Cambridge City Council

Services, Climate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: Thursday, 19 November 2026

Time: 5.30 pm

Venue: Byron and Chaplen Rooms - Clay Farm Centre, Hobson Square, Hobson Ave, Cambridge, CB2 9FN

Contact: democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk tel:01223 457000

Agenda

1	Apologies	
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3	Minutes	(Pages 3 - 8)
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Services, Climate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Members: Glasberg (Chair), Martinelli (Vice-Chair), Davey, Davison, Gardiner-Smith, Haithcock, Hauk, Hossain, Sage and Swift

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

SERVICES, CLIMATE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

21 September 2026
5.30 - 8.45 pm

Present: Councillors Glasberg (Chair), Martinelli (Vice-Chair), Davey, Davison, Gardiner-Smith, Haithcock, Hauk, Hossain, Sage and Swift

Officers:
Sam Scharf, Communities Director
Keryn Jalli, Strategic Resettlement and Community Equity Lead
James Goddard, Democratic Services Officer
Justin Long, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Officer

Other councillors in attendance:
Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Leader of the Council
Councillor Martin Smart, Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Space and City Services
Councillor Jacqui Whitmore

Joining Remotely:
Alistair Wilson, Assistant Director Public Realm & Environment
Robert Martyr, Project Lead - Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project
Rachel Veysey, Drainage and Flood Resilience Manager
Heather Jones, Deputy Director Planning and Building Quality
Guy Belcher, Biodiversity Manager
Jonathan Dixon, Planning Policy Manager
Councillor Rosy Moore, Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

During the meeting, the Chair used their discretion to alter the order of agenda items. For ease, the below minutes follow the order of the published agenda.

26/1/SC&C Apologies

It was noted that since the publication of the agenda there had been a change to the membership of the Committee with Cllr Swift replacing Cllr Griffin.

26/2/SC&C Declarations of Interest

Cllr Davey declared an interest in Item 6 as a member of the Friends of Logan's Meadow.

26/3/SC&C Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2026 were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman.

26/4/SC&C Public Questions

There were no public questions.

26/5/SC&C Equity Strategy Update

The Committee considered the emerging Equity Strategy and the engagement undertaken with residents and community organisations.

The Committee was invited to provide feedback on:

- The engagement methodology and themes identified.
- Areas where the Council could have the greatest impact.
- How the Council could use its position to leverage systemic change.

During discussion, Members:

- Welcomed the engagement approach and supported the emphasis on lived experience and working through trusted community organisations.
- Highlighted the importance of the Council acting as a visible leader and champion for inclusion, equality and diversity, particularly where Full Council had previously adopted resolutions on such matters.
- Suggested that communications should form a key part of the strategy, especially in terms of articulating the Council's values and commitment to equity.
- Discussed the need for information and services to be available in accessible formats, including alternative languages and formats suitable for people with differing literacy levels and disabilities.

- Emphasised that equity should be embedded throughout all Council services and policies rather than treated as a separate area of work.
- Discussed the role of planning and housing functions in reducing inequality and supporting marginalised communities.
- Recognised the value of both quantitative and qualitative measures in evaluating the success of the strategy, acknowledging that some outcomes, such as trust, belonging and community confidence, may be difficult to measure through traditional performance indicators.
- Welcomed that proposed action plans would include clear objectives, measures of success and baseline information where appropriate.
- Discussed the importance of improving access to English language provision and the role this can play in supporting inclusion and access to services.
- Highlighted the need to ensure both existing and new communities benefit from investment, community facilities and opportunities.
- Noted the importance of community spaces, informal support networks and local places where residents can access information, support and services without formal appointments.

Members noted that while some issues raised during the consultation (such as transport) fell outside the Council's direct control, the Council had an important leadership, convening and influencing role.

The Committee endorsed the overall direction of the proposals and welcomed the opportunity to provide input at an early stage in the development of the strategy.

