the Council indicates that the Conservators' statutory duties continue while the governing legislation remains in force and that dissolution, or the transfer of navigation responsibilities to the Council or another authority, would require legislative change and extensive consultation. Any alternative long-term model would also need to identify which body would assume the navigation function, infrastructure liabilities, regulatory powers, assets and ongoing financial obligations. The immediate focus should therefore be on practical collaboration within the present statutory framework. The Council can use its convening role, governance interest and relationships with public bodies, landowners and potential funders to help the Conservators explore sustainable business and financial options and to develop a deliverable solution for Jesus Green Lock. This should not be interpreted as the Council accepting responsibility for the Conservators' statutory functions, operational liabilities or future deficits.
12	**Planning, Water Resources and Sustainable Growth**
	The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service has undertaken substantial work examining the relationship between development, water supply, abstraction,

	wastewater capacity and environmental constraints as part of preparation of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. Water availability is a strategic constraint for Greater Cambridge. The issue is particularly important because of the relationship between groundwater abstraction and the chalk aquifer which supports the area's chalk streams. The formation of a Cambridge Water Scarcity Group in 2023 brought together the key agencies to identify solutions. The objectives of the Water Scarcity Group are to advise government on the development of a detailed approach to water scarcity issues in Greater Cambridge in the short, medium, and long-term, and to advise on wastewater and drainage services. The Group is chaired by Dr Paul Leinster (current Chair of Water Resources East and previous Chief Executive of the Environment Agency), and consists of key stakeholders including water companies, Water Resources East, the Environment Agency and water regulators, and the local planning authorities. Measures being implemented include a Water Efficiency Programme to retrofit public buildings and social housing with water efficiency and water reuse measures. Government funding has been provided to the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service to implement the programme, which has now commenced. A second phase involving other stakeholders has also commenced to explore a wider range of efficiency and reuse measures in different types of buildings. A water credits system has also been considered and could be subject to further work in future. Programmes are also trialling nature-based solutions to assist with aquifer recharge and exploring a range of measures with the agricultural sector. Water plans by Cambridge Water and Water Resources East include various additional measures to address short term water issues, including measures to increase water efficiency, an enhanced metering programme, leakage reduction through a range of measures, and risk-based approach to abstraction management. Strategic water supply solutions are also planned. A pipeline connection to Grafham Water will boost supplies to the Cambridge area from 2032. The Fens Reservoir will further increase supplies from 2036 (at the earliest). In addition to helping meet future water supply needs they will enable reductions in abstraction from existing sources, helping to restore and protect the chalk streams in Cambridge. To consider the impact of additional development being explored though the Greater Cambridge Local Plan, The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service commissioned a Water Supply Evidence to accompany the draft Local Plan in 2025, and it was updated in 2026 to accompany the Proposed Submission Local Plan. Working closely with the Water Scarcity Group this also produced a water supply dashboard, allowing different growth scenarios to be tested.

	The development trajectory in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan has taken account of water supply availability, and the availability of the strategic water supply interventions. The adopted 2018 Local Plan implemented the optional standard for water efficiency set out in national planning guidance (110 Litres per person per day (LPD) design standard), which is more stringent than the standard building regulations requirement. It also set requirements for non-domestic buildings using BREEAM standards. Higher standards have already been achieved in many recent developments. For example, the village centre development at land North of Cherry Hinton has a standard of around 100 LPD, and the Virido site at Great Knighton which includes communal rainwater harvesting will delivery around 80 LPD. The Proposed Submission Greater Cambridge Local Plan proposes to tighten standards further, requiring highly water efficient design standards in housing and non-housing developments which go beyond Building Regulation levels. These draw on approaches set out in the Shared Standards in Water Efficiency for Local Plans developed by water stakeholders and are informed by other evidence including from the Enabling Water Smart Communities project. The emerging strategy has considered wastewater treatment capacity to accommodate the planned development. Upgrades will be required to a number of treatment works to accommodate development needs. Policies require treatment to be available when development takes place. Officers have also been liaising with Anglian Water to ensure that their emerging Drainage and Waste Water Management Plan takes account of this. Planning policy has a wider role in protecting the river system through sustainable drainage, Biodiversity Net Gain, habitat connectivity, flood-risk management and appropriate assessment of development affecting watercourses. The Council motion recognises the extensive evidence prepared through the Local Plan process and states that future development should continue to be informed by evidence demonstrating sustainable water supplies, reduced abstraction, water efficiency and environmental capacity.
13	**Statutory and Strategic Partnerships**
	No single organisation has the powers, resources, or responsibilities necessary to address all the pressures affecting the Cam. The Council's role is therefore one of direct delivery where it owns land or assets, combined with partnership, evidence gathering, advocacy and influence where responsibilities sit elsewhere.

	Key strategic relationships include: • Environment Agency • Cambridge Water • Anglian Water • Conservators of the River Cam • Cambridgeshire County Council • Natural England • Water Resources East • Anglia Ruskin University • University of Cambridge and colleges Through CCSP, the Council's role is developing beyond convening partners. It is leading a multidisciplinary programme combining water-company investment, university monitoring, scientific assurance, specialist procurement, local-government governance, and community participation. This enables the Council to act as an informed technical delivery partner: commissioning work, testing assumptions, integrating specialist evidence, and developing defensible restoration strategies. Responsibilities must nevertheless remain clear. Abstraction regulation, wastewater treatment, navigation, and environmental regulation remain with the relevant statutory organisations. The Council's leadership lies in taking responsibility for where it has powers and assets, generating evidence where it can influence others and ensuring technical questions are considered by people with the appropriate expertise.
14	**Collaboration with Voluntary, Community and Catchment Groups**
	An important feature of work to protect and improve the River Cam and its tributaries is the contribution made by voluntary organisations, community groups, trusts, and individual volunteers. These organisations provide local knowledge, relevant experience, monitoring capacity, practical delivery, community perspectives and independent advocacy, monitoring capacity, practical delivery and an important connection between statutory organisations and communities with a direct interest in the river. The Council recognises that the long-term health of the Cam cannot be secured through statutory organisations acting alone. Effective river restoration requires sustained collaboration between local authorities, environmental regulators, water companies, landowners, academic institutions, voluntary organisations, and communities. Where an individual or organisation possesses relevant specialist technical expertise, this should be recognised specifically. More generally, community organisations can

	identify concerns, gather observations, campaign for change, support monitoring and undertake practical activities. Technical causes and solutions should then be assessed using appropriate scientific evidence and specialist advice. The Council’s approach should therefore be one of evidence-led partnership: community knowledge and advocacy identify questions; scientific investigation helps establish cause; appropriate specialist expertise informs solutions; and statutory organisations retain their responsibilities. **Cam Valley Forum** Cam Valley Forum is a long-established voluntary organisation concerned with the River Cam and its tributaries. It provides an independent voice on issues including water abstraction, water quality, sewage pollution, river flows, biodiversity, and management of the wider catchment. The Council and Cam Valley Forum have worked collaboratively on river-related issues. A significant recent area of shared interest has been the work associated with Designated Bathing Water status at Sheep's Green, which has enabled systematic monitoring to provide additional evidence about water quality in this part of the River Cam. Voluntary organisations also provide constructive challenges to the Council and other public bodies. Partnership working does not require partners to hold identical positions on every issue. Independent scrutiny, local knowledge, and challenge can contribute to better evidence, greater transparency, and better environmental outcomes. **Cam Catchment Partnership** The Cam Catchment Partnership provides a broader catchment-scale mechanism for organisations and communities interested in the Cam and its tributaries to work together. Its work enables the river to be considered as a connected catchment rather than through individual administrative boundaries, sites, or projects. This is particularly important because pressures including abstraction, pollution, sediment, habitat fragmentation and agricultural or urban runoff frequently arise some distance from where their ecological effects are observed. The Council's involvement in catchment arrangements complements the more locally focused work being undertaken through the Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project. As that project transitions towards a Cambridge City-focused restoration programme, wider catchment partnerships provide an important mechanism through which evidence

	and experience gathered by the Council can continue to support work elsewhere in the Cam catchment. An emerging Cambridge city-focused river partnership group is strengthening coordination of activity within the urban section of the Cam and its tributaries, where development pressures, recreation, water quality challenges, and habitat fragmentation are particularly significant. The group brings together key stakeholders with an interest in the river corridor to identify shared priorities, develop integrated projects and align investment. Its focus on practical delivery complements the strategic work of the Cam Catchment Partnership and supports wider objectives within the Cambridge Nature Network and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy, helping to create a healthier, more resilient, and better-connected river environment across Cambridge. **River Granta and local catchment groups** Cambridge City Council has not acted as the overall River Granta catchment lead. GCCSP’s involvement in South Cambridgeshire has focused on the Linton and Abington case-study sites, investigating ecological decline, undertaking monitored restoration and establishing regular water-quality and biological monitoring. The practical programme is expected to conclude in October 2026, while monitoring at Linton and Abington is intended to continue until July 2027 to provide an early post-restoration dataset and support an orderly transition to the developing South Cambridgeshire catchment partnerships. This provides a positive project legacy. GCCSP will leave monitoring infrastructure, trained volunteers, practical restoration case studies, and evidence base upon which catchment organisations, landowners, parish councils and local communities can build. **Friends of the River Cam** Friends of the Cam is a local community and advocacy group campaigning for the protection and restoration of the River Cam. Its interests include water quality, abstraction, biodiversity, the effects of development and the wider recognition of the river’s environmental value, including advocacy for the rights of the river. The group should therefore be recognised as a relevant stakeholder in future engagement and partnership discussions, while distinguishing its community and campaigning role from the statutory, regulatory and operational responsibilities held by organisations such as the Environment Agency and the Conservators of the River Cam.

	Citizen science and practical environmental action Citizen science has become a key component of the Council's chalk-stream work. The GCCSP monitoring programme is delivered with Anglia Ruskin University and supported by volunteers, enabling regular monitoring across the network and building an increasingly detailed evidence base concerning water quality, flow and ecological condition. Voluntary and community organisations can also contribute through habitat management, river clean-ups, monitoring, invasive-species control and identification and reporting of pollution or environmental deterioration. Such activity can supplement, but does not replace, the responsibilities of statutory organisations. The Council's role should include helping voluntary activity to be targeted safely and effectively and ensuring that community evidence can be connected to organisations able to investigate or address underlying environmental problems. **Future approach** There is an opportunity to strengthen the Council's relationship with voluntary and catchment organisations as the programme develops. This should include: • maintaining regular dialogue with key river and catchment organisations; • ensuring community and voluntary-sector knowledge contributes to project identification and design; • supporting citizen-science monitoring where it can contribute useful evidence; • sharing Council monitoring and project evidence where appropriate; • working collaboratively on external funding opportunities; • supporting practical volunteering and community stewardship where appropriate; • connecting locally identified concerns with the statutory organisation responsible for addressing them; and • ensuring that the emerging Cambridge City chalk-stream programme complements rather than duplicates wider catchment activity. It will also be important to maintain the independence of voluntary organisations. Their value lies not only in practical delivery but also in their ability to provide specialist knowledge, community perspectives and constructive challenge. The Council should therefore seek to develop these relationships as partnerships rather than simply delivery arrangements.
15	**Future Environmental Projects and External Funding**

	The Cambridge Chalk Stream Project is the landscape-scale implementation of the evidence and case-study learning developed through GCCSP. Cambridge City Council is the lead authority and accountable body for the programme. Subject to confirmation of the final funding agreements, CCSP combines up to £1.9 million of Cambridge Water WINEP funding with grant funding for the Hobson's Brook pollution-mitigation and resilience component. The principal delivery period is July 2026 to March 2029, with monitoring, maintenance and management continuing beyond the capital programme. The two funding streams are complementary elements of one controlled programme rather than separate chalk-stream restoration projects**.** **Cambridge Water WINEP** The £1.9 million WINEP allocation is the wider Cambridge restoration component of CCSP. It supports programme management and governance, research and technical assurance, planning and mobilisation, and capital habitat delivery. This budget structure reflects the evidence-led methodology. Science, design, consents and assurance are integral parts of delivery and provide safeguards for the subsequent capital investment; they are not separate additions to the physical works. **Hobson's Brook pollution mitigation** The proposed grant funding approach will support the Hobson's Brook pollution-mitigation and resilience component of CCSP. The project will investigate, design and deliver nature-based measures intended to intercept and mitigate pollution before it reaches sensitive chalk-stream habitats and progresses through the connected freshwater system towards the River Cam. The proposed methodology is to identify and quantify pollutant pathways, undertake modelling and design, construct the agreed measures, monitor inputs and outputs, validate performance and adapt future management where necessary. The final value, funding conditions, approvals and ongoing liabilities must be confirmed before the agreement is completed. **Cambridge Water Pebble Fund** Cambridge Water provided a £27,000 PEBBLE grant for the 2025/26 delivery period. The funding was fully allocated to eligible practical biodiversity delivery at Hobson's

	Brook, Coldham's Brook and the East Cambridge Main Drain, Nine Wells and Giant's Grave. Of the total, £17,250 supported eligible habitat materials and £9,750 supported contractor installation. The funding was restricted to practical biodiversity delivery and was not used for project staffing, consultancy, monitoring, research or design. The PEBBLE grant provides an example of different external funding sources being combined and controlled transparently to deliver measurable environmental outputs while avoiding duplication or double funding. **Watercourse Land Drainage Model Byelaws** The watercourses throughout the city provide essential surface water drainage functions and support valuable ecological habitats. Damage to, obstruction of, or unauthorised activities within these watercourses can increase flood risk, reduce biodiversity, impede maintenance operations and adversely affect water quality. To provide additional protection for ordinary watercourses, local authorities have powers to make byelaws under the Land Drainage Act. The adoption of model byelaws is recommended by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and is established practice amongst several risk management authorities. The Environment Agency, Conservators of the River Cam and South Cambridgeshire District Council already operate byelaws covering watercourses within their respective jurisdictions. The proposed byelaws would provide the Council with an additional regulatory mechanism to help protect watercourses from activities that may obstruct flows, damage banks, impede access for maintenance, or otherwise increase flood risk. The byelaws would also complement ongoing work to improve water quality, biodiversity and the resilience of Cambridge's chalk streams and wider water environment. The proposed byelaws are based on the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' model byelaws and would apply to ordinary watercourses within the administrative boundary of Cambridge City Council. Subject to Cabinet approval, officers would undertake the necessary consultation and statutory approval process prior to the byelaws being formally adopted and brought into force.
16	**Opportunities for Improvement**

	The review demonstrates that a substantial amount of activity is already taking place. The principal opportunity is therefore not necessarily the creation of additional structures, but better coordination and visibility of existing activity. Future work should focus on: • maintaining and strengthening the evidence base; • moving from individual demonstration projects towards catchment and network-scale restoration; • identifying and addressing pollution pathways; • integrating water quantity, water quality, biodiversity and physical habitat; • improving coordination between Council projects and external partners; • maximising external funding; • supporting community stewardship and citizen science; • ensuring Council land and assets are managed consistently with biodiversity and climate objectives; • embedding river and water considerations within planning and development; • improving communication with residents about the condition of the Cam and actions being taken; and • maintaining clear distinctions between matters for which the Council is responsible and those requiring action from statutory partners. A simple programme or pipeline of river-related projects could provide a useful mechanism for recording project status, funding, lead organisation, outcomes and dependencies. This could also provide the basis for periodic reporting through the Council's Biodiversity Strategy and associated governance arrangements rather than creating a separate permanent reporting structure.
17.	**Corporate plan**
17.1	The recommendations support the Council's corporate priorities by protecting and enhancing Cambridge's natural environment, strengthening the city's resilience to climate change and supporting the sustainable management of its natural assets. The River Cam, its chalk streams, tributaries and adjoining open spaces form an important part of the city's green and blue infrastructure and contribute significantly to biodiversity, recreation, wellbeing and Cambridge's sense of place. The proposed programme demonstrates the Council's commitment to working collaboratively to achieve these outcomes. Delivery will involve statutory agencies, water companies, academic institutions, voluntary and community organisations, landowners and other partners. The South Staffordshire Water and other grants will enable the Council to use external investment to increase the scale and pace of

	environmental improvement, while supporting community participation, citizen science and partnership working. The recommendations also support a more sustainable and financially responsible approach to delivery. Rather than treating individual river projects in isolation, the report proposes a more coordinated and evidence-led programme, using monitoring and environmental evidence to prioritise interventions and maximise external funding. This will help ensure that Council resources and partner investment are directed towards projects capable of delivering demonstrable environmental and community benefits. Taken together, the recommendations support the Council's ambitions for a greener, fairer and more resilient Cambridge, combining nature recovery and climate adaptation with improved public spaces, partnership working and responsible use of Council and external resources.
18.	**Consultation, engagement and communication**
18.1	The activities described in this report involve significant ongoing engagement with statutory bodies, environmental organisations, water companies, academic institutions, landowners, voluntary and community organisations and other partners with an interest in the River Cam and its tributaries. Partnership and community engagement has been an important feature of the Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project. This has included collaboration with Anglia Ruskin University and citizen scientists undertaking water-quality and environmental monitoring, together with volunteer training and practical involvement in the management and stewardship of chalk streams. The Council also works with voluntary and catchment organisations, including Cam Valley Forum, the Cam Catchment Partnership and local Friends and conservation groups. These relationships provide local knowledge, specialist expertise, monitoring capacity and constructive challenge alongside practical opportunities for joint delivery. Engagement will continue as the Cambridge City chalk-stream programme and individual projects are developed. The nature and extent of consultation will be proportionate to each project and will include affected communities, landowners, river users and relevant statutory and community partners where appropriate. This will be particularly important where proposals affect public open space, access, residential moorings, navigation or established recreational uses. There is also an opportunity to improve communication about the work taking place across the River Cam and its tributaries. Bringing projects together as a more coordinated programme should make it easier to communicate the evidence informing

	investment, the respective responsibilities of the Council and other organisations, progress with individual projects and the environmental outcomes being achieved.
19.	**Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact**
19.1	The Full Council motion provides an opportunity to bring together a wide range of work already being undertaken to protect and improve the River Cam and its tributaries. The Council is not the sole body responsible for the condition of the river. Its ability to influence abstraction, sewage treatment, navigation infrastructure and regulatory matters is necessarily dependent upon effective engagement with the organisations holding those statutory responsibilities. Nevertheless, the Council has an important and increasingly active role. It is a major riparian landowner, manages important riverside open spaces and infrastructure, leads significant biodiversity and chalk-stream projects, participates in water-resource partnerships and, through the Shared Planning Service, has an important role in ensuring future growth responds appropriately to water scarcity and environmental capacity. The Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project demonstrates the value of combining evidence, practical restoration, academic expertise and community participation. Its monitoring has identified significant and complex pressures affecting both rural and urban chalk streams, while the transition to a Cambridge City-wide programme supported by up to £1.9 million of WINEP funding provides a significant opportunity to move from individual interventions towards coordinated restoration of the City's connected chalk-stream network. Alongside this work, investment in the River Cam wall, work concerning Jesus Green Lock, improvements at Sheep's Green, planning for sustainable water resources, collaboration with voluntary and catchment groups, and the development of externally funded environmental projects demonstrate the breadth of Council activity relating to the Cam. The next stage should focus on coordination, delivery and outcomes: ensuring that the Council's own projects are aligned, external funding is maximised, evidence informs investment, community expertise is utilised and the Council continues to use its influence to secure action from organisations responsible for water quantity, water quality and river infrastructure.
20.	**Implications**