26/6/SC&C River Cam, Chalk Streams and Tributaries

The Committee considered a report submitted in response to the resolution of Full Council regarding the River Cam, its chalk streams and tributaries.

In introducing the item, the Chair noted that the Rights of the River motion had been unanimously approved by Full Council and highlighted the distinction between the rights contained within the motion and the Council's aspirations to achieve those rights through practical action.

The Committee welcomed the comprehensive nature of the report and the breadth of activity being undertaken by the Council and its partners.

During discussion, Members:

- Sought clarification regarding the strategic leadership and governance arrangements for river and water management, particularly the role and remit of the Water Scarcity Group.

- Received an update on the work of the Water Scarcity Group, including its role in bringing together key stakeholders to address water resource challenges, support sustainable growth and develop long-term solutions relating to water supply and water efficiency.

- Raised concerns regarding future water availability, water scarcity and the long-term resilience of water supplies within Greater Cambridge.

- Discussed water recycling schemes and barriers presented by current national regulations, specifically at the Eddington development where recycled ‘grey water’ cannot be used for drinking due to current drinking water regulations.

- Discussed the impact of abstraction, climate change, pollution and agricultural runoff on the River Cam and the wider chalk stream network.

- Highlighted the importance of chalk streams as internationally significant habitats and discussed opportunities for enhanced protection including the current Private Members Bill on the subject.
- Welcomed the progress made through the Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project and the transition towards a coordinated city-wide chalk stream restoration programme.

- Recognised the positive outcomes achieved through restoration projects including Logan's Meadow and Hobson's Brook, particularly in relation to habitat enhancement, water quality improvements and community engagement.

- Considered proposals relating to the Jesus Green River Wall and discussed the reasons for the increased project costs following detailed engineering and site investigations.

- Expressed some concern regarding the financial position of the Conservators of the River Cam and questioned the future funding of repair works to Jesus Green Lock.

- Supported continued partnership working with statutory agencies, environmental organisations, local communities and academic institutions.

Members requested that:

- Additional information referred to within the report be circulated to Committee Members including the water supply documents in the Greater Cambridge Local Plan and Water Resource plans from Cambridge Water and Water Resources East.

- A representative of the Water Scarcity Group be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to provide a detailed update on progress and future plans.

- The Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Space and City Services write to Government regarding regulatory barriers affecting water recycling schemes.

The Cabinet Member welcomed the Committee's comments and reiterated the importance of the River Cam to the city's environment, biodiversity, recreation, heritage and identity as well as noting that many of the current challenges stemmed from the privatisation of the water industry in the 1980s.

The Committee **Resolved** unanimously to endorse the recommendations contained within the report that will be considered by Cabinet on 23 September 2026.

26/7/SC&C Work Programme

The Committee considered the forthcoming work programme.

Members noted that an update on the Herbicide-Free Weed Management Programme would be presented to the November meeting and welcomed the opportunity to review progress since the matter was last considered. The Chair also advised that an officer briefing would be sought in advance of the meeting.

The Committee discussed future consideration of cultural matters and agreed that these could be more appropriately explored through a Task and Finish Group.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm

CHAIR

Agenda Item 5

Herbicide-Free Weed Management: Response to Council Motion and Next Steps

To: Services, Climate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (19 November 2026)
Report by: Alistair Wilson, Assistant Director, Public Realm and Environment
Email: alistair.wilson@cambridge.gov.uk

Wards affected: All

Director Approval: James Elms confirms that the report author has sought the advice of all appropriate colleagues and given due regard to that advice; and that they are content for the report to be put to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