20.1	**Financial Risk**
	The programme described in this report combines existing Council resources with significant external investment. External funding provides an opportunity to increase the scale of environmental improvement without the full cost falling on the Council. It can, however, create requirements relating to programme management, procurement, technical assurance, monitoring, maintenance and the future ownership of assets and liabilities. The progression from GCCSP to CCSP represents a risk-managed approach to environmental investment. The Council first assembled a multi-funder programme to establish baseline evidence, undertake monitored case studies and develop practical delivery capability before progressing to landscape-scale investment. Research, monitoring, design and technical assurance should therefore be understood as safeguards for the capital programme rather than simply as project overheads. They reduce the risk of investing in interventions that fail to address the principal environmental constraint or cannot be sustained. Subject to confirmation of the final funding agreements, no Council match funding is currently assumed for CCSP. The agreements must nevertheless define eligible expenditure, Council staffing implications, procurement requirements, maintenance responsibilities, asset ownership, monitoring commitments, treatment of VAT and the arrangements applying if external funding or project outputs change. Significant capital expenditure is also proposed for the Council-owned Jesus Green river wall. The budget, funding sources and any related revenue implications will be set out separately within the relevant financial and project approvals.
	Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)
20.2	The recommendations have been developed to avoid creating unnecessary structural dependency ahead of Local Government Reorganisation and to maintain flexibility in future operating arrangements. Temporary and phased implementation approaches reduce the risk of embedding arrangements that may require redesign during transition.
	Legal Implications
20.3	The Council has a range of statutory functions and powers relevant to the matters described in this report, including those relating to planning, biodiversity, land

	ownership, open-space management and drainage. Other statutory responsibilities rest with organisations including the Environment Agency, water companies and the Conservators of the River Cam. Partnership and funding arrangements will need to clearly identify responsibilities, liabilities, ownership of works and future maintenance obligations. The environmental aspirations contained in the Full Council motion do not transfer statutory responsibility for abstraction, wastewater treatment, navigation or environmental regulation to the City Council. Similarly, ecological benchmarks used by GCCSP and CCSP are tools for restoration design and ecological risk management. They should not be presented as statutory compliance standards or as replacing established regulatory classifications. The funding and partnership agreements for CCSP must clearly address the Council's legal powers, eligible expenditure, procurement, landowner permissions, environmental and flood-risk consents, liabilities, ownership of completed works, maintenance and monitoring obligations, and exit or variation arrangements.
	Equalities and socio-economic Implications
20.4	Rivers and riverside open spaces provide important opportunities for recreation, wellbeing and access to nature. Restoration and infrastructure projects should therefore consider accessibility alongside biodiversity and environmental objectives and seek, where practicable, to improve opportunities for a wide range of residents and visitors to experience the river.
	Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications
20.5	The recommendations are expected to have positive climate change and environmental implications. The programme described in this report will support the restoration and improved resilience of the River Cam, its chalk streams, tributaries, wetlands and associated riparian habitats. Climate change is expected to place increasing pressure on Cambridge's water environment through periods of drought and low flows, higher temperatures, more intense rainfall and increased flood risk. Restoring more naturally functioning rivers, wetlands and floodplains, improving riparian habitats and increasing ecological

	connectivity can help the natural environment adapt to these pressures and improve its resilience to future climate change. The proposed programme will also support the Council's wider environmental objectives through habitat creation and restoration, improved biodiversity and ecological connectivity, measures to address pollution pathways, and interventions designed to improve the condition and resilience of chalk streams. The use of nature-based solutions, including the proposed Hobson's Brook pollution-mitigation project, provides opportunities to deliver multiple benefits for water quality, biodiversity and climate adaptation. The South Staffordshire Water-funded chalk-stream programme will enable interventions to be developed on an evidence-led basis, taking account of water quality, hydrology, channel condition and ecological need. This should help ensure that investment is targeted towards the factors limiting ecological recovery rather than applying standard interventions irrespective of local conditions. There may be short-term environmental and carbon impacts associated with the construction and delivery of individual projects, including the use of materials, plant and transport and temporary disturbance to habitats and public spaces. These impacts will be considered through project design, procurement and, where applicable, ecological, flood-risk, planning and environmental consenting processes. Opportunities to minimise embodied carbon, reuse materials and adopt lower-carbon construction methods will be considered as individual schemes are developed. Overall, the recommendations are considered to make a positive contribution to climate adaptation, biodiversity recovery and the resilience of Cambridge's water environment. The principal climate benefit is expected to arise from adaptation and resilience rather than direct operational carbon reduction.
	Procurement Implications
20.6	The acceptance of external grant funding does not in itself commit the Council to the appointment of suppliers or contractors. Any goods, works or services required to deliver the projects described in this report will be procured in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and applicable procurement legislation. The conditions attached to the South Staffordshire Water and other funding will be reviewed to ensure that any requirements relating to expenditure, procurement, delivery timescales and reporting are compatible with the Council's procurement obligations. Individual projects may require the procurement of specialist professional services, surveys, design work, monitoring equipment and construction or environmental works.

	Appropriate procurement routes will be determined as individual schemes are developed, taking account of value, complexity, available frameworks and the requirements of the relevant funding agreements. Where appropriate, procurement will also seek to secure wider social, environmental and carbon benefits, consistent with the Council's policies and the nature of the individual project. There are therefore no procurement implications that prevent acceptance of the proposed grant funding. Subsequent expenditure will remain subject to the Council's normal procurement and governance requirements.
	Community Safety Implications
20.7	There are no significant adverse community safety implications arising directly from the recommendations in this report. The River Cam and its adjoining open spaces are extensively used for recreation, navigation, walking, cycling and other activities. Individual river restoration and infrastructure projects will therefore need to consider public safety, safe access to the river and adjoining open spaces, and the interaction between construction activity and existing river users. Where works are undertaken, appropriate risk assessments, site management arrangements and temporary access restrictions will be put in place as necessary. Consideration will be given to works affecting riverbanks, paths, navigation, residential moorings and other areas of high public use. In the longer term, investment in riverbank infrastructure, appropriate management of riverside land and improved environmental condition should contribute positively to the safety, resilience and quality of the river environment.
21	**Background documents** Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
21.1	None
22	**Appendices**
22.1	None

	To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Alistair Wilson, City Services, alistair.wilson@cambridge.gov.uk

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REPORT TITLE: Budget Outturn 2025-26

To: Cabinet

23 September 2026

Report by:
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Wards affected:
All

Director Approval: Chief Finance Officer Jody Etherington 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 Cabinet for decision.

1.	**Recommendations**
1.1	It is recommended that Cabinet: 1. Note this Budget Outturn Report 2025-26. 2. Recommend to Full Council the approval of the revenue budget carry forwards greater than £50,000 listed at Appendix C. 3. Recommend to Full Council the creation of a new earmarked reserve for asset compliance, and the transfer into this reserve of the net 2025/26 General Fund underspend of £1.930 million. 4. Recommend to Full Council the approval of the General Fund capital budget carry forwards listed at Appendix D, together with the carry forward of associated resources to finance this expenditure (including £1.767 million of planned revenue contributions to capital). 5. Recommend to Full Council the approval of the Housing Revenue Account capital budget carry forwards listed at Appendix F.

2.	**Purpose and reason for the report**
2.1	This report explains the final outturn position for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the 2025/26 financial year. It is presented to Cabinet and then Full Council in support of its statutory and constitutional responsibilities in respect of financial sustainability and monitoring compliance with the budgetary framework.
2.2	Under the council's financial regulations, budget carry forwards in excess of £50,000 require approval by Full Council.
3.	**Alternative options considered**
3.1	The council could choose not to approve some or all of the requested revenue and capital budget carry forwards. The implications of this would vary depending upon the nature of the requests refused, but this would likely have a detrimental impact upon service provision or the ability to complete the council's planned capital programme.
3.2	The council could choose not to create a new earmarked reserve for asset compliance, or not to transfer the full 2025/26 General Fund underspend to this reserve. Such a decision would likely leave the council with significant unfunded and unavoidable capital costs, particularly in relation to the Jesus Green riverbank.
4.	**Background and key issues**
4.1	Draft 2025-26 outturn figures were first presented in the Quarterly Performance Report January to March 2026, which was received by Cabinet on 7 July 2026. There have been no changes to the outturn figures since this report, although some corrections have been made to HRA capital budgets which impacts the capital carry forward requests, as highlighted within this report.
4.2	Note that the external audit of the council's 2025/26 Statement of Accounts commenced earlier this month and is still ongoing, therefore all figures within this report remain as draft for the time being. Should there be any changes as a result of audit which impact

	upon the council's General Fund or HRA reserves, this will be reported as part of the 2027/28 budget-setting process.
5.	**General Fund**
5.1	After proposed budget carry forwards, there was a net underspend on the General Fund of **£1.930 million**, which can be summarised as follows:-

Group	Current Budget	Outturn	Unspent budget carried forward	(Under budget)/ over budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Chief Executive Office	2,555	2,688	-	133
City Services	1,058	642	-	(416)
Communities	10,240	9,779	17	(444)
Corporate Hub	10,370	5,985	111	(4,274)
Economy and Place	(8,153)	(9,006)	214	(639)
Planning and Building Control	1,559	1,485	-	(74)
Non-service expenditure	14,157	15,202	1,767	2,812
Total net expenditure	**31,786**	**26,775**	**2,109**	**(2,902)**
Funded by:				
Business rates and council tax	(24,114)	(23,161)	-	953
Government grants	(4,374)	(4,355)	-	19
Use of earmarked reserves	(711)	(711)	-	-
Total funding	**(29,199)**	**(28,227)**	**-**	**972**
Total General Fund outturn	**2,587**	**(1,452)**	**2,109**	**(1,930)**

5.2	The final 2025/26 budget included a planned use of unallocated General Fund reserves to support council services of £2.587 million. The net underspend of £1.930 million means that the actual draw on reserves, after carry forwards, is £657,000.
5.3	The most significant areas of **underspend** and **increased income** were as follows:- • Net investment income was £1.9 million higher than budgeted (after transfers to earmarked reserves). This was due to capital slippage, which meant that cash balances were higher than anticipated throughout the year, along with sustained higher interest rates on investments. Investment income is projected to fall in future years as excess cash is applied to the council's planned capital programme. • Net income from car parks was £1.6 million higher than budgeted, reflecting continuing strong demand at the Grand Arcade, Park Street and Queen Anne Terrace car parks, together with tariff increases and the reintroduction of overnight

	charging. Adjustments to budgets from 2026/27 mean that this level of over-achievement is unlikely to be repeated.
5.4	The most significant areas of **overspend** and **reduced income** were as follows:- • Underachievement of business rates income of £1.0 million following a significant number of ratings appeals being resolved in year.
5.5	A more detailed breakdown of outturn by service grouping is provided at Appendix A, whilst Appendix B contains commentary on all individual cost centre variances greater than £50,000.
5.6	Due to the council's current financial position and continuing need to deliver savings over the medium-term, carry forward of service revenue budgets has only been proposed in exceptional circumstances this year. A full list of proposed revenue carry forwards has been provided at Appendix C. In line with the council's constitution, those over £50,000 require approval by Full Council. Those under £50,000 have already been approved by the Chief Finance Officer and are listed for information only.
5.7	There are a number of emerging pressures in the General Fund relating to asset condition and compliance. The most significant of these concerns necessary urgent repairs to the riverbank at Jesus Green, which is the subject of a separate report to the September Cabinet meeting. Other immediate pressures are emerging or likely to emerge as a result of an ongoing asset compliance review. As such, it is proposed that the £1.930 million General Fund underspend be placed into an earmarked reserve, to fund first and foremost the additional costs associated with the Jesus Green riverbank (currently estimated at £1.561 million on top of the £850,000 budget already approved). Any excess will then be held to support other essential asset compliance work.
5.8	The outturn position on the council's General Fund capital programme for 2025/26 is as follows:-

	(table below)

Capital Outturn – Q4 2025/26	Final Budget £'000	Outturn £'000	Unspent budget carried forward £'000	(Under budget)/ over budget £'000
General Fund				
Loans to Cambridge Investment Partnership	36,704	14,663	22,041	-
Park Street development	32,797	13,233	-	(19,564)
Civic Quarter	6,417	4,629	1,788	-
Sustainable Warmth Grant - HUG2	4,638	2,211	-	(2,427)
Operational Hub	3,495	4,767	-	1,272
East Barnwell new centre	3,449	1,241	2,208	-
S106 funded projects	2,232	1,715	560	43
Other capital projects	18,654	8,326	10,336	8
General Fund total	**108,386**	**50,785**	**36,933**	**(20,812)**

5.9	Project by project variances are set out in detail at Appendix D, alongside capital carry forwards for Full Council approval.
6.	**Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**
6.1	The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a statutory ringfenced account, whereby rent and service charge income from council tenants and leaseholders can only be spent upon the provision of housing services. As such, it is managed in a different way from the General Fund, with reserve balances held as close as possible to the minimum target level, and surpluses generated from housing operations reinvested into capital expenditure (either on maintaining and improving existing stock, or building new homes).
6.2	The 2025/26 outturn on the HRA is summarised below:-

Service Grouping	Current Budget £'000	Outturn £'000	(Under budget)/ over budget
Income			
Dwelling rents	(51,684)	(52,225)	(541)
Other rents	(1,376)	(1,489)	(113)
Service charges	(4,076)	(4,288)	(212)
Other income	(862)	(356)	506
Total Income	**(57,998)**	**(58,358)**	**(360)**
Expenditure			
Repairs and maintenance	12,871	19,155	6,284
Management	11,245	11,220	(25)
Bad debt provision	527	1,102	575
Depreciation	12,254	12,647	393
Total Expenditure	**36,897**	**44,124**	**7,227**
Net operating surplus	**(21,101)**	**(14,234)**	**6,867**
Net interest cost	8,949	8,284	(665)
Revenue contribution to capital financing	11,140	4,717	(6,423)
Transfers to/(from) earmarked reserves	0	183	183
HRA (surplus)/deficit	**(1,012)**	**(1,050)**	**(38)**

6.3 As shown above, the operating surplus on the HRA for 2025/26 was £6.9 million lower than budgeted. This was mainly due to the following factors:-

- Increased spend on housing repairs (£2.3 million), including damp, condensation and mould, in order to comply with Awaab's law.
- The need for interim fire safety measures including waking watch at a number of sites (£1.5 million). As a result of work already undertaken, the number of sites with waking watches in place has reduced from eleven to two. It is taking longer than anticipated to address the final two sites as decanting is required.
- Additional costs of dealing with voids due to the poor condition of significant numbers of void properties (£1.5 million).
- The cost of rectifications (£1.4 million) as a result of fire and other damage to properties.

6.4 The impact of these overspends is that the revenue contribution towards HRA capital

	expenditure in year had to be reduced by £6.4 million in order to maintain revenue reserves above the target level. This will have a knock-on impact on future years, as it has increased the amount the council needed to borrow to fund its capital programme.
6.5	The council continues to take strong action to address overspends in the HRA, including an in-depth budget review and rebasing which took place as part of the 2026/27 budget setting exercise, and continuous monitoring and mitigating actions. However, conditions remain challenging, and the implementation of Awaab's Law Phase 2 will add to those pressures. This will be reviewed again as part of the 2027/28 budget setting process.
6.6	More detailed commentary on significant HRA variances at cost centre level has been provided at Appendix E.
6.7	The outturn on the HRA capital programme for 2025/26 is as follows:-
6.8	Note that within the Quarterly Performance Report January to March 2026, which was presented to Cabinet on 7 July 2026, final budget figures for the HRA capital programme were overstated as a result of an administrative error. This meant that carry forward and under/overspend figures were also incorrect. These errors have been corrected in the table above and the associated Appendix. Actual expenditure of £65.9 million has not changed from the original report.
6.9	Project by project variances are set out in detail at Appendix F, alongside capital carry forwards for Full Council approval.
7.	**Corporate plan**

Capital Outturn – Q4 2025/26	Final Budget £'000	Outturn £'000	Unspent budget carried forward £'000	(Under budget)/ over budget £'000
Housing Revenue Account				
Existing stock	41,271	24,468	17,038	235
New build and acquisitions	51,711	41,463	11,010	762
Other	3,284	2	2,682	(600)
Housing Revenue Account total	**96,266**	**65,933**	**30,730**	**397**

7.1	The council's budget framework supports all aspects of the Corporate Plan. Budgets requested for carry forward have already been approved by Full Council in 2025/26 or an earlier year, and approval of carry forwards will allow for delivery of the priorities these budgets were assigned to support. Corporate plan 2022-27: our priorities for Cambridge - Cambridge City Council
8.	**Consultation, engagement and communication**
8.1	The 2025/26 budget setting process was subject to full public consultation in line with the council's Code of Best Practice on Consultation and Community Engagement.
9.	**Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact**
9.1	Approval of budget carry forwards will allow delivery of the associated corporate priorities. The approval of a new earmarked reserve for asset compliance will provide a degree of financial resilience against known and unknown future asset compliance risks.
10.	**Implications**
	Relevant risks
10.1	Where capital budgets are carried forward due to project slippage, this increases the risk of overall overspend due to extended project timelines and the impact of inflation where procurement is delayed. This risk will need to be managed by the relevant project manager in line with the council's usual Financial Regulations.
	Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)
10.2	The maintenance of reserves above their target level helps to demonstrate and secure the council's medium-term financial resilience in advance of local government reorganisation.

	Financial Implications
10.3	The financial implications of the requested carry forwards have already been taken into account within future reserve projections. Since budget has already been assigned, there is no further implication from approving carry forwards (apart from the increased risk of overspend identified above). Earmarking the 2025/26 General Fund underspend to support asset compliance work, including at the Jesus Green riverbank, will avoid the need to fund this essential work from other council resources.
	Legal Implications
10.4	None identified.
	Equalities and socio-economic Implications
10.5	The equalities and socio-economic implications of individual budget proposals will have been considered at the time of budget setting in line with the relevant council policy and statutory requirements. This includes the preparation of an Equalities Impact Assessment for each year's budget as a whole, and further assessments for individual proposals where the impact is likely to be significant.
	Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications
10.6	The net zero, climate change and environmental implications of individual budget proposals will have been considered at the time of budget setting in line with the relevant council policy and statutory requirements. This includes the assignment of a climate change rating to each individual proposal.
	Procurement Implications
10.7	None identified.
	Community Safety Implications

10.8	None identified.
11.	**Background documents** Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
11.1	General Fund Budget Setting Report 2025/26 to 2029/30 HRA Budget-Setting Report (BSR) 2025/26 Quarterly Performance Report January to March 2026
12.	**Appendices**
12.1	Appendix A – General Fund Revenue Outturn 2025/26 Appendix B – General Fund Revenue Variances Appendix C – General Fund Revenue Carry Forward Requests Appendix D – General Fund Capital Outturn 2025/26 Appendix E – Housing Revenue Account Revenue Variances Appendix F – Housing Revenue Account Capital Outturn 2025/26
	To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Jody Etherington, Chief Finance Officer, tel: 01223 458130, email: jody.etherington@cambridge.gov.uk

Appendix A – General Fund Revenue Outturn 2025/26

Group / Service Grouping	Current Budget	Outturn	Unspent budget carried forward	(Under budget)/ over budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Chief Executive Office				
Chief Executive Office	1,022	1,025	-	3
Democratic Services	1,533	1,663	-	130
Total Chief Executive Office	**2,555**	**2,688**	**-**	**133**
City Services				
Bereavement Services	(734)	(872)	-	(138)
Car Parking	(6,558)	(8,173)	-	(1,615)
Community Safety	366	387	-	21
Garage Services	64	(47)	-	(111)
Management	379	464	-	85
Markets and Street Trading	(528)	(549)	-	(21)
Operational Buildings	526	534	-	8
Sport and Recreation	659	1,216	-	557
Streets and Open Spaces	4,433	5,218	-	785
Waste and Recycling	2,451	2,464	-	13
Total City Services	**1,058**	**642**	**-**	**(416)**
Communities				
Community Centres	1,004	958	-	(46)
Community Development	1,765	1,734	-	(31)
Community Grants	1,443	1,437	-	(6)
Community Safety	764	717	-	(47)
Cultural Services	1,049	854	17	(178)
Environmental Health	1,353	1,350	-	(3)
Housing Strategy and Advice	2,124	1,964	-	(160)
Homelessness	535	548	-	13
Management	203	217	-	14
Total Communities	**10,240**	**9,779**	**17**	**(444)**
Corporate Hub				
Central Costs and Recharges	1,558	(66)	-	(1,624)
Customer Service Centre	2,162	2,007	-	(155)
Financial Services	1,998	1,864	111	(23)
Housing Benefit Expenditure	63	333	-	270
ICT	3,518	3,129	-	(389)
Insurance	1,186	1,613	-	427
Internal Audit	257	213	-	(44)
Investment interest and financing costs	(1,349)	(3,867)	-	(2,518)
Legal Services	872	740	-	(132)
Management	227	199	-	(28)
Office Buildings	1,323	1,206	-	(117)
People and Change	2,170	2,108	-	(62)
Procurement	291	301	-	10
Recharges to Housing Revenue Account	(4,915)	(4,839)	-	76
Revenues and Benefits Administration	1,009	1,044	-	35
Total Corporate Hub	**10,370**	**5,985**	**111**	**(4,274)**

Group / Service Grouping	Current Budget	Outturn	Unspent budget carried forward	(Under budget)/ over budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Economy and Place				
Commercial Property Services	(9,967)	(10,292)	-	(325)
Development	375	259	100	(16)
Economy, Energy and Climate Change	1,104	690	114	(300)
Management	335	337	-	2
Total Economy and Place	**(8,153)**	**(9,006)**	**214**	**(639)**
Planning and Building Control				
Building Control	165	148	-	(17)
Greater Cambridge Planning Service	1,394	1,337	-	(57)
Total Planning and Building Control	**1,559**	**1,485**	**-**	**(74)**
Total for all Groups	**17,629**	**11,573**	**342**	**(5,714)**
Non-service expenditure				
Capital expenditure financed from revenue	7,982	6,342	1,767	127
Contributions to earmarked funds	6,175	8,860	-	2,685
Total non-service expenditure	**14,157**	**15,202**	**1,767**	**2,812**
Net spending requirement	**31,786**	**26,775**	**2,109**	**(2,902)**
Funded by:				
Business rates baseline	(4,750)	(4,750)	-	-
Accumulated business rates growth	(8,767)	(7,814)	-	953
Government grants (including NHB)	(4,374)	(4,355)	-	19
Council tax	(10,597)	(10,597)	-	-
Appropriations from earmarked funds	(1,711)	(1,711)	-	-
Total funding	**(30,199)**	**(29,227)**	**-**	**972**
Total General Fund outturn	**1,587**	**(2,452)**	**2,109**	**(1,930)**