1.	**Introduction**
1.1	**Remit and purpose.** This item provides scrutiny of the Council's implementation of its herbicide-free weed management policy and the proposed response to the Council motion. The Committee is asked to examine delivery, risks and the proposed programme of evidence gathering, and to make recommendations. **Scrutiny functions.** Holding the Executive to Account; Policy Development or Review; Performance Monitoring. **Next steps.** A further report is proposed for 4 February 2027. The budget timetable requires parallel development of provisional financial options before that meeting.
2.	**Recommendations for Scrutiny**
2.1	**a.** Note progress and operational challenges in delivering the approved 2025 Herbicide-Free Weed Management Work Programme and the proposed response to the Council motion. **b.** Support the independent Integrated Weed Management Audit, operational equipment demonstration, online all-member briefing, engagement with Pesticide Free Cambridge and learning from other authorities, including Edinburgh and Brighton. **c.** Support development of a transparent, risk-based prioritisation framework, service standards and performance reporting, with immediate safety and accessibility concerns continuing to be addressed. **d.** Recommend that the Executive Councillor and officers, with Finance, place a provisional budget pressure or marker into the current 2027/28 budget-setting process, separately identifying potential one-off recovery and recurring maintenance requirements, without prejudging the review or approving expenditure.

	e. Note that the next scheduled scrutiny meeting on 4 February 2027 is too late to initiate a budget proposal; request that Finance, Legal and Democratic Services confirm the appropriate interim Executive decision route and deadlines. **f.** Request a further report on 4 February 2027 setting out findings, the comparison of options, recommended delivery model, financial implications and revised programme.
3.	**Attendees**
3.1	Assistant Director, Public Realm and Environment; Operational lead – Don Blair; Finance representative TBC.
4.	**Background and key issues**
4.1	**Purpose.** This report sets out the Council's response to the motion on herbicide-free weed management. It provides an interim position and a structured route to informed recommendations, rather than seeking approval now for a particular equipment, staffing or financial solution. **Policy background.** The Council declared a Biodiversity Emergency in 2019, supported a herbicide-free trial in two wards in 2021 and approved a city-wide Herbicide-Free Weed Management Work Programme in 2025. The commitment to ending routine herbicide use on City Council-managed land remains unchanged. The contribution of Pesticide Free Cambridge, On the Verge and other partners is recognised. **Operational experience.** The transition from chemical treatment to mechanical and manual removal is not a like-for-like substitution. Intensive initial work includes removing established vegetation and accumulated detritus, while subsequent maintenance requires repeat interventions. Seasonal growth, leaf-fall redeployment, weather, parked vehicles, narrow access, street furniture, equipment availability and surface condition all affect productivity. The programme has required specialist equipment and dedicated operational capacity. **Delivery evidence.** Officers are consolidating the planned-versus-delivered programme, initial treatments completed, remaining backlog by ward and risk, treatment productivity, staffing and equipment availability, complaints and service requests. A verified ward-by-ward position and financial baseline are not yet available for inclusion in this interim report and will be supplied through the review. Existing operational activity continues, with priority for safety, accessibility, drainage and infrastructure risks. **Independent audit.** An independent Integrated Weed Management Audit has been commissioned. The proposed scope covers site conditions, operational data, compliance and risk, financial and productivity assessment, asset protection and future equipment or treatment options. Officers will test its findings against local evidence and