Appendix B – General Fund Revenue Variances

Group	Service Grouping	Reason for Variance	(Under budget)/ over budget £'000
Chief Executive Office	Democratic Services	Includes £116k net overspend due to changes in members basic and special responsibility allowances. This is slightly offset by an underspend of £29k in the events budget. There is a net overspend of £47k for electoral registration due largely to rising postage, courier, and printing costs and legislative limits on digital alternatives, and annual canvass costs including staff, tablets, and software.	130
City Services	Bereavement Services	Net underspend includes a credit of £227k in relation to the recovery of legal costs incurred in previous years on the A14 settlement – these costs have now been recovered. Without this the service would be showing a net overspend of £89k. This includes an overspend of £114k at the Crematorium reflecting wider national trends across the bereavement sector, with sustained growth in online-only providers offering direct cremation and more customers choosing this simpler, lower-cost option. The position is being actively managed through a review of service offer and pricing. Meanwhile, cemeteries are showing a net underspend of £75k due to increased income. This reflects targeted business improvement activity across the service. There is also a £20k overspend on vehicle repairs reflecting the age of the fleet, with this being managed through planned maintenance and future replacement planning.	(138)
	Car Parking	Income performance reflects strong demand at Grand Arcade, Park Street and Queen Anne Terrace car parks, which has more than offset reduced usage at Grafton Centre following recent closures. Demand at Grafton is expected to improve over time, as new offices and laboratory space become operational. Income has also been supported by the reintroduction of overnight charging and tariff increases in 2025/26. The allocation of some spaces to dedicated EV charging has reduced capacity slightly, although this has been mitigated through returning bays to dual use to optimise overall income.	(1,615)
City Services	Garage Services	Includes overachievement of income on external (£117k) and internal (£98k) work, offset by corresponding overspend of £149k on parts and consumables.	(111)
	Management	A £62k pressure on salaries within this area reflects targeted investment to strengthen leadership capacity across City Services, including the regrading of two posts and the introduction of a Programme Manager role. The overspend also includes focused investment in leadership and management development to establish a strong and consistent City Services leadership team, in the absence of a dedicated training budget.	85

Group	Service Grouping	Reason for Variance	(Under budget)/ over budget £'000
City Services (cont'd)	Sport and Recreation	An overspend of £348k within the leisure contract reflects a combination of historic utility recharges and the phasing of the new Leisure Contract Agency model. The budget assumed implementation from April; however the model commenced in August 2025, resulting in the previous operating model continuing for part of the year. This has now been addressed and is reflected in the ongoing budget position from 2026/27. In addition, there is an overspend of £204k on Recreation, including a one-off catch-up on electricity recharges at Jesus Green Pool (where estimated billing has been aligned to actual consumption resulting in a £150k back payment), and salary overspends following the late implementation of the service restructure.	557
City Services	Streets and Open Spaces	Includes salary overspends across the service totalling £430k. This reflects the implementation of the service restructure, including the regrading of posts, structural changes and pay protection arrangements. The timing of implementation from July 2025 rather than April 2025 also contributed to the variance. These changes have now been embedded and are reflected in the ongoing budget position, strengthening the service's leadership and delivery capacity. There is also an overspend of £123k on vehicle hire and repairs, associated with the age profile of the fleet. This is being addressed through the planned vehicle replacement programme, which will reduce maintenance costs and improve reliability over time. A £116k overspend in public toilet cleaning contract costs reflects updated cost levels and service requirements, with this now built into the 2026/27 budget. An overspend of £69k on Open Space Asset Maintenance reflects historic trends, and a £50k budget increase for 2026/27 will bring these budgets in line with actual operating costs.	785
Communities	Cultural Services	A positive variance of £111k on the Corn Exchange and Guildhall is primarily due to an increase in events from 178 last financial year to 208 in 2025/26. This has given the Council an increase in show related income (hire fee, booking fee, recharges, merchandise commission and food & beverages (F&B)). There is also an underspend of £83k within the central Cultural Services team which is primarily due to some staff vacancy gaps during the year – Project Officer, Marketing and Fundraising Assistant and a delay in recruiting the Sponsorship Officer and Marketing Manager.	(178)

Group	Service Grouping	Reason for Variance	(Under budget)/ over budget £'000
Communities (cont'd)	Housing Strategy and Advice	There has been an increase in the number of properties being managed by Town Hall Lettings which has increased income, coupled with more focused work on recovering rechargeable repairs and minimising void times, as well as some salary underspend due to long term sickness and a vacant post, which has now been filled.	(160)
Corporate Hub	Central Costs and Recharges	Includes £2.025m one-off compensation income in relation to the impact of the construction of the new A14 on the Crematorium. This has been transferred to earmarked reserves and will be used to fund capital works including mitigating works at the Crematorium. Also includes a one-off underspend of £147k on historic pension deficit contributions due to accounting adjustments. This has been offset by £548k of additional staff costs from across the organisation resulting from an above budgeted pay award and increased NI contributions during 2025/26.	(1,624)
	Customer Service Centre	Includes £87k net underspend in staffing budget as a result of high turnover and unused contingency budget. In Business Support there is a net one-off underspend of £68k as a result of one-off income relating to work undertaken in 2024/25.	(155)
	Housing Benefit Expenditure	The net overspend includes subsidy loss of £346k partly offset by £51k overachievement of overpayment recovery. The main pressure continues to be rent allowance subsidy shortfall where entitlement and payment is not fully reimbursed by DWP due to landlords being charitable entities and not Registered Providers. A budget bid has been included within 2026/27 with the intention of addressing this situation.	270
Corporate Hub	ICT	The £389k net underspend includes £174k unused contingency budget for disaster management, £93k underspend from CDIO (Chief Digital and Information Officer) project, £30k underspend from TVI (Triple Value Impact) consultancy project and £80k underspend related to supplies and services. The supplies and services budget has been adjusted for the 2026/27 financial year to reflect the underspend.	(389)
	Insurance	The overspend includes £339k relating to property and fire insurance claims, £94k for liability claims and £60k for insurance premiums. This has been partially offset by a lower claims result in Motor by £37k.	427

Group	Service Grouping	Reason for Variance	(Under budget)/ over budget £'000
Corporate Hub (contd)	Investment interest and financing costs	No further external borrowing took place in Q4 for the General Fund and this has significantly reduced the interest payable and the Minimum Revenue Provision that needs to be made. As forecast at Q3, there has been increased interest received from loans to the Cambridge Investment Partnership as a result of the drawdown of loans agreed by Full Council in October 2025. Note that £660k of this income has been transferred to the Development Reserve in line with the council's policy to set aside excess amounts for future capital spend. The General Fund also benefits from interest from the HRA on internal borrowing, which has increased this year to avoid more expensive external borrowing for the HRA. In line with the Treasury Management Strategy, it is anticipated that some of this internal borrowing will need to be externalised during 2026/27.	(2,518)
	Legal Services	The underspend of £132k is a result of efficient consumption of legal resource, achieving legal income projections, and underspend due to a vacancy in the Deputy Head of Practice role which is being addressed.	(132)
	Office Buildings	At the Guildhall there was a £104k net underspend on utilities costs due to low building usage, offset by a £56k overspend in business rates following the recent revaluation. There is also a £41k underspend on the Facilities Management team, due to a vacant post.	(117)
	People and Change	Includes a £31k underspend on the Digital and Application Support team as a result of staff vacancy. Recruitment is underway.	(62)
	Recharges to Housing Revenue Account	Underspends on a number of corporate services has seen a corresponding reduction in the recharge to the HRA – essentially this represents the HRA's share of corporate underspends as described elsewhere in this table.	76

Group	Service Grouping	Reason for Variance	(Under budget)/ over budget £'000
Economy and Place	Commercial Property Services	There was negative impact of £1.05m as a result of the updated ground rent calculations for Lion Yard. These showed that previous amounts paid to the council on account were too high, resulting in a downwards adjustment to rental income of around £350k per year for 3 years. The correct position has been reflected in the 2026/27 budget going forwards. This has been offset to some degree by overachievement of income totalling £440k on other commercial and industrial properties, from a variety of factors including rent reviews and new lease completions. In addition, there is overachievement of income from the Park Street Aparthotel (£813k) due to an accounting adjustment in the treatment of the 6-month rent free period upon lease commencement. There is also an underspend of £122k on the Property Services team due to two vacant posts which were proving challenging to recruit.	(325)
	Economy, Energy and Climate Change	The underspend is due to combination of delays in staff recruitment and £81k cost recovery from capital projects for warm homes and retrofit. There have been some recruitment challenges due to the niche market for posts and shortages of suitable candidates. Some posts have had to be re-evaluated as part of new team development planning.	(300)
Planning and Building Control	Greater Cambridge Planning Service	This is largely due having higher planning application income, unbudgeted government grants and other contributions and costs recovered. These are offset by higher employee related costs and supplies and services overspends most of which relate to the grant funded activities.	(57)
Non-service expenditure	Capital expenditure financed from revenue	Includes financing of £142k of historic unfinanced capital expenditure from excess revenue reserves.	127
	Contributions to earmarked funds	Includes two large unbudgeted contributions in respect of variances above - £2.025m A14 compensation and £660k of income from loans to Cambridge Investment Partnership.	2,685
Funding	Business rates and council tax	Primarily due to underachievement of business rates income following significant rating appeals in recent years. This is a technically complex area and work is underway to better understand the reason for the shortfall and any mitigating actions which can be taken.	953

Appendix C – General Fund Revenue Carry Forward Requests

Group	Service Grouping	Underspend (£'000)	Carry Forward Request (£'000)	Reason
Communities	Cultural Services	(195)	17	To carry over funds set aside for the city's 75th anniversary event in July 2026 (already approved by Chief Finance Officer under £50k delegated authority level).
Corporate Hub	Financial Services	(134)	111	To set aside 2025/26 service underspend to cover known and unavoidable pressures associated with external audit assurance build-back programme, with a focus on ensuring a clean audit opinion can be obtained prior to local government reorganisation.
Economy and Place	Development	(116)	100	To carry forward funding received by Homes England in relation to Hartree and not spent by the end of the year – this will support critical work on obtaining vacant possession and then demolition planning at Orwell House and Orwell Furlong.
Economy and Place	Economy, Energy and Climate Change	(414)	114	Amounts committed to the Included Project during 2025/26 but not yet spent during the financial year.
Total GF revenue carry forwards			**342**	

Appendix D – General Fund Capital Outturn 2025/26

Project	Final Budget 2025/26 £'000	Outturn 2025/26 £'000	Carry Forward Request £'000	(Under)/overspend £'000	Commentary
Administrative buildings maintenance	587	416	171	0	Underspend as a result of no planned capital maintenance in 2025/26 - carry forward against future and emerging pressures.
Automation of Bishops Mill sluice gate	90	0	90	0	Contract amendments made in order to commence flood risk assessment on sluice structure. Rephase to 2026/27.
Building Control Software & Hardware	80	11	69	0	The project is still work in progress and at the final stage, we will receive the invoice from the supplier after formal completion of the project.
Cambridge Corn Exchange - infrastructure improvements	78	197	0	119	Due to the length of the project original costs have risen due to inflation and other pressures.
Cambridge Food Distribution Hub at the Meadows Centre	97	39	58	0	Project delayed by complexity with building control and air conditioning plans. Site should be complete and handed over by end of June. Spend likely to go over budget by £25k due to additional professional fees and some additional required works.
CCTV hardware and software update	120	117	0	(3)	Project completed.
Chalk Streams projects in Cambridge	342	342	0	0	Project financed entirely from external grants, CPCA, Anglian Water, etc.
CHUB - community extension to Cherry Hinton library	93	52	0	(41)	Project completed in June 2025.
Clay Farm centre remedial works	1,669	984	685	0	Project funded from Homes England grant, projected completion in the summer of 2026.
Commercial property repair and maintenance	527	173	354	0	Property maintenance project budget to be carried forward. Backlog of outstanding capital works to be completed.
CPCA grant domestic energy efficiency and low carbon heating	905	887	0	(18)	Project is complete and can be closed. Underspend returned to funder as per agreement.
Creation of a new boat pumping station at Stourbridge Common	58	0	58	0	There has been some slippage in the works programme so this budget will need to be rephased into 2026/27.
Cycle parking improvements at Queen Anne Terrace car park	114	111	3	0	The works were completed in October 2025. Another payment (a contracted retention sum) of around £4.5k is due to the contractor in the autumn of 2026.
Decarbonisation works - Abbey pool, Parkside pool, Cherry Hinton village centre	1,156	42	1,114	0	Decarbonisation works to be continued in the new financial year.
Depot Relocation programme to create Operational Hub	3,495	4,767	0	1,272	The overspend for the new Operational Hub came to a total of £1.3 million, caused by delays from external contractors. It is important to note that the original capital bid was made over five years ago, and since then inflationary pressures—particularly in construction, materials, and labour, have significantly increased the cost base for delivery.
Development loan to CIP for Newbury Farm, ATS and Fanshawe	18,500	3,700	14,800	0	The development loan is drawn down as and when it is required, upon submission of cashflow forecasts and valuation certificates.
Development Of land at Clay Farm	804	44	760	0	Project is work in progress. Expenditure recharge is reducing as infrastructure is nearly complete. Keep project open and carry forward budget.
Development of the Civic Quarter	6,417	4,629	1,788	0	Spending on track to September 2026. Planning approved for Guildhall and Corn Exchange. Expect Market Square to be approved July 2026. Working on Business Plans for Cabinet report in autumn 2026.

Project	Final Budget 2025/26 £'000	Outturn 2025/26 £'000	Carry Forward Request £'000	(Under)/overspend £'000	Commentary
East Barnwell new centre	3,449	1,241	2,208	0	East Barnwell General Fund budget consists of building work for the main development scheme (delivering community centre, library and pre-school) and some off-site works (delivering a bowls green and tennis court at Abbey Leisure Centre). The scheme is progressing and will continue in 2026/27.
Eastnet Connect migration	200	133	0	(67)	Underspend as a result of efficient project delivery and underused additional resource.
EIP - Environmental Improvements Programme options	285	69	216	0	There has been some slippage in the works programme so this budget will need to be rephased into 2026/27.
Electric vehicle charging points - taxis	64	45	19	0	Project nearly completed.
Environmental Improvements Programme	73	25	48	0	There has been some slippage in the works programme so this budget will need to be rephased into 2026/27.
Equity loan to CIP for Newbury Farm, ATS and Fanshawe	4,677	4,213	464	0	The development loan is drawn down as and when it is required, upon submission of cashflow forecasts and valuation certificates.
Essential repairs to Jesus Green river bank	845	33	812	0	Drainage engineer currently scoping works which are likely to exceed budget - see separate report to September Cabinet.
Fire management compliance at the Grand Arcade car park	162	61	101	0	Project nearing completion. Rephase to 2026/27.
Food waste policy implementation programme	464	0	464	0	Food waste implementation programme in progress and planned to complete at the end of 2026/27.
ICT & Digital Capabilities	124	0	124	0	£124k underspend as a result of project planning, scoping the solution.
King's Hedges Play Equipment	75	78	0	3	Minor overspend against project budget.
Laptop and desktop replacement	209	177	32	0	£31k underspend is based on actual laptops purchased. This is a laptop replacement programme, will continue for another couple of years.
Loan to CIP to purchase land south of Cambridge	13,527	6,750	6,777	0	One remaining loan instalment to be drawn down in line with planned profile.
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (Owner Occupiers)	404	148	0	(256)	Annual grant allocation from the government. The budget is underspent, as the funding awarded is not matched to number of residents requiring adaptations. There is no requirement to carry forward the remaining budget.
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (Tenants)	404	334	0	(70)	Annual grant allocation from the government. The budget is underspent, as the funding awarded is not matched to number of residents requiring adaptations. There is no requirement to carry forward the remaining budget.
Market Square project	155	1	154	0	This is on hold, pending the outcome of the Civic Quarter project. Should the Civic Quarter project be approved, this project would be incorporated into it. For the time being, the budget has been carried forward.
Meadows Community Hub and Buchan St retail outlet	0	126	0	126	The variance arises from additional professional fees, initially expected to be funded from the HRA but ultimately charged to the General Fund without a contingency budget.
Minor Highway Improvement Programme	106	11	95	0	Commitments with County to be reviewed in 2026/27.
NHS new community room at Abbey Leisure Centre	168	135	33	0	Some fit out works yet to be completed and then 12 month retention monies on hold in case of defects.
Park Street Car Park Development	32,797	13,233	0	(19,564)	The Council spent £19.6 million less than budgeted on the Park Street redevelopment, which opened fully this year, as a result of strong contract management. This project is funded from external borrowing, so the underspend reduces the need to borrow rather than releasing any new resource.
Pathfinder House data centre equipment replacement	110	0	110	(0)	Carry forward to 2026/27.

Project	Final Budget 2025/26 £'000	Outturn 2025/26 £'000	Carry Forward Request £'000	(Under)/overspend £'000	Commentary
Pool and rainwater recovery system	424	0	424	0	The project is scheduled for delivery in 2026/27, the funding mechanism for the grant is administered by South Cambridgeshire District Council.
Purchase of 2 pest control vehicles	84	0	84	0	The purchase of the vans was approved in November 2025, but due to the long lead time - from order to purchasing - the spend will take place in 2026/27.
Purchase of 4 new wood shredders	59	59	0	0	Project completed.
Purchase of a second LGV channel sweeper	180	180	0	0	Project completed.
Recommended maintenance at Abbey pool, Parkside pool and Cherry Hinton village centre	367	98	269	0	Works on the capital upgrades to continue in the new financial year.
Redevelopment of Silver Street Toilets	382	612	0	230	Project completion in early March. Overspend is relating to traffic management from County Council, commodity costs have increased and the project team have been working on the project longer than originally budgeted.
Repairs Assistance (Owner Occupiers)	522	72	450	0	Spend is demand-led - carry forward unspent budget to 2026/27.
Replacement air quality monitoring equipment	81	31	0	(50)	Project fully completed well under budget.
Replacing ride-on lawn mowers	69	69	0	0	Project completed.
Structural Holding Repairs & Lift Refurbishment - Car Parks	82	41	41	0	Project nearing completion. Rephase to 2026/27.
Structural repairs at Cambridge car parks	165	152	13	0	Carry forward unspent amounts against future required repairs.
Sustainable Warmth Grant - Home Upgrade Grant 2	4,638	2,211	0	(2,427)	The original budget was higher than the final grant amount received. This is a fully grant funded project which has now been completed successfully.
Urban Tree Challenge Fund: Priority, people, planting, parks	57	8	49	0	2 years left on the project. Project on course. Rephase to 2026/27
Warm Homes: Local Grant - DESNZ funding	1,834	1,422	412	0	Year 1 of 3 year project with external funding from Government. Unspent budget to be carried forward.
Waste vehicle replacement programme	1,374	42	1,332	0	Waste vehicle replacement programme in progress and planned to complete at the end of 2027/28.
Wetlands at Logan's Meadow LNR	197	204	0	7	Project completed and grant fully claimed from the Combined Authority.
WREN solar project at Waterbeach	1,482	146	1,336	0	WREN project in progress and forecasting to complete at the end of 2026/27.
Section 106 Funded Projects	2,232	1,715	560	(43)	All projects where the S106 monies have not been fully spent are requested to be carried forward.
Other Capital Projects (under £50k budget)	727	399	356	(30)	
Total	**108,386**	**50,785**	**36,933**	**(20,812)**	

Appendix E – Housing Revenue Account Revenue Variances

Budget Line	Service Grouping	Reason for Variance	(Under budget)/ over budget £'000
Income	Dwelling rents	Gross rents are higher than budgeted. This is partly due to new council dwellings being let out to tenants earlier than assumed in the budget. The number of dwellings that are being re-let on the basis of rent flexibility is higher than anticipated with an overall positive impact on rental income.	(541)
	Other rents	Consists of £65k overachievement of income on HRA commercial properties (shops) and £48k overachievement of income on HRA garages following changes to the charging structure.	(113)
	Service charges	Overachievement of £143k on leaseholder service charges which vary depending upon actual costs in line with statutory requirements. Other service charges have overachieved broadly in line with dwelling rents, reflecting the early letting of new dwellings as above.	(212)
	Other income	Includes underachievement of income from the General Fund for shared amenities of £436k following changes to recharge model – this will be investigated and any adjustments made in 2026/27.	506