	will retain responsibility for any recommendations. The specimen audit supplied with the proposal is illustrative, not evidence of Cambridge's performance. **Member and stakeholder engagement.** Officers propose a demonstration of mechanical and manual equipment and an online briefing for all councillors, including operational evidence and an opportunity to question the service. Pesticide Free Cambridge will be invited to provide environmental and policy context. Engagement should help establish realistic expectations while ensuring that residents' safety and access concerns are heard. **Learning from other authorities.** The review will examine practice elsewhere, particularly Edinburgh and Brighton, and test what is transferable to Cambridge in terms of treatment methods, scheduling, repeat cycles, resident communication, workforce requirements and whole-life costs. Contact with Brighton and Pesticide Action Network is already an identified programme action; the Edinburgh comparison will be developed. No unverified claims are made here about the outcomes achieved by those councils. **National sector evidence.** APSE's October 2026 survey of glyphosate and integrated weed management reports that only 5% of responding authorities had completely eliminated glyphosate; 84% cited effectiveness of alternatives as a barrier and 66% cited cost. Of respondents, 42% reported much higher costs and 21% slightly higher costs for alternatives. Only 41% reported monitoring effectiveness. These are survey responses rather than a direct benchmark of Cambridge and support the need for robust local evaluation. **Future service standards.** A proposed risk-based framework will prioritise obstruction and accessibility, safety, drainage, transport routes and protection of infrastructure, while allowing some vegetation where it presents no material risk. The review will develop measurable service standards, response times, planned treatment frequencies and transparent reporting of initial and repeat work. Responsibilities between the City Council, County Council and other landowners, including any additional costs of County Council verge work, will be clarified. **Options appraisal.** Officers will distinguish a non-recurring recovery programme to address established growth and detritus from the recurring maintenance required thereafter. Options will include continuing within existing resources with improved scheduling, targeted temporary capacity, additional equipment or specialist support, and different maintenance frequencies. They will be compared on deliverability, effectiveness, safety, environmental outcomes, workforce implications and whole-life costs. **Budget marker.** The 2027/28 budget setting process is already underway. Officers therefore propose that Finance records a provisional, uncommitted financial pressure now, separated into one-off recovery and recurring maintenance components. Figures should be based on initial operational assumptions and ranges, refined by the audit and options appraisal. A marker is not a spending approval, does not guarantee funding and

	does not predetermine the preferred delivery model. The affordability and any offsetting savings or competing priorities remain matters for the budget process. **Decision route.** The Committee considers this interim report on 19 November 2026. During late November and December, officers will progress the audit, operational analysis, member engagement and provisional costings. Finance, Legal and Democratic Services will confirm the budget submission deadline and whether a scheduled Cabinet decision, authorised Executive decision or other constitutionally compliant route is needed during December or January. The further scrutiny report on 4 February 2027 will review the evidence and proposed delivery programme; it must not be the first point at which a potential 2027/28 funding requirement is identified. **Communications and accountability.** A resident-facing statement will explain responsibilities, service priorities, seasonal regrowth, realistic standards and how urgent concerns are reported. Performance information will cover planned and completed initial treatments, repeat visits, backlog, complaints, costs and operational learning. An action-by-action response to the motion is provided at Appendix 1. **Conclusion.** The Council's environmental commitment is established. The task is to develop a safe, effective, transparent and financially sustainable delivery model. The proposed audit, engagement, comparative learning and early budget marker allow evidence-led recommendations without losing the opportunity to address a potential funding requirement in 2027/28.
5.	**Corporate Plan**
5.1	The Herbicide-Free Weed Management Programme supports the Council's Corporate Plan 2022–2027, particularly its commitments to responding to the climate and biodiversity emergencies, creating a sustainable city and delivering high-quality public services. The programme directly contributes to the Council's priority of responding to the climate crisis and protecting and enhancing biodiversity, by reducing reliance on chemical herbicides and supporting more environmentally sustainable approaches to managing streets, parks and public spaces. It also supports the objectives of the Council's Biodiversity Strategy. The programme contributes to building a sustainable city for all by seeking to maintain safe, accessible and attractive streets and public spaces. The proposed review recognises the importance of balancing environmental ambitions with the needs of residents, particularly those who may be disproportionately affected by vegetation obstructing footways and other public infrastructure. The review also supports the Council's commitment to leading a well-run council that works for and with local communities. The independent audit, operational assessment, engagement with councillors and community organisations, and learning from other