Budget Line	Service Grouping	Reason for Variance	(Under budget)/ over budget £'000
Expenditure	Repairs and maintenance	This significant additional expenditure is broken down as follows: £2.347m over budget on day-to day repairs. This reflects a deliberate response to increased damp, condensation and mould (DCM) demand. This combines the use of specialist external support to accelerate complex cases with investment in DCM works to support compliance, prevention, and a more robust end-to-end response. This is supported by the addition of two staff to strengthen initial response and operational oversight, along with improved systems and process controls to enable earlier identification, prioritisation and tracking of cases. These changes are improving operational control and supporting ongoing compliance with Awaab's Law. £1.536m overspend on asset management. This is due to Waking Watch arrangements in response to specific fire safety risks. The requirement has now reduced, with ongoing cover confined to a small number of sites. £1.479m overspend on Voids (voids is the term used for properties returned to the Council at the end of a tenancy). This reflects a high volume of voids returned in a poor condition during the year. Additional works were completed while properties were void to improve overall condition and support a more robust standard for re-letting. £1.431m overspend on Client and Third Party Repairs. This is result of a significant increase in insurance-related repair activity during the year, including major fire incidents within HRA properties. Costs relate to emergency response, reinstatement and follow-on works. The position is largely incident-led and therefore partly one-off, although the increasing complexity and value of claims presents an ongoing financial pressure. Actions in place and continuing into 2026/27 focus on strengthening cost recovery processes, improving visibility and control of uninsured expenditure, and targeted investment in compliance, fire safety and preventative measures to reduce future incident risk and associated financial pressures.	6,284

Budget Line	Service Grouping	Reason for Variance	(Under budget)/ over budget £'000
Expenditure (contd)	Repairs and maintenance (contd)	£586k underspend on overheads. Operational experience has provided greater clarity on cost drivers at the new Operational Hub, particularly energy and security, alongside one-off setup costs such as equipment and transitional business rates. This improved understanding has been fully reflected in the 2026/27 budget, ensuring a more accurate and robust financial position going forward.	
	Bad debt provision	Ongoing impact of rent regulation error refunds continues to affect the level of rent arrears and collection rates. Until a resolution is reached with DWP it will not be possible to write-off historic uncollectable arrears, therefore both the level of arrears and provision against these will continue to increase.	575
	Depreciation	Depreciation charges depend solely on the annual stock valuation and are therefore outside of the control of the council. Depreciation charges are transferred to the Major Repairs Reserve and used to fund capital repairs and maintenance within the council's existing housing stock.	393
Non-service expenditure	Net interest cost	Net financing costs are lower than budget due to capital slippage, which has reduced the borrowing requirement in year, along with the fact that the HRA has continued to borrow internally from the General Fund rather than externally. However, General Fund cash is now running low, and it is likely that some borrowing will need to be externalised in 2026/27 – this is taken into account within the HRA Business Plan.	(665)
	Revenue contribution to capital financing	The HRA Business Plan seeks to maximise revenue contributions to capital financing, in order to reduce the need for the HRA to borrow. However, service overspends elsewhere, as described above, mean that less money has been available for capital financing this year. This will have a direct impact on borrowing need, leading to increased interest costs in the future. This will be taken into account when the HRA Business Plan is next refreshed.	(6,423)

Budget Line	**Service Grouping**	**Reason for Variance**	**(Under budget)/ over budget £'000**
Non-service expenditure (contd)	Transfers to/(from) earmarked reserves	This represents amounts transfers to Repairs & Renewals reserves to pay for specific future capital works within the HRA estate.	183

Appendix F – Housing Revenue Account Capital Outturn 2025/26

Project	Final Budget 2025/26 £'000	Outturn 2025/26 £'000	Carry Forward Request £'000	(Under)/overspend £'000	Commentary
Existing stock					
Asbestos Removal	53	343	0	290	Additional work identifed by Property Services pushed the spend above the allocated budget for the year. Future budgets brought forward to cover the extra spend.
Bathrooms	1,215	869	346	0	The variation is due to tenant refusals - to be carried forward to 2026/27.
Capitalised Officer Fees - Decent Homes	540	477	0	(63)	Slight underspend due to underspends on underlying work.
Capitalised Officer Fees - Other HRA Stock Spend	122	91	0	(31)	Slight underspend due to underspends on underlying work.
Central Heating / Boilers	2,226	1,543	683	0	The variation is due to tenant refusals - to be carried forward to 2027/28.
Communal Areas Floor Coverings	107	99	8	0	Carry forward small underspend.
Communal Areas Uplift	103	103	0	0	Timber ceilings to communal areas of flat blocks had to be replaced urgently, as identified as a fire risk by Compliance.
Communal Electrical Installations / Fire Systems / Communal	917	13	904	0	To be carried forward to 2026/2027 for work identified.
Communal Entrance / Enclosure Doors + Glazing	440	105	335	0	To be carried forward to deliver the work programme in 2026/27.
Decent Homes Backlog	5,610	0	5,610	0	This budget has not been used due to other decent homes works taking precedence, therefore the budget will be carried forward.
Decent Homes Planned Maintenance Contractor Overheads	1,797	1,173	624	0	This budget has been spent on the main works in 2025/26, but requires a carry forward to bring the project to completion in 2026/27.
Disabled Adaptions	928	737	191	0	All adult work requested completed for the year. Four children's cases allocated significant monies but unable to proceed in year - carry forward.
Electrical / Wiring	607	328	279	0	The variation is due to tenant refusals - to be carried forward to 2027/28.
Estate Investment	1,072	462	610	0	Some works were carried out, however due to staffing vacancies the planned projects were not developed sufficiently for budget to be spent this year, therefore budget will be carried forward.
External Doors	956	697	259	0	Fire doors not ordered until late in the year due to new specification requirements - carry forward to following year.
Fire Prevention / Fire Safety Works	855	1,190	0	335	Overspend due to additional works identified in year - part funded from underspends on HHSRS budget.
Garage Improvements	107	50	57	0	Work required is under order - carry forward to following year.
Hard surfacing on HRA Land - Health and Safety Works	231	256	0	25	All works completed with slight overspend.
HHSRS	678	254	242	(182)	S20 delays and access issues - outstanding works to be carried forward to 2026/27 with some underspend overall used to fund overspend on fire prevention.
Insulation / Energy Efficiency	8,659	7,977	682	0	Underspend as a result of incomplete works and invoices still to be paid on completion - carry forward.
Kitchens	2,012	1,316	696	0	The variation is due to tenant refusals - to be carried forward to 2026/27.
Lifts and Door Entry Systems	125	4	121	0	To be carried forward to 2026/2027 for work identified.
Local Authority Housing Fund Acquisitions	1,600	1,537	0	(63)	Slight underspend against allocated amount - grant funded.
New Build Decent Homes	2,431	0	2,431	0	This budget has not been utilised as other Decent Homes works have taken priority; therefore, the budget will be carried forward for outstanding works.
Other External Works	408	302	106	0	Carry forward unused budget.

Project	Final Budget 2025/26 £'000	Outturn 2025/26 £'000	Carry Forward Request £'000	(Under)/overspend £'000	Commentary
Other Health and Safety Works	53	0	0	(53)	The overall progress of the HRA capital programme, together with current levels of expenditure, indicates that this contingency budget is unlikely to be utilised next year.
Other Spend on HRA Stock Planned Maintenance Contractor Over	204	279	(75)	0	Some works have been completed ahead of schedule; therefore, the budget is requested to be brought forward from a future year.
PVCu Windows	2,981	1,440	1,541	0	The PVCu windows programme is of a significant scale and has not been fully completed due to access constraints. As a result, the budget will be carried forward.
Roof Covering	2,564	1,457	1,107	0	There was a delay in obtaining pricing for these works, which postponed the start on site; as a result, a carry forward is required.
Roof Structure	320	39	281	0	See roof covering works — to be combined into a single budget in the next financial year.
Sulphate Attacks	109	0	0	(109)	Budget not utlilised this year and no spend is expected in the next financial year.
Wall Structure	1,241	1,312	0	71	Budget fully utlilised this year with some overspend due to additional works.
Other projects <£50k	0	15	0	15	
Total existing stock	**41,271**	**24,468**	**17,038**	**235**	
New build and acquisitions					
Acquisitions & Disposals	10	660	0	650	Two council home buybacks in year.
Fanshawe Road	4,363	4,672	(309)	0	Variance of £309k overspend cas Affordable Housing Payment forecasted for next financial year was brought forward. Expecting total project overspend of approximately £180k in future years.
New Build - ATS, Histon Road	4,440	4,577	(137)	0	Delays in securing planning approval, but project now progressing ahead of schedule.
New Build - Aylesborough Close	3,933	3,293	640	0	Significant delay in entering into PCSA agreements were experienced.
New Build - Colville Road III	215	159	56	0	Retention payment of £196k due next year.
New Build - Davy Road	1,876	3,080	(1,204)	0	Overspend in-year as decanting has progressed quicker than expected - bring forward budget from future years.
New Build - East Barnwell	12,454	10,223	2,231	0	Delays in respect of start on site, but this major redevelopment project is now well underway. The budget unused in 2025/26 will be carried forward to the next financial year.
New Build - Eddeva Park	2,404	5	2,399	0	Significant delays are being experienced on this site as a result of the contractor withdrawing from the project, necessitating a re-tender by This Land.
New Build - Ekin Road	3,481	1,629	1,852	0	Expenditure expected to be broadly in line with budget for whole project - carry forward slippage.
New Build - Fen Road	58	71	0	13	Small invoice for professional fees paid in 2025/26.
New Build - Meadows and Buchan Street	1,134	796	338	0	Total expenditure for 2025/26 less than planned due to compensation from contractor being received earlier than expected.
New Build - Newbury Farm	10,234	10,163	71	0	The initial phases of the development were protracted, but the scheme is now in advanced delivery stage.
New Build - Sackville Close	(74)	30	0	104	Project complete with overspend - negative budget this year was as a result of amounts previously brought forward.
New Build - Unallocated Retained RTB Receipts	673	0	673	0	Kingsway/Arbury Court allocation is included in here - carry forward.
Princess and Hanover	4,535	1,579	2,956	0	Acquisition of leasehold properties slower than forecast due to complex negotiations. Planning submission delayed targeted start on site.
Stanton House	1,833	392	1,441	0	Extended design timeframes due to delivering sheltered accommodation and agreeing specifications with the County Council - carry forward unused budget.
Other projects <£50k	142	134	3	(5)	
Total new build and acquisitions	**51,711**	**41,463**	**11,010**	**762**	

Project	Final Budget 2025/26 £'000	Outturn 2025/26 £'000	Carry Forward Request £'000	(Under)/overspend £'000	Commentary
Other					
Commercial Property	133	0	133	0	Unspent budget to be carried forward to 2026/27.
Inflation Allowance	2,455	0	2,455	0	This budget for inflation was not needed in 2025/26 due to an overall underspend on the capital programme.
Orchard Upgrade	72	2	70	0	The main spend on this project is planned for 2026/27 - carry forward.
Shared Ownership Repurchase	600	0	0	(600)	No repurchases in year - this is demand led.
Other projects <£50k	24	0	24	0	
Total other	**3,284**	**2**	**2,682**	**(600)**	
Total HRA capital programme	**96,266**	**65,933**	**30,730**	**397**	

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TITLE: Development Loan to Cambridge Investment Partnership

To: Cabinet

23 September 2026

Report by:
Jody Etherington, Chief Finance Officer
Tel: 01223 458130 Email: jody.etherington@cambridge.gov.uk

Wards affected:
All

Director Approval: Chief Finance Officer Jody Etherington 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 Cabinet for decision.