	local authorities will inform an evidence-led approach to service improvement and the effective use of public resources. The proposed assessment of recovery costs, recurring maintenance requirements and alternative delivery methods will help ensure that the Council's environmental commitments are supported by a financially sustainable and deliverable service model. Overall, the proposed approach seeks to strengthen the Council's ability to deliver its established environmental objectives while maintaining public confidence in the quality, accessibility and management of Cambridge's public realm.
6.	**Implications and Risks**
6.1	**Financial.** A provisional pressure is proposed but no expenditure is authorised by this report. Finance must confirm the budget timetable, assumptions and affordability; recurring and non-recurring requirements must be separated. **Legal and governance.** Scrutiny makes recommendations but does not approve the budget. Executive delegations, key-decision requirements, publication and consultation obligations must be checked before any interim decision. **Equality and accessibility.** The prioritisation framework should give particular attention to footway obstruction and access for disabled residents and others with mobility needs; any revised standards should be equality assessed. **Environmental and carbon.** The herbicide-free policy supports environmental aims, but machinery, transport, disposal and alternative treatment methods have different environmental and carbon impacts requiring appraisal. **Workforce, procurement and community safety.** Review manual handling, vibration, traffic management, equipment safety, maintenance, training, procurement lead times and urgent obstruction reporting. Risks include an unmanaged backlog, unclear ownership, unaffordable recurring commitments and weak performance data.
	Principal mitigation: continue risk-based operational interventions; validate ward-level information; complete independent audit and options appraisal; involve Finance, Legal, Democratic Services and partner landowners before final decisions.
7.	**Background documents** Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
7.1	Council motion on herbicide-free weed management 1st October 2026. The approved 2025 Herbicide-Free Weed Management Work Programme; APSE, Glyphosate and Integrated Weed Management: Where do local authorities stand?, Briefing 26/70 (October 2026);

8.	**Appendices**
8.1	Appendix 1 – Motion response and delivery tracker (attached below).

Appendix 1 – Response to Council motion

Interim action tracker for 19 November 2026. Status and target dates remain subject to confirmation with service leads.

Motion requirement	Action	Output	Position
Reaffirm policy commitment	Confirm continued end to routine herbicide use; explain biodiversity objectives	Current policy reaffirmed	Ongoing
2025 planned versus actual delivery	Validate ward-by-ward programme, completed work, variances and reasons	Delivery reconciliation	In progress
Backlog by ward and priority	Compile remaining first treatments, access and risk categories	Ward-level backlog register	In progress
Staffing, equipment and capacity	Model existing and required capacity; test productivity and whole-life costs	Resource and cost appraisal	In progress
Repeat cycles, seasonal and access constraints	Record seasonal effects, parked vehicles and realistic revisit frequencies	Treatment frequency model	In progress
County Council and landowners	Clarify ownership, coordination and verge-cutting costs	Responsibilities and costs statement	To develop
Non-recurring recovery options	Cost targeted backlog clearance scenarios	Recovery options appraisal	To develop

Motion requirement	Action	Output	Position
Recurring maintenance options	Cost sustainable maintenance scenarios and standards	Recurring options appraisal	To develop
Risk-based framework	Set safety, access, drainage and infrastructure priorities and response targets	Prioritisation framework	To develop
New methods and external learning	Independent audit, equipment demonstration, Edinburgh/Brighton benchmarking	Audit and comparative learning	Underway/planned
2027/28 budget implications	Submit provisional marker now; distinguish one-off and recurring; refine with Finance	Budget pressure and decision route	Immediate action
Public information and performance	Publish responsibilities and reporting routes; track completed and repeat work, requests and costs	Resident statement and dashboard	To develop
Return to scrutiny	Bring findings, costed options and revised programme	4 February 2027 report	Scheduled/proposed

Agenda Item 6

REPORT TITLE: Cultural Events Task and Finish Group

To: Services, Climate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (19 November 2026)

Report by:
Justin Long, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Officer
Email: justin.long@cambridge.gov.uk

Wards affected:
All

1.	**Introduction**
1.1	**Remit and purpose.** This item recommends creating a Task and Finish Group on the Cultural Events Programme. **Scrutiny functions.** Holding the Executive to Account; Policy Development or Review; Performance Monitoring. **Next steps.** It is recommended that the proposed Task and Finish Group reports back to the Committee with its final recommendations at the 11 March 2027 meeting.
2.	**Recommendations for Scrutiny**
2.1	It is recommended that the Committee: 1. Consider and approve the attached scoping document (Appendix 1). 2. Decide on membership of the proposed Task and Finish Group.

3.	**Background and key issues**
3.1	Cultural events were identified by Members as a potential scrutiny topic following the SCC Committee's informal discussion on future work programming in June. Following discussions with the Chair, Vice-Chair and relevant officers, it is proposed that the review be undertaken through a Task and Finish Group.
3.2	The topic is considered particularly suited to a Task and Finish approach as it will require detailed evidence gathering, engagement with stakeholders and consideration of longer-term policy options which would be difficult to accommodate within a single committee meeting.
3.3	The Constitution outlines the role of Task and Finish Groups at Cambridge City Council: *5.16. Task and Finish Groups* • *5.16.1 Task and Finish Groups may be set up by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees to carry out detailed work in relation to specific topics or issues. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees will decide what Task and Finish Groups are set up and what their terms of reference will be. These will include deciding the membership of the group and the proposed dates of reporting to the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.* • *5.16.2 Only one Task and Finish Group should be set up at any one time for each Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a maximum of two Task and Finish Groups per year across both Committees.* • *5.16.3 Task and Finish Groups are informal bodies and will have no decision making powers and will report to the parent Overview and Scrutiny Committee.* • *5.16.4 Task and Finish Groups will keep the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee informed of their progress. They will produce a report for consideration by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the end of the review.*

3.4	The Committee is asked to set up a Task and Finish Group on Cultural Events with the remit and reporting dates as outlined in the Scoping Document, and the membership to be agreed at the meeting.
3.5	There is no prescribed membership number for a Task and Finish Group. In determining membership, Members may wish to consider political balance, interest in the subject matter and maintaining a group of a size that can work effectively.
4.	**Corporate Plan, Implications and Risks**
4.1	Please see Scoping Document.
5.	**Background documents** Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
5.1	None
6.	**Appendices**
6.1	Appendix 1 - Scoping Document

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Appendix - Scoping Document – Task and Finish Group (Cultural Events)

Review Topic (Name of review)	Cultural Events
Type of Review	Task and Finish Group
Initial suggestion	Topic was suggested by Cllr Anthony Martinelli following the informal meeting of the SCC committee in June 2026.
Key Lines of Enquiry	The Group will consider the Council-run portfolio of cultural events and the following issues: (i) What should be the identity and strategic vision of the Council's cultural events programme? (ii) What role should the Council play in delivering or enabling cultural events, including through the use of its open spaces? (iii) How should the Council balance cultural, community and economic objectives, including the long-term financial sustainability of its programme?
In Scope	Council-organised events, events directly commissioned by the Council, use of Council-owned open spaces and the Council's role in enabling cultural events delivered by others.
Excluded from Scope	Infrastructure, Local Plan policy matters, s106 agreements or detailed operational management of individual events.
Timescales	To complete work and present recommendations within this civic year.
Provisional Timetable	19 November ’26 SCC – agree scoping document and membership December ’26 – February ‘27 – meetings of the Group 11 March SCC ‘27 – present final report and recommendations to SCC.
Terms of Reference	To review the Council's approach to cultural events, including strategic identity and objectives, use of public spaces, and financial model, and to make recommendations to support a successful and financially appropriate programme.

What primary/new evidence is needed?	TBC – could include evidence from residents, event organisers, arts and cultural organisations, local businesses, and relevant councillors and officers as well as the work of other comparable local authorities.

What secondary/ existing information is needed?	TBC – could consider the existing Cultural Strategy, attendance figures, relevant financial information, event evaluations as well as evidence from other local authorities.
Relevant briefings and site visits	TBC
Other work being undertaken/Relevant Corporate Links	The review supports the objectives of the Council's Cultural Strategy by considering the future role, purpose and sustainability of the city's cultural events programme.
Risks	Availability and capacity of officers and any external contributors. Any (re-emerging) LGR priorities or implications. The timing of the review may limit its ability to influence the 2027/28 budget.

WHO DO WE NEED TO CONTRIBUTE/CONSULT?

Relevant Portfolio Holder(s)	Cabinet Member for Communities
Key ECC Officers	Sam Scharf, Director of Communities
Partners and service users	These could include: cultural organisations, event organisers, community groups, local businesses and residents.

WHAT RESOURCES DO WE NEED?

Lead Member and Membership	Cllr Anthony Martinelli plus membership to be determined at 19 November SCC.
Co-optee's (if any)	None
Lead Scrutiny Officer/Other	Justin Long, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Officer

WHO ARE WE DIRECTING ANY RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS TO?

Recommendations to (key decision makers)**:**	SCC and then to Cabinet / Cabinet Member
Reporting arrangements	To SCC in March 2027 (provisionally)
Follow-up arrangements	TBC

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/NOTES

REPORT TITLE: Work Programme Update

To:
Services, Climate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (19th November 2026)

Report by:
Justin Long, Senior Overview and Scrutiny Officer justin.long@cambridge.gov.uk

Wards affected:
All

1.	**Introduction**
1.1	This report presents the current work programme of the Committee following the informal meeting in June 2026. Scrutiny should be a member-led process, and it is the role of committee members to decide which items they would like to add to the work programme. When thinking about potential topics, it is suggested that members consider the **PAPER** mnemonic: **P**ublic Interest – is this a matter of interest / relevance to residents? **A**bility to Change – is this an area where scrutiny can have a meaningful impact? **P**erformance – is this an area where the council or local service providers are underperforming or one where there is a policy gap? **E**xtent – does the item effect the whole – or a large part – of the district? **R**eplication – is scrutiny replicating work going on elsewhere or is it an issue that has recently been considered by the committee? Members should also think about the core functions of scrutiny: Holding the Executive (Cabinet) to Account, Policy Development and Review, Performance Monitoring and External Scrutiny.

2.	**Recommendations for Scrutiny**
2.1	It is recommended that the Committee 1. Agree the current work programme (**Appendix 1**) and suggest any additional topics ideas for inclusion.
3.	**Next Steps**
3.1	If the Committee decide to add an item to the work programme, the Senior Overview and Scrutiny Officer will work with the Chair to agree the appropriate format e.g. committee item, written update, Task & Finish Group.
4.	**Corporate Plan**
4.1	The work programme supports a robust scrutiny function that is central to the governance process and the delivery of the priorities outlined in the Plan. Corporate plan 2022-27: our priorities for Cambridge - Cambridge City Council
5.	**Appendix**
5.1	Appendix 1 - Current Work Programme

Services, Climate and Communities OSC Work Programme – November 2026

Provisional Date	Topic Title	Lead Contact / Cabinet Member	Purpose and Target Outcomes
19 November	Herbicide-Free Weed Management Programme	Assistant Director – Public Realm and Environment / Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Spaces and City Services	To receive an update and proposed next steps following the Motion to Council
19 November	Cultural Events	Senior Overview and Scrutiny Officer	To consider the establishment of a Task & Finish Group

Additional Items (to be scoped and added to the Work Programme)

- Climate Change Strategy – performance (to include update on Extreme Heat / SWEP)
- ASB Enforcement
- Open Spaces
- Herbicide-Free Weed Management (follow-up to the November meeting)
- Water Scarcity Group Update – all-member briefing being organised

Committee Remit

The Services, Climate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for the scrutiny of the following Cabinet portfolios:

- Climate Action and Environment
- Communities
- Nature, Open Space & City Services
- Inclusive Economy and Skills

In addition, the Committee is responsible for scrutiny of crime and disorder strategies, safeguarding and RIPA.

Meeting Dates

21 September 2026, 19 November 2026, 4 February 2026, 11 March 2027

Please contact Justin Long (Senior Overview and Scrutiny Officer) justin.long@cambridge.gov.uk for more information.