1.	**Recommendations**
1.1	It is recommended that the Cabinet: 1. Recommend that Full Council increase the maximum development loan amount to be drawn down by Cambridge Investment Partnership LLP in respect of Newbury Farm, ATS/Murketts Histon Rd, and Fanshawe Road, by £12 million. 2. Recommend that Full Council approves a corresponding increase of £12 million to the total investment counter-party limit with CIP in the Treasury Management Strategy.
2.	**Purpose and reason for the report**
2.1	The council has been approached by representatives of the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) with a request to advance further development loan financing totalling a maximum of £12 million to support the housing schemes currently under development at Newbury Farm, ATS/Murketts Histon Rd, and Fanshawe Road.

2.2	Under the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003, the advancement of loans for capital purposes is to be treated by local authorities as capital expenditure. The council's constitution requires any allocation of council resources to capital purposes in excess of £1 million to be considered by Full Council. Whilst this is usually done as part of the annual budget-setting process, CIP's cash flow projections show that the financing is required in the current financial year, therefore an out-of-cycle decision is required.
3.	**Alternative options considered**
3.1	The council could choose not to advance further loan financing. In these circumstances, there are likely to be two courses of action available to CIP: • Slowing down of development on one or more sites, which will delay the handover of council homes; and/or • Seeking finance from an alternative provider – this may be challenging in the timescales required given the lack of formal credit rating and security over CIP assets already given to the council. As a result of these factors it is also likely that any alternative finance would be at higher interest rates, with a knock-on impact on the return generated by the schemes, of which 50% belongs to the council.
3.2	In addition, if the council chose not to proceed, there would be an opportunity cost to the General Fund. The agreed interest rates receivable on the loans to CIP are higher than the rates that are currently being obtained on the remainder of the council's investment portfolio.
4.	**Background and key issues**
4.1	Cambridge Investment Partnership LLP (CIP) is a 50:50 joint venture arrangement between the council and property developer Hill. The partnership has to date delivered over 700 new council homes within the city. Many of CIP's developments, including the three schemes under consideration in this report, are mixed tenure, meaning that the provision of council homes is supported by the sale of private units on the same

	development.
4.2	In October 2025, Full Council approved the establishment of new development loan facilities totalling £18.5 million from the council to CIP in respect of three ongoing developments at Newbury Farm (£6 million), ATS/Murketts Histon Rd (£7 million) and Fanshawe Road (£5.5 million). Alongside this, Full Council approved an equity investment of £4.7 million, with Hill also putting in an equivalent amount of equity.
4.3	Development on the site is proceeding well, and the equity has now been drawn down along with £11.4 million of development loans.
4.4	The recent and ongoing war in Iran has meant that build cost inflation has increased and sales rates have slowed. Acknowledging this, construction programming has been reviewed and the council's payments for the affordable housing has been reprofiled in line with new handover dates. This, along with a more conservative estimate of sales rates, has led to an increase in the project's cash financing requirement during the development phase.
4.5	There is strong evidence to suggest that the units remain ultimately highly saleable. The Cambridge property market has proved extremely resilient to past economic events, including Covid-19 and recent increases in interest rates. To date, across the three schemes, 20 units have already been sold or reserved.
4.6	CIP have therefore asked for the maximum development loan facilities already in place to be increased by a total of £12 million, to £30.5 million. This breaks down on a scheme-by-scheme basis as £3.9 million for Newbury Farm, £4.5 million for ATS/Murketts Histon Rd, and £3.6 million for Fanshawe Road.
4.7	The amount of £12 million is based upon planned project expenditure of £11.1 million between October and December, rounded up to provide some contingency. This therefore assumes a 3-month delay to sales income. The facility is provided on a flexible drawdown basis – it is in CIP's interest to only drawdown the amount which is actually required to finance the project, therefore the total amount drawn down may in fact be less

	than the maximum should sales proceed at a faster pace.
4.8	The additional amounts would be subject to the same security and protections as the original loans, namely: • A covenant to the effect that the loans are only to be used for the purposes of housing delivery, including regeneration activities, new build development and delivery of affordable housing. • Loans are secured against the assets of CIP and can only be drawn down against capital work-in-progress as certified by the council's employer's agent.
4.9	Other terms and conditions would also remain the same, including the interest rate which is set at 3.50% above the 5-year treasury gilt rate on a quarterly variable basis. This provides sufficient margin to the council to reflect the risk involved and provide some protection against future interest rate movements.
5.	**Corporate plan**
5.1	The recommendation supports the following priorities within the Corporate plan 2022-27: our priorities for Cambridge - Cambridge City Council:- Priority 3: • increasing the delivery of homes, and in particular affordable housing, including council homes, to meet housing need • diversifying the housing market and accelerating housing delivery • working with key partners to innovate and maximise available resources Priority 4: • run our services in an efficient way, generating income where appropriate to reinvest into other council services
6.	**Consultation, engagement and communication**
6.1	Specialist external tax and legal advice was sought upon agreement of the original loan

	facilities which confirms the council's approach to setting interest rates. In addition, development scheme approvals were subject to the usual consultation and planning process.
7.	**Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact**
7.1	The primary purpose of advancing loans to CIP is to facilitate the development of housing within the city, including affordable housing. There is a secondary benefit in respect of additional interest income to the General Fund, and the development profit generated by CIP, of which 50% also accrues to the General Fund.
8.	**Implications**
	Relevant risks
8.1	As with any loan there is an inherent risk of default on repayments – however this is significantly mitigated by the loan security, requirement for drawdown to be against certified work-in-progress, and the council's 50% participation in the CIP joint venture.
	Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)
8.2	The loan agreements contain a specific provision for the loans to be transferred to a successor authority in the case of local government reorganisation.
	Financial Implications
8.3	The loans are likely to generate additional interest income for the General Fund. This is hard to quantify as the exact timing and amounts of drawdowns under the facility are unknown. The loans are advanced at a margin of approximately 2.70% above Public Works Loan Board rates, which provides some protection for the council even should it need to borrow to fund future drawdowns.
	Legal Implications

8.4	Legal advice supports the council's approach to both facilitation of loan and applicable interest rates.
	Equalities and socio-economic Implications
8.5	The loans will facilitate the provision of social housing within the city which will have positive socio-economic implications.
	Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications
8.6	The housing to be supported by the loans will be delivered to 'Cam Standard', which exceeds minimum energy efficiency requirements and therefore supports the council's environmental objectives.
	Procurement Implications
8.7	None.
	Community Safety Implications
8.8	None.
9.	**Background documents** Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
9.1	Establishment of new loan facilities for Cambridge Investment Partnership – report to Cabinet, September 2025
	To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Jody Etherington, Chief Finance Officer, tel: 01223 458130, email: jody.etherington@cambridge.gov.uk

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CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

REPORT TITLE: Proportionality Update

To:
Council (1 October 2026)

Report by:
Dan Kalley, Head of Governance and Democracy (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Email: dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk

Wards affected:
All

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.

1. Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that Council notes the change in proportionality following the Green Group now having 13 seats on the Council.

2. Purpose and reason for the report

2.1 Council to note the changes in political composition of the Council and the proportionality on committee seats.

3. Background and key issues

3.1 The allocation of seats on local authority committees is subject to statutory political balance requirements. These requirements are principally set out in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

The purpose of the legislation is to ensure that, where councillors are divided into different political groups, the composition of committees reflects, as far as reasonably practicable, the political composition of the Council as a whole. This provides political groups with representation on committees broadly proportionate to their representation on the Council.

Statutory requirements

Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 places a duty on a relevant local authority to review the representation of political groups on committees and other bodies to which the political balance provisions apply. The review must take place, amongst other circumstances, at or as soon as practicable after the Council's annual meeting and following changes in the political composition of the authority.

Allocation of seats

Once Council has determined the allocation of seats to political groups, Section 16 of the 1989 Act requires the authority to exercise its appointment powers so as to give effect to that allocation. Where a seat has been allocated to a particular political group, the authority must give effect to the wishes of that group as to the person appointed to the seat.

3.2 With the Green Group now having 13 seats on the Council, up from 12 the proportionality of seats has been reviewed and the Green Group is therefore entitled to one further seat, which based on proportionality is on the Planning Committee. The Group have therefore increased their representation on the committee from 2 to 3.

At the Annual Council meeting Council agreed to depart unanimously from proportionality by allowing one seat on the Planning Committee to go to the then Your Party representative who was un-aligned. As this is no longer the case the seat by terms of proportionality is taken by the Green Group under the strict proportionality rules.

To note the Services, Climate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee increased to 10 seats and this seat was given to the non-aligned Conservative Councillor as part of the unanimous agreement of Council.

4. Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact

4.1 Proportionality rules apply and the seat on Planning Committee is now allocated to the Green Group.

5. Implications

Relevant risks

5.1 None.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

5.2 None.

Financial Implications

5.3 None.

Legal Implications

5.4 Proportionality rules applied by virtue of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Equalities and socio-economic Implications

5.5 None.

Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications

5.6 None.

Procurement Implications

5.7 None.

Community Safety Implications

5.8 None.

6. Background documents

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

6.1 None.

7. Appendices

7.1 None.

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Dan Kalley, Head of Governance and Democracy (Deputy Monitoring Officer), email: dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk