



Cambridge City Council

Notice of Council

Date: Monday, 1 June 2026

Time: 6.00 pm

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

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

This meeting is the continuation of the adjourned meeting of Thursday 21 June 2026. The meeting will start from agenda item 10.

Agenda

- 10 Election of Leader of the Council (Pages 5 - 8)
- 11 Notification of Cabinet Member Portfolios
- 12 Appointments to Committee Places and Chairs/Vice-Chairs of Committee's
Final report to follow Civic Affairs & Audit Committee meeting.
- 13 Appointments to outside bodies & working groups
Final report and appendices to follow.
- 14 Municipal Meeting Calendar 2026/27 (Pages 9 - 14)
- 15 To Consider recommendations from Committees
- 16 Civic Affairs & Audit Committee - Constitutional Updates (Pages 15 - 46)
- 17 Civic Affairs & Audit Committee - Annual Civic Affairs & Audit Committee report (Pages 47 - 66)
- 18 Employment Committee - Termination agreement over £100k (Pages 67 - 72)

The public is likely to be excluded during any discussion on the confidential report by virtue of paragraph(s) 1,2,3 & 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

19 To note the officer decision - Capital Budget -
Demolition of Council Owned Buildings (Pages 73 - 76)

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.

Information for the public

The public may record (e.g. film, audio, tweet, blog) meetings which are open to the public.

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- Website: <http://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk>
- Email: democratic.services@cambridge.gov.uk
- Phone: 01223 457000

This Meeting will be live streamed to the Council's YouTube page. You can watch proceedings on the livestream or attend the meeting in person.

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REPORT TITLE: Election of Leader of the Council

To: Full Council 21 May 2026

Report by: Dan Kalley, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Email: dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk

Wards affected: All

Director Approval: the Chief Executive 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 Council for decision.

1. Recommendations

1.1 The Council is asked to:

Elect the Leader of the Council in line with the Localism Act 2011 and the Council Constitution until the day of the Annual Meeting of the Council in the year their term of office ends or until:

- death or disqualification;
- resignation from the office; or
- removal from office by resolution of the Council.

2. Purpose and reason for the report

2.1 To consider the election of a new Leader of the Council in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's Constitution. This will likely be for a period of two years until April 2028, when Cambridge City Council will be dissolved and a new unitary authority is

expected to take on its, and other authorities, powers and functions in line with the governments proposed timetable for Local Government Reorganisation.

3. Alternative options considered

3.1 The Council will need to appoint a Leader in order to discharge the functions of the Executive. If the council does not appoint a Leader, the Council risks not being able to fulfil its executive arrangements as prescribed by the Local Government Act 2000, which could affect decisions that need to be taken on behalf of the Council and its residents.

4. Background and key issues

4.1 Following the election held on Thursday 7 May 2026 the Council is now in a position where it needs to appoint a Leader from amongst its numbers in order for the governance of the Council to continue. A proposer and seconder for any nomination will be required in order for the Council to vote on such a proposal.

4.2 The Localism Act 2011 updated the existing legislation relating to the appointment of a Leader within the Cabinet model of Executive arrangements by making amendments to the Local Government Act 2000, which have the effect of allowing a Leader to be appointed for a period determined by the Council's Constitution, Article 7.3:

The Leader will be a Councillor elected to the position by the Council and will remain as Leader until the day of the Annual Meeting of the Council in the year their term of office ends or until:

- death or disqualification;*
- resignation from the office; or*
- removal from office by resolution of the Council.*

In the event of the office of the Leader becoming vacant before the expiration of their term of office, the Council will elect a new Council Leader at its next meeting, or a meeting called for that purpose.

5. Corporate plan and Council Vision

5.1 The Leader of the Council will play a crucial role in setting and delivering the Corporate plan and Vision for the Council.

6. Implications

Relevant risks

6.1 The Council will need to appoint a Leader in order for the business of the Council to continue. There are legal and reputational risks if there is no leader in place.

The Leader is responsible for appointing Cabinet members, allocating portfolios, determining executive responsibilities and maintaining executive governance arrangements.

Financial Implications

6.2 There are none.

Legal Implications

6.3 This is a legal requirement under the Local Government Act 2000 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. For councils operating the Leader and Cabinet model, there must therefore legally be:

- a Leader of the Council,
- appointed/elected in accordance with the authority's Constitution and legislation.

Equalities and socio-economic Implications

6.4 There are none.

Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications

6.5 There are none.

Procurement Implications

6.6 There are none.

Community Safety Implications

6.7 There are none.

7. Background documents

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

7.1 Council Constitution and Localism Act 2011.

8. Appendices

8.1 There are none.

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Dan Kalley, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, email: dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk



REPORT TITLE: Meeting Calendar 2026/27

To:

Full Council 21 May 2026

Report by:

Dan Kalley, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Email: dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk

Wards affected:

N/A

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 Council for decision.

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Full Council approves the meeting calendar for the Municipal Year 2026/27.

2. Purpose and reason for the report

- 2.1 The report is presented to Full Council to approve the meetings calendar as part of the process of the Annual General Meeting.

3. Background and key issues

- 3.1 An initial draft was presented to the Civic Affairs & Audit Committee meeting on 9 March 2026.

Some updates have been made to the original draft including separating the gap between the two scrutiny committees in September and November.

Dates have been considered around the party conferences in the Autumn to avoid

clashes.

4. Consultation, engagement and communication

4.1 Civic Affairs & Audit Committee were consulted as part of their remit.

5. Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact

5.1 That the meeting calendar is approved subject to any final changes. Setting the committee cycle for the next Municipal Year.

6. Implications

Relevant risks

6.1 There are none.

Financial Implications

6.2 There are none.

Legal Implications

6.3 There are none.

Equalities and socio-economic Implications

6.4 There are none.

Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications

6.5 There are none.

Procurement Implications

6.6 There are none.

Community Safety Implications

6.7 There are none.

7. Background documents

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

7.1 None.

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 – Meeting Card 2026/27

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Dan Kalley, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk

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Cambridge City Council Meeting Dates, May 2026 - May 2027

MEETING	DAY	TIME	2026								2027				
			MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY
Council	THUS	6.00PM	21		16				1	26			25		27
Cabinet	TUES	5.00PM			7			23*Wed	20	17	15	19	11*Thurs	23	
Scrutiny, Performance, Assets and Strategy	TUES	5.30PM		23				8		3		27*Wed		2	
Scrutiny, Services, Climate and Communities	THUS	5.30PM		18				24		19			4	11	
Housing Advisory Board	MON	5.00PM		15				14		9		25			
Employment (Ad-hoc 2x meeting a year)															
Civic Affairs and Audit	MON	5.30PM		22					5	30			1	15	
Full Licensing	MON	10.00AM		29				7				25			5
Licensing Sub	MON	10.00AM		8	13, 20	10,24		1*Tues	5, 26	2,23	7,21	4, 11	15	8,22	
Planning	WED	10.00AM		24	1			2	7	4	2	6	3	3, 31	
Jnt Dev Control	WED	10.00AM		17	15	19		16	21	18	16	20	24	17	21
Equalities	THURS	4.00PM			2							14			
DCF	TUES	10.00AM		16	21			29	27	24	8	26	16	16	
JSEF	TUES	5.00PM			14				13			5			
Cambridge Joint Area Committee	WED	4.00PM		24				9			9			10	

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Member briefings	TIME	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APRIL	MAY
Mon, Wed at 18.00	00:00	various*												

*various member briefings/training sessions for new/all councillors are taking place during May (see Induction Programme)

- 2026 Lib Dem Party Conference
- 2026 Labour Party Conference
- 2026 Green Party Conference TBC
- Planning Committee Training
- Licensing Committee Training
- Elections

7

03-Jun
01-Jun

19-22
27-30

2 Oct - 11 Oct

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Civic Affairs & Audit Committee

19 May 2026

5.30 – 6.20pm

Present: Councillors McPherson (Chair), Gawthrop Wood (Vice-Chair), Bick, Dalzell, Davey and Sheil

Councillor Bennett was present via Teams.

Councillor Thornburrow was also in attendance.

Officers Present:

Chief Executive: Robert Pollock

Chief Operating Officer: Jane Wilson

Chief Financial Officer: Jody Etherington

Head of Legal Practice and Monitoring Officer: Tom Lewis

Democratic Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer): Dan Kalley

Democratic Services Officer: Sarah Michael

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

Constitutional Updates: Revised Member/Officer Protocol

Recommendations of the Civic Affairs & Audit Committee, which met on 19 May 2026, are outlined below:

The Committee **resolved unanimously** to approve the recommendations on to Full Council.

Accordingly, Council is recommended to:

Approve the following changes to the Constitution following the meeting on 9 March 2026:

- The updated member/officer protocol
- The limited power for Cabinet to make supplementary estimates – additional revenue and capital expenditure up to a threshold, with provision to allow for reporting of decisions to Full Council.

Approve minor revisions to the terms of reference for the Equalities Panel to be renamed the Inclusion and Equity Panel.

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**REPORT TITLE: Constitutional Updates revised Member/Officer
Protocol**

To: Civic Affairs & Audit Committee (9 March 2026)

Report by:

Tom Lewis, Head of Legal Practice and Monitoring Officer

Email: tom.lewis@3csharedservices.org

Wards affected:

None

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 for consideration.

1. Recommendations

1.1 That the Civic Affairs and Audit Committee recommend to the Annual General Meeting (AGM) the following changes to the Constitution following the last meeting on 9 March 2026:

- The updated member/officer protocol
- The limited power for Cabinet to make supplementary estimates – additional revenue and capital expenditure up to a threshold.

To note:

- that the Committee already agreed to recommend minor revisions to the terms of reference for the Equalities Panel to be renamed the Inclusion and Equity Panel.

2. Purpose and reason for the report

2.1 Following the initial report being presented to the committee in March the member/officer

protocol has been updated and amended based on feedback from the Committee. A further briefing note was provided to members of the committee with regards to the supplementary estimates.

All members of the committee have had an opportunity to comment on some of the updates.

Committee are therefore asked to agree the updated protocol for inclusion in the report that is presented to the Annual Council meeting on 21 May 2026.

3. Background and key issues

3.1 Protocol on Member / Officer Relations

The updated Protocol on Member / Officer Relations is attached at appendix 1. A link to the previous report can be found here, ([Review of Constitutional Arrangements Cover Report.pdf](#)). The previous protocol had not been updated for a number of years. The updated version is based on best practice across the sector. It shares similarities with the member/officer protocol at South Cambridgeshire District Council but retains elements that are unique to the city council.

The updated Protocol provides a clearer, operational framework for constructive and professional working relationships. It retains the core principles of political neutrality, mutual respect and clear separation of roles, and strengthens or provides greater clarity wherever possible.

Adoption of the revised Protocol will support more consistent behaviour standards and clearer day-to-day working practices and should reduce avoidable friction by setting out predictable processes.

3.2 Supplementary Estimates

Committee members received addition information to clarify the process by which Cabinet can approve relatively small additional amounts of revenue and capital spend outside of the annual budget setting process. No concerns were raised.

4. Corporate plan

- 4.1 The Constitution underpins the decision making of the Council in order for the Council to carry out its priorities as part of the Corporate Plan

[Corporate plan 2022-27: our priorities for Cambridge - Cambridge City Council](#)

5. Consultation, engagement and communication

- 5.1 Changes to the Constitution are being presented to the committee as part of the consultation and engagement process. Any recommendations from the committee will be presented to Full Council for ratification.

6. Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact

- 6.1 If approved at the AGM the changes will be included in the Constitution and will take effect from that date.

7. Implications

Relevant risks

- 7.1 There are none.

Financial Implications

- 7.2 There are none.

Legal Implications

- 7.3 The Constitution contains the rules by which the Council governs itself. It contains a number of legal provisions that are set out in statute. Part of good governance is to review the Constitution and ensure any legal updates are reflected.

Equalities and socio-economic Implications

7.4 There are none.

Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications

7.5 There are none.

Procurement Implications

7.6 There are none.

Community Safety Implications

7.7 There are none.

8. Background documents

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

8.1 [Report to Council May 2025](#)

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 – Updated Member Officer Protocol

Appendix 2 – Inclusion and Equity Panel ToR

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Tom Lewis, Head of Legal Practice and Monitoring Officer, email:

tom.lewis@3csharedservices.org

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Updated Protocol on Member / Officer Relations

The Protocol is a ‘code of standards’ for members and officers to work together to benefit residents and support good governance. It describes the ground rules for professional, lawful, and effective working relationships between elected Members and paid officers.

When the constitution was revised in May 2025 the Protocol on Member / Officer Relations was not updated to reflect modern practice and is now somewhat outdated. The proposed updated Protocol and existing Protocol are attached at Annex A.

The update includes recent guidance from the LGA. It retains the core principles of political neutrality, mutual respect and separation of roles, and strengthens or provides greater clarity in several key areas:

- explicit **reciprocal expectations** for Members and officers based on LGA recommended guidance, including Nolan principles.
- greater **clarity on roles**: Members lead on policy, priorities and scrutiny; officers provide impartial advice, deliver decisions and manage day-to-day operations.
- clearer **guidance on ‘familiarity’ and conduct** between all officers and all members, rather than just toward the Cabinet - officers work for all members of the council.
- clearer **protection for officer integrity and impartiality**, including arrangements in relation to political group briefings
- earlier **engagement of ward Members** in matters affecting their wards
- a more **structured route for addressing concerns** or resolving relationship breakdowns, and
- recognition that new governance - **Leader/Cabinet with O&S and committee Chairs** - necessitates particular relationships officers will have with those members.

Following feedback from the Civic Affairs & Audit Committee section 7 (Member Enquiries) has been revised. That section is now clearer about the different routes members can take to have queries addressed, now in 5 working days rather than 7, which is also reflected in the ‘Who Does What?’ guide for Councillors.

Once adopted there would be a short programme of briefings for Members and officers, and updates to Member and officer induction.

Annex A: [UPDATED] Protocol on Member / Officer Relations

This Protocol forms part of the Constitution of Cambridge City Council and sets out the framework governing relationships between Members and Officers. It reflects the Council's commitment to high standards of governance, mutual respect, professional integrity and lawful decision-making.

1. Introduction

1.1 Effective member-officer relations are built on a series of interconnecting basic principles:

- **Ethical conduct:** Members and officers individually act with selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
- **Mutual respect and trust:** Members and officers respect each other, their respective roles and responsibilities.
- **Clear and well understood roles and responsibilities:** The roles and responsibilities of both members and officers, including the boundaries between them, are clearly defined, consistently communicated and understood by all members and officers working with members.
- **Visible leadership:** Senior members and officers actively and visibly model, promote and uphold the authority's standards, setting clear expectations. They are committed to preventing, identifying and resolving conflicts constructively and transparently.

1.2 This Protocol operates alongside other elements of the Council's constitution and statutory legislation:

- The Members' Code of Conduct
- The Officers' Code of Conduct
- The Council's Constitution
- The Scheme of Delegation
- The Access to Information Procedure Rules
- Relevant legislation including the Local Government Act 1972 and Localism Act 2011.

1.3 Members should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer where necessary. Officers should seek guidance from their Line Manager, Service Lead, Assistant Director, Director, or Chief Executive as appropriate.

1.4 This protocol will be reviewed on a regular basis alongside any review of the Constitution.

2. Roles of Members and Officers

2.1 Both members and officers are servants of the public and they are indispensable to one another. Their individual responsibilities are, however, distinct. Members are responsible to the electorate and serve only so long as their term of office lasts. Officers are employees of the Council and their job is to give advice to members and the authority, and to carry out the Council's work under the direction and control of the Council, the Cabinet and relevant committees, panels etc. Officers shall act in the best interests of the Council as a whole and shall not give partisan political advice. Mutual respect between members and officers is essential to good local government.

2.2 Members have three main areas of responsibility:

(1) determining the policy of the Council and providing political leadership,

(2) representing the Authority externally, and

(3) acting as advocates on behalf of their constituents.

It is not the role of members to involve themselves in the day-to-day management of the Council's services. Members should be careful to avoid involvement in internal office management, discipline and other employment related issues, as the actions of a member may be held to be the actions of the Council as an "employer".

2.3 Members of the Cabinet and chairs and vice-chairs of committees and panels have additional responsibilities. Their relationships with officers may be different from, and more complex than, those of members without those responsibilities and this is recognised in the expectations they are entitled to have.

2.4 As individual members of the Council, all members have the same rights and obligations in their relationship with officers and should be treated equally. This principle is particularly important in the context of overview and scrutiny. Where a political group forms an administration, either alone or in partnership with another group or groups, it is recognised that the relationship between officers (particularly those at a senior level in the Council) and the administration will differ from that with

opposition groups. However, members in opposition still have the same rights and obligations in their relationships with officers and should be treated equally.

2.5 The Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer) hold statutory responsibilities which must be respected at all times. The role of officers is to give advice and information to members and to implement the policies determined by the Council.

3. Expectations

3.1 Members can expect from officers:

- (a) a commitment to the Authority as a whole, and not to any political group;
- (b) a working partnership;
- (c) an understanding of, and support for, respective roles, workloads and pressures;
- (d) a timely response to enquiries and complaints;
- (e) professional advice, not influenced by political views or preference, which does not compromise the political neutrality of employees;
- (f) regular up-to-date information on matters that can reasonably be considered appropriate and relevant to their needs, having regard to any individual responsibilities that they have and positions that they hold;
- (g) awareness of, and sensitivity to, the political environment;
- (h) respect, dignity and courtesy;
- (i) training and development in order to carry out their role effectively;
- (j) integrity, mutual support and appropriate confidentiality;
- (k) not to have personal issues raised with them by employees outside the agreed procedures;
- (l) that employees shall not use their relationship with members to advance their personal interests or to influence decisions improperly;
- (m) that employees shall at all times comply with the Officers' Code of Conduct.

3.2 Officers can expect from members:

- (a) a working partnership;
- (b) an understanding of, and support for, respective roles, workloads and pressures;
- (c) political leadership and direction;
- (d) respect, dignity and courtesy;
- (e) integrity, mutual support and appropriate confidentiality;
- (f) not to be subject to bullying or to be put under undue pressure. Members should have regard to the seniority of officers in determining what are reasonable requests, having regard to the power relationship between members and officers, and the potential vulnerability of officers, particularly at junior levels;
- (g) that members shall not use their relationship with officers to advance their personal interests or those of others or to influence decisions improperly;
- (h) that members shall at all times comply with the local Code of Conduct.

4. Working Relationships and Conduct

4.1 It is clearly important that there should be close working relationships between all officers and members. However, such relationships should never be allowed to become so close or appear so close as to bring into question the individual's ability to deal impartially with others. Close personal familiarity between individual members and officers can damage professional relationships and can prove embarrassing to other members and officers. Situations should be avoided, therefore, that could give rise to suspicion and / or appearance of improper conduct or behaviour. Provided these guidelines are observed, there is no reason why there should not be an informal atmosphere between members and officers outside formal meetings and events.

4.2 Any dealings between members and officers should be conducted with mutual trust, respect and courtesy and neither party should seek to take unfair advantage of their position. An employee who is one of their constituents may ask a member for advice and support. Employees are entitled to seek such assistance in the same way as any other member of the public. However, members should be careful not to prejudice the Council's position in relation to disciplinary procedures or employment matters in respect of any employee. A member approached for help in such circumstances should first seek advice from the Monitoring Officer.

4.3 Members shall not pressurise any officer to change their professional opinion on any Council business matter or do anything that compromises, or which is likely to compromise, the impartiality of officers or those who work for, or on behalf of, the Council.

Constructive Criticism

4.4 It is an absolute requirement that councillors do not criticise officers personally or use, as councillors, inappropriate language or conduct in public about reports or actions taken by officers. Officers are similarly constrained by their own code, by their employment provisions and by their requirement to maintain professional integrity. It is important that there should be mutual respect and courtesy between councillors and officers and that no councillor or officer should seek to take unfair advantage of their position.

4.5 Councillors have the right to criticise reports or the actions taken by officers but they should always avoid personal attacks on officers and ensure that criticism is constructive, well-founded and likely to lead to improved performance in future, and does not seek to apportion blame.

5. Accountability of Members / Officers under Scrutiny Arrangements

An Overview and Scrutiny Committee may scrutinise and review decisions made by the Cabinet or actions taken by or on behalf of the Cabinet. As well as reviewing documentation, in fulfilling the scrutiny role, these committees may require the Leader, lead cabinet member or Chief Officer or service lead to attend before it as provided in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

6. Local Members (Ward Councillors)

6.1 Local members have an important role to play in representing the Council in electoral Wards, responding to the concerns of their constituents, in meetings with partners and serving on external bodies and organisations.

6.2 It is essential for the proper running of the Council that there should be full and appropriate engagement with local Ward members before new decisions are taken which affect their electoral Wards. It is the duty of each Chief Officer or service manager to ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the requirements engage and to keep local members informed and that the timing of such information allows members to contribute to those discussions.

- 6.3. Issues may affect a single electoral Ward but others may have a wider impact in which case numerous members will need to be involved and kept informed. In such instances and engagement should be proportionate and coordinated.
- 6.4 Officers must ensure Ward Councillors are consulted or advised of the exercise of delegated powers relevant to their area where appropriate.
- 6.4 Wherever a public meeting (i.e. a meeting open to the public to attend) is organised by the Council to consider a local issue, all members representing the electoral Ward(s) affected should, as a matter of course, be invited to attend. Similarly, whenever the Council undertakes a formal consultative exercise, the local member(s) shall be notified at the outset of the exercise.
- 6.5 If a local member is not sure how to handle a problem that has arisen in their Ward they may, if appropriate, seek guidance from their Group Leader or member colleagues before seeking advice from Chief Officers or service managers.

7. Members' Enquiries

- 7.1 The relationship between members and officers should be characterised by partnership, empowerment and trust. In order to ensure delivery of the Council's priorities and provision of high-quality public services it is essential that members and officers work in a collaborative and mutually supportive manner. Officers should recognise the need for members to receive information in a timely manner in order to carry out their constituency roles. Members should likewise be appreciative of the competing demands on officer time and the variety of routes available to them to resolve enquiries.
- 7.2 There now exists a significant amount of information about council services on the council's public website. This includes digital routes to report issues or request services, which are then logged and monitored to ensure they are addressed appropriately and expediently. Members should, whenever possible, first check the City Council website to resolve general queries, or to report issues or request services
1. Members should advise residents to do the same.
- 7.3 Members frequently get involved in resident matters if there is a potential unresolved failure of service or to advocate on behalf of residents. If it is necessary to contact an officer to resolve such an enquiry, Members should refer to 'Who Does What' to identify the appropriate service manager to contact. If that is not clear, Members can

¹ On-line options are the quickest, easiest, and most efficient way to report issues or receive a service. [Report it - Cambridge City Council](#).

Speak to the contact centre in order to be referred to the appropriate officer or service. Try to avoid contacting Chief Officers about issues that should be dealt with by a service manager.

- 7.4 Members' enquiries which fall within the remit of residents' complaints, which should not generally include a request for service, shall be handled under the Council's Complaints Procedure². The Council aims to respond to all complaints within 10 working days. If more time is required residents will be informed of the reasons why. Residents are also informed of who is dealing with their complaint. All complaints are logged and monitored, and complaint performance is reported quarterly.
- 7.5 Service managers and Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring that members' enquiries are dealt with promptly and satisfactorily within their service areas. There should however be no expectation among members that member queries will always be given priority over an officer's other work commitments, which also includes providing services to residents.
- 7.6 Officers shall aim to provide a substantive response to members' enquiries within 5 working days of receipt. If a substantive response cannot be provided within that timescale, officers shall contact the member to explain the reason why and liaise with them regarding the timescale within which the full response shall be sent.
- 7.7 An officer shall raise with their service manager or Chief Officer any enquiry which would impose a disproportionate burden on their work and, if necessary, further discussion shall then take place with the member concerned with a view to agreement of the approach to managing the response to the enquiry.
- 7.8 The process outlined above supplements members' statutory and common law rights to information as detailed in paragraph 10.

8. Political Groups

- 8.1 Political group meetings, whilst they form an important part in the preliminaries to Council decision-making, are not formal decision-making bodies of the Council and, as such, are not empowered to make decisions on behalf of the Council. Conclusions reached at such meetings do not, therefore, rank as Council decisions and it is essential that members and officers understand and interpret them accordingly.
- 8.2 Officer support to political groups shall not extend beyond providing information and advice in relation to Council business (not party-political business). It may be

² [Compliments, complaints and suggestions - Cambridge City Council](#)

appropriate for officers to participate in discussions within political group meetings in relation to the professional advice they give. However, it is good practice for party political discussions and debates to take place and conclusions to be reached in the absence of officers, in order to avoid suspicion of impropriety or misunderstanding.

8.3 Officers shall respect the confidentiality of any political group discussions. Any breach of this part of the protocol shall be brought to the attention of the Monitoring Officer for consideration. For the avoidance of doubt, it shall be recognised by all that, in discharging their duties, officers serve the Council as a whole and not exclusively any political group, combination of groups or any individual members. Members shall, at all times, respect the political impartiality of officers and shall not expect or encourage officers to give a political view on any matter.

8.4 When an officer is requested to attend a political group meeting:

(a) the request to attend shall be made through, and approved by, the appropriate Chief Officer or Chief Executive;

(b) such a request shall only be made in relation to Council business; and officers shall:

(i) provide relevant factual advice and assistance;

(ii) leave during the deliberations of the political group on the issues;

(iii) respect the confidentiality of any party group decisions at which they are present;

(iv) not champion, defend, action a request or spend any resources of the Council, or be held responsible for actioning in any way whatsoever the decisions of the political group(s), unless and until such decisions have become the formal decisions of the Council; and

(v) inform the other political groups, offering them the right of the same information.

9. Access to Information and Documentation

9.1 Access to Information Procedure Rules set out the rights of access for members.

9.2 Any member may request a private and confidential briefing from a senior officer on matters of policy, which have already been or may be discussed by the Council within its decision-making or advisory process. All such requests shall be made to the appropriate Chief Officer or service lead and shall be subject to the constraints and demands of the service. Briefings shall remain strictly confidential and are not to be

shared with other members of the Council unless so permitted by the relevant member and officer.

9.3 Individual members may request any Chief Officer (or another senior officer) to provide them with factual information, which is necessary in pursuance of the proper performance of their duties. Such requests shall be reasonable and shall also recognise the need for officers to maintain the distinction between the cabinet and scrutiny processes.

9.4 As regards the legal rights of members to inspect Council documents, these are partly covered by statute and partly by common law. This is commonly known as the “need to know principle”.

9.5 Sometimes a member’s “need to know” will be presumed. For example, a member is unlikely to be refused an opportunity to inspect documents relating to the functions or activities of a member body on which they serve. At other times, for example when documents contain confidential information or personal information about a third party, the member shall be required to satisfy the relevant Chief Officer or service lead about their “need to know”.

9.6 If a Chief Officer or service manager considers the cost of providing the information requested, or the nature of the request to be unreasonable they should seek guidance from the Monitoring Officer as to whether the information should be provided. Where necessary, the Monitoring Officer shall determine whether the information should be provided.

9.7 Confidential information relating to casework shall not normally be sought. If in exceptional circumstances members wish to discuss confidential aspects of an individual case then they shall first seek advice from the appropriate Chief Officer or service lead and may also need to seek permission from the constituent.

9.8 Council information provided to a member shall only be used by the member for the purpose for which it was provided (i.e. in connection with the proper performance of the member’s duties as a member of the Council). Where confidential, personal or otherwise sensitive information is obtained by a member, they shall deal with that information in accordance with the Members’ Code of Conduct.

10. Correspondence

10.1 E-mail relating to the Council shall be treated in the same way as formal business correspondence and its distribution considered accordingly. Members should restrict the distribution of e-mail correspondence to the intended recipients and refrain from

using multi address distribution lists (for example e-mail replies copied to all members) unless there is good reason so to do. It should be noted that e-mail can be used for documentary evidence in matters such as disciplinary proceedings and libel cases even after it has been deleted.

10.2 Official correspondence on behalf of the Council shall normally be sent in the name of the appropriate officer, rather than in the name of a member. However, there are circumstances in which it is appropriate for correspondence to appear in the name of a member. For example, a local member may deal with correspondence with a local constituent in relation to a local matter in their name. Similarly, the Leader of the Council or a lead cabinet member may deal with correspondence concerning their area of responsibility in their name.

10.3 Any member who receives correspondence should consider whether it is appropriate in the circumstances for it to be passed to an officer for a reply, or for them to reply in their name. Any such correspondence should always have regard to the Council's policies, practices and procedures and any mechanisms, if appropriate, for changing them. A member is advised to seek advice, as necessary, from officers before sending any correspondence in their own name.

10.4 Correspondence which creates legal obligations or gives instructions on behalf of the Council should never be sent out in the name of a member. Correspondence includes any communication by letter, e-mail, texts, social media posts or other electronic means.

11. Publicity and Media

Publicity

11.1 The Council wishes to encourage regular, open and two-way dialogue with its communities to ensure that the public are aware of the Council's activities, are informed about how to access services and are aware of opportunities for public participation in the democratic process.

11.2 The way information is publicised has changed significantly over time with online and social media being more prominent and instant. Messaging in publicity should be well considered as it is essential to ensure that local authority decisions on publicity are made in accordance with clear principles of good practice.

11.3 Officers and members of the Council shall, therefore, in making decisions on publicity, take account of the provisions of the national Code of Recommended

Practice on Local Authority Publicity 2011. The Council's communications team can help to ensure publicity is timely, correct and targeted appropriately.

- 11.4 Particular care should be taken with Council publicity in the run-up to an election. Additional guidance is issued at these times to help members and officers. The MO or Chief Executive can provide advice where necessary about the guidance during periods of heightened sensitivity.

Media

- 11.5 Members wishing to publicise themselves or their political parties shall do so in an independent capacity without using Council resources. This applies to other support service Members receive to carry out their official duties, which may only be used on Council business, and may not be used for party political work.
- 11.6 When using Council email, or writing on behalf of the authority, correspondence should not include political comments or criticise Council policy adopted by Full Council. If members wish to make political statements in correspondence, they shall not use Council communications channels or, give the impression their views are those of the Council on any communications channels, including social media.
- 11.7 The Council's Communications Team provides a press office function on behalf of the Council. Media enquiries requesting information or a response on behalf of the Council should be referred to the Communications Team and all proactive communications on behalf of the Council's work should be coordinated through the Communications Team

12. When Things Go Wrong

- 12.1 This protocol is designed to provide the framework within which members and officers work effectively together. However, the following process should be followed in the event of any difficulties arising.

Procedure for officers to follow when experiencing difficulties with members

- 12.2 From time to time the relationship between members and officers may break down or become strained. It will always be preferable to resolve matters informally, through conciliation by an appropriate senior manager or member, for example an informal meeting arranged between the relevant member and officer, the member's group leader and the Chief Executive. Officers also have recourse to a procedure whereby the complaint or grievance can be referred to the Council's Monitoring Officer.

Procedure for members to follow when experiencing difficulties with officers

- 12.3 A member should not raise matters relating to the conduct, behaviour or capability of an officer in a manner that is incompatible with the objectives of this protocol. An officer has no means of responding to such criticism in public. If any member feels that they have not been treated with proper mutual trust, respect or courtesy or have any concern about the conduct or capability of an officer, they should raise the matter, in private, with the relevant Service Manager, Assistant Director or Director.
- 12.4 Any concerns with regard to a senior officer or Chief Officer should be discussed in private with the Chief Executive. Where the officer concerned is the Chief Executive, the matter should be raised with the Leader of the Council or Monitoring Officer, as appropriate to the circumstances. If the matter cannot be resolved informally it may be necessary to invoke the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.

13. Whistleblowing

Where an officer or councillor is concerned about potential unlawful conduct of an officer or councillor, the Council's whistle-blowing policy may also be relevant.

14. Interpretation

Questions of interpretation of this protocol shall be determined by the Monitoring Officer or Chief Executive.

15. Unresolved issues and amendments to this Protocol

- 15.1 If there are any issues of concern which are not dealt with by this Protocol, then the relevant Member or officer may discuss the matter with the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer with a view to advice being provided.
- 15.2 Should any Member or officer wish to suggest an amendment to this protocol, they are encouraged to contact either the Chief Executive, Monitoring Officer or Deputy Monitoring Officer.

Adopted by Cambridge City Council: _____

Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this Protocol is to guide councillors, officers and other individuals who are members of Council bodies in their relations with one another. The Codes of Conduct for both members and officers have been referred to in the development of this Protocol and should be considered in addition to it when appropriate.
- 1.2 Given the variety and complexity of such relations, this Protocol does not seek to be either prescriptive or comprehensive. It seeks simply to offer guidance on some of the issues that most commonly arise. It is hoped, however, that the approach that it adopts to these issues will serve as a guide to dealing with other issues.
- 1.3 This Protocol is to a large extent no more than a written statement of current practice and convention. In some respects, however, it seeks to promote greater clarity and certainty.
- 1.4 This Protocol also seeks to reflect the principles underlying the respective rules of conduct which apply to members and officers. The purpose of the rules and this Protocol is to enhance and maintain the integrity (real and perceived) of local government by demanding very high standards of personal conduct.

Roles of Members and officers

- 2.1 The elected members are responsible for:
 - the initiation and direction of policy;
 - democratic accountability to the electorate for policies and for service delivery;
 - the scrutiny of Council services;
 - community leadership;
 - the promotion of partnership working; and
 - the presentation of Council policy.

2.2 The officers are responsible for:

- providing the professional advice that members must have before them when formulating policy and when taking decisions. The functions and areas of responsibility of the Council's Chief Officers are described in Article 11 of the Constitution (pages 23-26);
- implementing members' decisions;
- running the Council's services and day-to-day administration;
- taking managerial and operational decisions in accordance with the Council's schemes of delegation; and
- the provision of information regarding Council services and approved Council policies including via the media.

Working relationships

3.1 The Council has determined that there should be no formal separation of officer support between the executive and scrutiny functions. The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that staffing support is sufficient. To assist this, the Chief Executive will be responsible for ensuring that proper officer support is provided for overview and scrutiny.

3.2 The working relationship between senior officers and the Executive will be particularly close. This relationship, however, must not:

- compromise officers' duties to all Members of the Council;
- be so close as to give the appearance of partiality on the part of the officer;
- undermine the confidentiality of any discussions within the Corporate Management Team or between senior officers and other Members;
- compromise officers' professional responsibility to advise Members that a particular course of action should not be pursued;
- abrogate officer responsibility for action taken under Delegated Powers.

- 3.3 Officers will also provide advice and assistance to individual Members in respect of Council business, including issues raised by constituents. They must not be requested to advise upon private matters.
- 3.4 Paragraph 2 of the Officer Code of Conduct (Pages 295-299) emphasises that officers are employed by, and serve, the whole Council. They are politically neutral and must avoid being identified with any political party. Members must respect this.
- 3.5 Directors/Assistant Directors (but not normally any other officer below second tier) may, in exceptional circumstances, be invited to attend political group meetings to explain or advise on policies and/or issues provided that this facility is available to all political groups represented on the Council. The Chief Executive should be informed by an employee that he/she is to attend such a meeting.
- 3.6 Paragraph 3.5 does not apply to invitations to officers to attend group meetings in their capacity as trade union representatives, which shall be permitted.
- 3.7 Political group meetings fall outside the Council's decision-making process. Conclusions reached at such meetings are not Council decisions and so should not be relied upon as such.
- 3.8 The Chief Executive and Directors may attend collectively to brief meetings of those members making up the Executive and the Chairs of Scrutiny & Regulatory Committees, on forthcoming issues.
- 3.9 Scrutiny committees have the power to require Executive Councillors and officers to appear before them and answer questions. So far as Executive Councillors are concerned, scrutiny committees should, wherever possible, require attendance only at meetings that appear in the Council diary. So far as officers are concerned, the statutory guidance states that "local authorities may wish to adopt conventions that overview and scrutiny committees would normally only require officers above a certain grade to attend to ensure that more junior officers are not put under undue pressure". Accordingly, the Council's scrutiny committees will only be able to require

the attendance of Chief Officers and Directors/Assistant Directors. However, to facilitate proper conduct of business, they may arrange, as necessary, for other officers to attend meetings to assist.

Familiarity

- 4.1 Close personal familiarity between individual members and officers can damage the principle of mutual respect. It could also, intentionally or accidentally, lead to the passing of confidential information or information which should not properly be passed between them, such as personal details.
- 4.2 Such familiarity could also cause embarrassment to other members and/or other officers and even give rise to suspicions of favouritism.
- 4.3 As a result care should be taken by individual members and officers in their relationship with each other.

Undue Pressure

- 5.1 It is important that in any dealings between members and officers neither should seek to take unfair advantage of their position.
- 5.2 In their dealings with both Directors and officers (especially junior employees), members need to be aware that it is easy for officers to be overawed and feel at a disadvantage. Such feelings can be intensified where members hold official and/or political office.
- 5.3 A member should not apply any pressure on an officer to do work outside of normal duties. A member should also not normally require an officer to do work outside of reasonable working hours but if deemed essential then this should be negotiated. Neither should pressure be put on an officer to do anything that he or she is not empowered to do.

- 5.4 Similarly, an officer must not lobby or use influence on an individual member to make a decision in his or her personal favour. They should not raise personal matters to do with their job, nor make claims or allegations about other officers, nor make negative comments on the competency of another officer as the Council has formal procedures for this.
- 5.5 Members should recognise that officers' workloads frequently require extended periods of concentration or involve tight deadlines. Members should respect officers' working time and should, where possible, arrange appointments and avoid frequent unscheduled interruptions.

Constructive criticism & redress

- 6.1 It is important that there should be mutual courtesy between Members and officers. It is important that there are reasonable standards of courtesy and no member or officer should seek to take unfair advantage of their position.
- 6.2 Members have the right to criticise reports or the actions taken by officers but they should:
- always avoid personal attacks on officers;
 - ensure that criticism is constructive and well-founded.
- 6.3 If a member considers that he or she has not been treated with proper respect or courtesy, he or she may raise it with the officer's line manager or Director without delay if it is not possible to resolve it through direct discussion. If the issue still remains unresolved appropriate action may be taken by the Director in accordance with the Council's normal procedures. Feedback should be given to the member on the outcome.
- 6.4 If an officer considers that he or she has not been treated with proper respect or courtesy, and a direct discussion is impractical or fails to resolve the matter, he or she should raise the matter with the line manager or Director without delay. In such circumstances, the Director will take such action as is appropriate either by

approaching the individual and/or Party Group Leader. The Director will inform the Chief Executive if the Party Group Leader becomes involved, or in any other case where it is appropriate. Feedback should be given to the officer on the outcome.

- 6.5 The Council operates a confidential whistle-blowing policy overseen by the Standards Committee. The Council is committed to the highest possible standards of operation, integrity, openness and accountability. It is expected that where an officer or member is concerned about potential unlawful conduct of an officer or member, they voice those concerns so that they can be dealt with effectively. Nb. The Code of Conduct for Members (Part 5a of the Constitution pages 287-294) refers to those matters where a member is aware that another member has failed to comply with the Code.

Officers' advice on declarations of interest

- 7.1 The Council's Head of Legal Practice will provide advice and information to Members on declarations of interest of a personal nature and whether or not such an interest might amount to a prejudicial interest. However, Members will know the nature and extent of any interest they may have. It is the Member's responsibility, therefore, to decide whether any interest should be declared.

Officers' reports and advice

- 8.1 The Director/Assistant Director in whose name a report to the Council (or any part of its formal decision-making structure) will always be fully responsible for the contents of it.
- 8.2 A report will only be amended where the suggested amendment also reflects the professional judgement of the author of the report. Any remaining disagreement between the Executive Councillor/Chair and the author of the report should be referred to the Chief Officer, or, if the author of the report is a Chief Officer, to the Chief Executive for resolution after consultation with the Leader.

- 8.3 On occasions, officers will need to express a professional view on a matter which may not support the view of the Executive and/or the relevant Chief Officers of the Council. They must be allowed to do so without interference from, or victimisation by, members or officers.

Officer decisions taken under delegated powers

- 9.1 When making a decision under powers delegated to them, it must be recognised that it is the officer, and not any member, who takes the action and it is the officer who is accountable for it.

Dealing with the Media

- 10.1 Officers and members should be aware of the Convention on dealing with the Media in Appendix F of the Council Procedure Rules in Part 4a of the Constitution (pages 138-140). This is also listed on the Council's Intranet under 'Publicity and Media'.

Involvement of ward councillors

- 11.1 Whenever a public meeting is organised by the Council to consider a local issue, all the councillors representing the Ward or Wards affected should, as a matter or course, be invited to attend the meeting with the maximum possible notice being given. Similarly whenever the Council undertakes any form of consultative exercise on a local issue, the Ward Councillors should be consulted at the outset of the exercise.
- 11.2 Ward Councillors should be notified in advance about any issues likely to affect them. This would include press releases relating to a particular Ward or significant matters likely to affect a Ward.
- 11.3 Officers are reminded of the protocol for consulting Ward Councillors before exercising delegated powers (Part 3 – Discharge of Council Functions pages 83-84).

Correspondence

- 12.1 Unless a member or officer requests confidentiality, it is to be assumed that correspondence between a Member and an officer is not confidential and may be shown to others (an obvious exception is where an issue relates to an individual constituent and would normally be treated in confidence). If, in an officer's view, correspondence between an individual member and an officer is of interest to other members, to keep them fully informed, it should be made clear to the original member that copies have been sent to other members.
- 12.2 Where issues are raised by, or with, individual members relating to a matter of general interest in a ward, (as it is in the best interests of the Council to ensure that all members are properly informed of general issues in their Ward), copies of correspondence will normally be sent to all members for the Ward and the appropriate Executive Councillor. However, a member may specifically request that correspondence is not copied to other members and/or there may be a political, or other reason, why it is not appropriate to do so.
- 12.3 Where an officer sends information on his/her own initiative to an Executive Councillor, copies will be provided to the relevant minority spokesperson(s) and Chair of Scrutiny.
- 12.4 Official letters sent on behalf of the Council should normally be in the name of the appropriate officer, rather than in the name of a member. It may be appropriate in certain circumstances (e.g. representations to a Government Minister) for a letter to be signed by a member, but this should be the exception rather than the norm.

Member support services

- 13.1 The Council provides a range of support services, including stationery, typing and postage to enable Members to carry out their duties. These may only be used on Council business. They may not be used for party political work of any kind except for the administration of party group meetings (but not attending or minuting such meetings).

Unresolved issues and amendments to this Protocol

- 14.1 If there are any issues of concern which are not dealt with by this Protocol, then the relevant Member or officer may discuss the matter with the Chief Executive with a view to advice being provided.
- 14.2 Should any Member or officer wish to suggest an amendment to this protocol, he/she is asked to contact either the Chief Executive or Director of Customer & Democratic Services.
- 14.3 Any amendments require approval of Council on the recommendation of the Civic Affairs Committee. The Standards Committee and any other relevant body may be consulted on issues raised by the Protocol and on proposed amendments when appropriate.

Inclusion and Equity Panel

Appointed by: Leader

Terms of Reference:

To promote equity and inclusion in order that all communities in Cambridge achieve better outcomes; thrive and succeed, with access and removing barriers to opportunity, networks, resources, and support with an emphasis on valuing the lived experiences of individual and communities and identifying best practice locally and nationally.

It delivers this purpose by:

- Ensuring Panel recommendations are informed by those with lived experience of inequality
- Aligning the Panel's agenda to the Forward Plan, prioritising items with the greatest equalities impact
- Developing a work plan that enables Panel members to request specific items come to the Panel for its consideration

The IEP will focus on equity for people with characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 as well as:

- People with care experience (an umbrella term used to describe individuals who are, or who have at any time been, in the care of a local authority)
- People with experience of being on a low-income or in poverty
- Travelling community members, including those without the protected characteristic of 'race' under the Equality Act 2010
- Non-binary and gender fluid people
- Veterans Objectives
- Drive service improvements in respect of equity within Council and influence practice more widely in the City.
- Share their expertise and make recommendations that promote equity and inclusion, and celebrate diversity, based on their lived experience and/or professional knowledge.
- Influence the council's approach to equity for our communities and staff by making recommendations on strategy, policies and plans (and equality impact assessments as they relate to these), helping to inform Cabinet decisions and scrutiny.
- Monitor and report on the Council's compliance with equity related legislation, including the Equality Act 2010.

Membership

The IEP membership will consist of:

- The nominated Cabinet Member (or a nominated substitute in their absence)

Membership from each of the following:

- Councillors who will be appointed by Cabinet with an expectation that one per Political Group and Lead Cabinet Member. Each Political Group will nominate their own members of the Panel who will represent their Group.

Delegation to the Director of Communities to facilitate Membership of:

- Cambridge City Council staff
- Public Members and members of the Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise and Faith sector working with diverse communities that experience discrimination, marginalisation and inequality.

The IEP will invite independent people from different equality groups to speak on issues that are important to them based on their lived experiences, helping to guide the Panel's discussions. Moreover, the Political Groups can nominate councillors who are not members of the Panel to attend meetings to speak to particular items as agreed by the Chair of the Panel.

Civic Affairs & Audit Committee

9 March 2026

5.30 – 7.30pm

Present: Councillors McPherson (Chair), Gawthrope_Wood (Vice-Chair), Bennett, Bick, Dalzell, Robertson and Sheil

Officers Present:

Chief Executive: Robert Pollock

Chief Financial Officer: Jody Etherington

Head of Legal Practice and Monitoring Officer: Tom Lewis

Communities Director: Sam Scharf

Chief Audit Executive: Jonathan Tully

Democratic Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer): Dan Kalley

Democratic Services Officer: Sarah Michael

Meeting Producer: Matthew Hussey

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

Annual Civic Affairs and Audit Committee report

Recommendations of the Civic Affairs & Audit Committee, which met on 9 March 2026, are outlined below:

The Committee **resolved unanimously** to approve the recommendations on to Full Council.

Accordingly, Council is recommended to:

Approve the Annual Civic Affairs and Audit Committee report.

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REPORT TITLE: Annual Civic Affairs & Audit Committee Report

To:

Civic Affairs & Audit Committee (9 March 2026)

Report by:

Jonathan Tully, Chief Audit Executive & Dan Kalley, Democratic Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Email: jonathan.tully@3csharedservices.org & dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk

Wards affected:

None:

Director Approval: Director Jane Wilson 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 the Civic Affairs and Audit Committee:

1. Review and approve the draft Annual Civic Affairs & Audit Committee Report shown in Appendix 1 for submission to Council at the Annual Meeting in May.
2. Delegate authority to the Chair, in consultation with the committee, to agree any minor changes to the report before submission to Council

2. Purpose and reason for the report

2.1 The Civic Affairs & Audit Committee has been in operation since Annual Council in May 2025. This was preceded by the Civic Affairs Committee. The Committee has a wide-ranging remit that underpins the Council's governance processes by providing independent challenge and assurance of the adequacy of risk management, internal controls including internal audit, anti-fraud and the financial reporting framework.

The Committee also has responsibility for oversight of Civic and Constitutional functions. Reports have been provided this year on giving updates to the Civic functions, ensuring that work is undertaken to maintain the history and importance of the office of Mayor. Further work will be presented to committee as progress is made around Local Government Reorganisation.

3. Alternative options considered

- 3.1 The committee could not provide an annual report, however best practice guidelines have stated that local authorities should produce a report for the Council to review as part of good governance arrangements.

4. Background and key issues

- 4.1 The attached Draft Annual Report has been produced (Appendix 1).

The report shows:

- Background to the Committee, its roles, responsibilities, and membership.
- An overview and coverage of its remit including Internal Audit, Accounts and Financial Management, External Audit, Risk Management, Control Assurance, Corporate Governance, Civic Functions and Fraud and Irregularities; and
- Focus on good governance moving forward and looking at continuous improvement.

5. Consultation, engagement and communication

- 5.1 The Civic Affairs & Audit Committee has the opportunity to feed into the report before being presented to Full Council

6. Anticipated outcomes, benefits or impact

- 6.1 Publication of the report will enable the public to gain an insight into the role of the Committee and will ensure that the Committee can continue to progress and develop in the future. The Council continues to evolve its Civic Affairs & Audit Committee in line with

best practice to provide effective challenge.

Subject to approval by Civic Affairs & Audit Committee, it is intended to present the report to Council for noting as part of the Committee's annual update in order to demonstrate the work carried out on the governance arrangements across the Council.

7. Implications

Relevant risks

7.1 There are none.

Financial Implications

7.2 There are none.

Legal Implications

7.3 There are none.

Equalities and socio-economic Implications

7.4 None required.

Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications

7.5 There are none.

Procurement Implications

7.6 There are none.

Community Safety Implications

7.7 There are none.

8. Background documents

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

8.1 CIPFA guidance

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 – Annual Civic Affairs & Audit Committee Report

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact, Jonathan Tully, Chief Audit Executive, Jonathan.tully@cambridge.gov.uk

Dan Kalley, Democratic Services Manager (Deputy Monitoring Officer), dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk



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Foreword From The Chair

As Chair of the Civic Affairs & Audit Committee, I am pleased to present this Annual Report for the municipal year.

The Committee plays a vital role in supporting Cambridge City Council's commitment to strong governance, civic functions, financial stewardship and effective risk management. On behalf of the Committee, I am satisfied that during the year we have continued to provide robust and constructive challenge across our core responsibilities, including oversight of internal and external audit, financial reporting, treasury management, risk management, counter-fraud arrangements and the Annual Governance Statement. As well as receiving reports on the Civic functions at the Council and the Council's Constitution.

Throughout the year, the Committee has received regular reports from Internal Audit, monitored delivery of the approved audit plan, and reviewed management's progress in implementing agreed actions. We have also maintained effective engagement with External Audit to ensure independent scrutiny of the Council's financial statements and value for money arrangements.

I would like to thank fellow Committee Members for their diligence and commitment, and officers for the quality and professionalism of the reports and advice provided throughout the year. The constructive and open working relationship between Members and officers is fundamental to the Committee's effectiveness.

Looking ahead, the Committee will continue to strengthen its role, support continuous improvement in governance arrangements, and ensure that Cambridge City Council maintains the highest standards of accountability and transparency.

Councillor Russ McPherson

Chair of the Civic Affairs & Audit Committee
Cambridge City Council

Executive Summary

Statement of Accounts and External Audit Progress

Substantial progress has been made on the auditing of our accounts in 2025/2026.

Recognising there was a national backlog, Central Government issued a consultation on proposals to clear the backlog in February 2024. This established new statutory backstop dates for all financial years up to and including 2027/28, replacing existing deadlines in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015. These [measures](#) were set out in a statement in July 2024. This approach enabled external auditors to complete lighter touch reviews to accelerate the recovery, and issue modified and disclaimed opinions. The external auditors' other statutory duties – including to report on Value for Money arrangements, to make statutory recommendations and issue Public Interest Reports remained. It was therefore very important that the Committee actively participated in reviewing the accounts, and we had effective engagement with both our external auditors during this process.

We concluded our Statement of Accounts with our external auditor EY for financial year 2023/2024 in May 2025 and financial year 2024/2025 in February 2026.

Below is a timetable summarising our current position as of May 2026.

Year	Draft statements	Audit Plan	Audit Fieldwork	Audit Sign-off	Date signed off (forecast)
2023/2024	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	May 2025
2024/2025	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	February 2026
2025/2026	In progress	In progress			(January 2027)

Our Statements are available to read on [our Website](#).

Governance and risk management

Our review of the past 12 months below highlights the positive work undertaken to maintain and develop our governance arrangements. This includes:

- ✓ regular assurance reports from internal audit;
- ✓ reviewing the Council's Risk Management Framework and Strategy;
- ✓ Information Governance assurance
- ✓ reviewing development of the Performance Management Framework

Conclusion

We would like to thank the officers who have supported the Committee, members who have substituted at meetings as needed, and our external auditors.



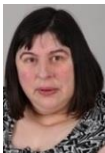




It is important for all of us to maintain awareness of our responsibilities and how we can help the Council. We suggest that all members and officers:

- ✓ make sure decisions are made in line with our corporate governance principles, being mindful of our [Code of Governance](#) and the [Constitution](#);
- ✓ are alert to the possibility of fraud or mistake in handling public money: if you have any concerns, please report these to the fraud and enforcement team, internal audit, external audit, or use our whistleblowing policy; and
- ✓ are familiar with how to access to help and guidance, and where policies can be found.

Committee overview

Who we are

The [Civic Affairs and Audit Committee](#) was established in May 2025 as part of the Council's new Cabinet and Leader Governance model. This was a progression of the existing [Civic Affairs Committee](#) both of which have the remit to provide those charged with Governance (Full Council) independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of the Council's financial reporting and governance processes, and undertake non-executive functions including electoral, civic and democratic processes. Our membership at the end of the municipal year for 2025/2026 is:

	Councillor Russ McPherson (Chair)
	Councillor Jenny Gawthrop Wood (Vice-Chair)
	Councillor Naomi Bennett
	Councillor Tim Bick
	Councillor Jamie Dalzell
	Councillor Richard Robertson
	Councillor Patrick Sheil

Officers which regularly support the Committee:

- Chief Finance Officer
- Chief Audit Executive
- Chief Operating Officer
- Democratic Services Manager

When we meet

We typically meet at least quarterly. Four meetings were held during 2025/2026:



What we do



We review and consider areas which support the Council’s corporate governance arrangements:

Governance Risk and Control	Internal Audit	External Audit	Financial Reporting
<p>Local Code of Governance and the Annual Governance Statement</p> <p>Instruments of financial control and arrangements to secure value for money</p> <p>Risk management, and effectiveness of internal controls.</p> <p>Counter-fraud strategy, and fraud and corruption risks.</p> <p>Partnerships and collaborations.</p>	<p>Internal Audit Charter and Code of Ethics</p> <p>Risk-Based Internal Audit Plan</p> <p>Reports from the Chief Audit Executive during the year, including updates on the work of Internal Audit, key findings, issues of concern and actions.</p> <p>Consider the Chief Audit Executive’s opinion on the control environment and the results of the Quality Assurance and Improvement Programme.</p>	<p>Comment on the scope and depth of external audit work to ensure their independence and it gives value for money.</p> <p>Review any issues raised by Public Sector Audit Appointments</p> <p>Consider the external auditor’s annual letter, relevant reports and the report to those charged with governance.</p> <p>Advise and recommend on the effectiveness of relationships between external and internal audit and other inspection agencies or relevant bodies.</p>	<p>Review the annual Statement of Accounts,</p> <p>Consider whether appropriate accounting policies have been followed.</p> <p>Notify Council with regard to conclusion and submission of the Statement of Accounts.</p>

This helps us to report our findings to those charged with governance and we do this by publishing this annual report. See [our website](#) for more information about the Committee.

Civic & Constitutional Functions

Civic leadership in Cambridge City Council has a distinguished history dating back to 1207, when King John granted the town the right to elect a Mayor. That historic charter established a tradition of civic representation and democratic accountability that continues to shape the Council's identity today. The ceremonial and civic functions of the authority are not merely matters of tradition; they embody the Council's connection to its residents, institutions and communities, and reinforce the dignity and integrity of public office.

Councillors and officers alike share responsibility for upholding these traditions while ensuring that civic arrangements remain modern, inclusive and responsive. The Civic Affairs and Audit Committee play a central role in providing oversight of civic governance, monitoring constitutional arrangements, and ensuring that high standards of probity and transparency are maintained.

During the 2025–26 Municipal Year, significant work was undertaken to review and modernise the Council's governance framework. A revised Constitution was formally adopted at the Annual Meeting in May 2025. Building on that work, a further report was presented to the Committee on 9 March 2026 to establish a structured programme of ongoing constitutional review, including proposed refinements to key protocols such as the Member–Officer Protocol.

The Committee has continued to receive assurance reports on the implementation and effectiveness of civic arrangements, ensuring that high standards are embedded in practice and not merely set out in policy. This proactive approach will be particularly important as Local Government Reorganisation progresses through summer and autumn 2026. The Civic Affairs and Audit Committee will play a pivotal role in maintaining constitutional clarity, safeguarding civic traditions, and ensuring that the Council remains resilient and well-governed through a period of structural change.

What we did during the year

In March 2025 our Civic Affairs Committee and Governance Design Group [reviewed and recommended](#) that Full Council approve a new Constitution to support operation of an updated Leader and Cabinet Model of governance from the start of the 2025/2026 Municipal Year. We established a newly titled Civic Affairs and Audit Committee, and our Terms of Reference was developed with support of ADSO. As part that review, we reviewed the Committee functions to Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) best practice guidance, to help ensure we continue to operate effectively.

CIPFA produced a diagram to illustrate this:



Using their guidance, we can evaluate our work and demonstrate how we contributed to development of effective governance arrangements in the year:

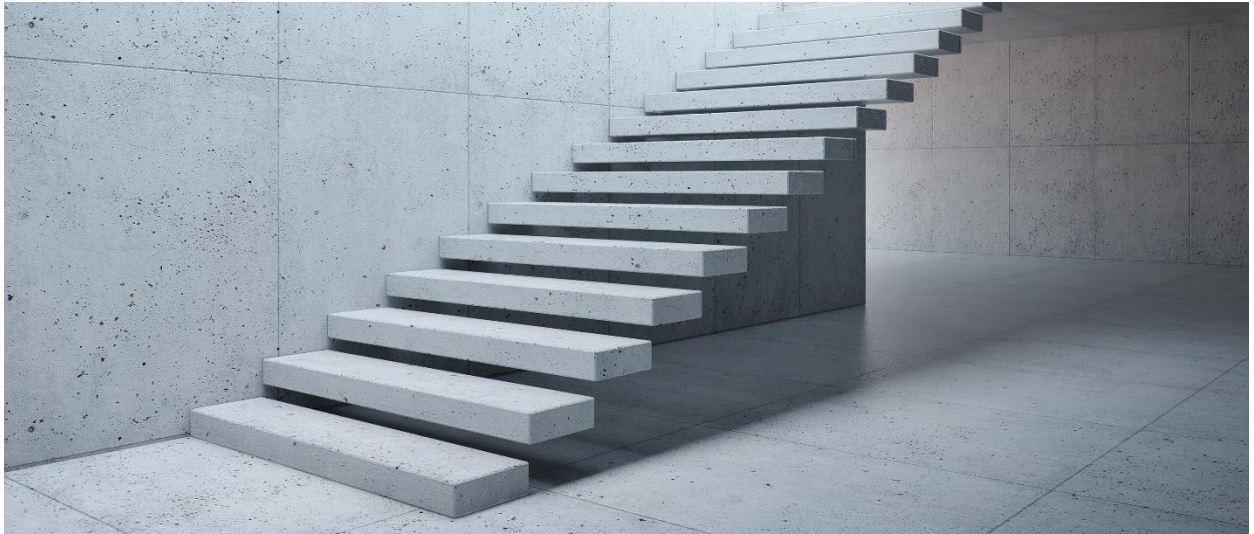
Areas where the committee can have impact by supporting improvement	Examples from the year
<p>Promoting the principles of good governance and their application to decision making.</p>	<p>We supported development of the Local Code of Governance which was updated in the year.</p> <p>In May 2025 the Civic Affairs Committee reviewed and approved the Annual Governance Statement for 2023/2024 in advance of approving the Statement of Accounts for 2023/2024.</p> <p>In February 2026 the Civic Affairs and Audit Committee reviewed and approved the Annual Governance Statement for 2024/2025 in advance of approving the Statement of Accounts for 2024/2025.</p> <p>As part of our review we suggested and agreed changes that were reflected in the final published versions of the documents. We supported effective partnership working by ensuring that robust governance, risk management and accountability arrangements are in place across collaborative activities. We kept up to date on the progress of the external audits, noting new legislation which introduced backstop dates to manage the national backlog. The Council is now up to date with the accounts as per the current backstop dates.</p>
<p>Contributing to the development of an effective control environment.</p>	<p>We reviewed regular reports from Internal Audit which provided updates on assurance work completed. This included follow-up reports on previous reviews where there was limited assurance and / or significant recommendations.</p> <p>The Finance team maintained their compliance with the CIPFA Financial Management Code.</p>

Areas where the committee can have impact by supporting improvement	Examples from the year
<p>Supporting the establishment of arrangements for the governance of risk and for effective arrangements to manage risks.</p>	<p>We discussed and noted how we are integrating our risk management data into the broader Performance Management Framework to strengthen alignment between risk and performance oversight.</p> <p>Our Risk Management Framework includes a scoring matrix that supports consistent risk evaluation and helps prioritise mitigation efforts. In November 2025 we noted the development of updated financial scoring factors to reflect current conditions and ensure effective and proportionate mitigation.</p> <p>In March 2026 we received a report on the Council’s risk management arrangements and reviewed the revision of our Strategy and Framework.</p>
<p>Advising on the adequacy of the assurance framework and considering whether assurance is deployed efficiently and effectively.</p>	<p>We considered the assurance framework whilst reviewing the Annual Governance Statement. This included variety of assurance sources including internal controls, policy development, risk management, the Chief Audit Executive annual opinion, external inspections, and the reports of the external auditors.</p>
<p>Supporting effective external audit, with a focus on high quality and timely audit work.</p>	<p>We discussed with external auditors how the Government has introduced legislation for a lighter touch audit of the outstanding accounts within the national backlog, and how these risks were being managed.</p> <p>We noted the audit plan from our external auditors, which considered risks and how the audit of the 2024/2025 would be carried out.</p> <p>We considered the External Audit completion reports for both 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 financial years from our external auditors EY.</p>

Areas where the committee can have impact by supporting improvement	Examples from the year
Supporting the quality of the internal audit activity, in particular underpinning its organisational independence.	<p>We reviewed internal audit reports which gives details on the planned audits and the audit strategy, compliance with professional codes, and received regular updates on the progress of current internal audits and outcomes of the reviews.</p> <p>We noted the implementation of the Global Internal Audit Standards in the UK Public Sector, and approved the teams new charter, code of ethics, and strategy which are based on the new professional standards. We noted the teams action plan to implement the new standards.</p>
Aiding the achievement of the authority's goals and objectives by helping to ensure appropriate governance, risk, control and assurance arrangements.	<p>We received and discussed the Information Governance Annual Report which provides an overview of the current arrangements in place to monitor the Information Governance arrangements at the Council including Data Protection Compliance and Information Security / Cyber Security Compliance. It also included an update on council performance related to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) / Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) Requests; Data Subject Access Requests; Personal Data Incidents</p> <p>As part of our ongoing training and awareness we received regular reports on Governance Risk and Control. These included topical updates to help us consider emerging risks. Examples included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued approach to clearing the national backlog of accounts • Updates on Global Internal Audit Standards in the Public Sector • New legislation on measures to tackle fraud and counter fraud briefings from CIFAS and the Public Sector Fraud Authority • Updates on the National Fraud Initiative • Nolan Principles at 30 Years

Areas where the committee can have impact by supporting improvement	Examples from the year
Supporting the development of robust arrangements for ensuring value for money.	As the Civic Affairs committee we considered the External Auditors completion reports for the 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 financial years. These include Value For Money assessment across areas of financial sustainability, governance and improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Actions for improvement and assurance are incorporated into the Annual Governance Statement.
Helping the authority to implement the values of good governance, including effective arrangements for countering fraud and corruption risks.	<p>We were briefed and discussed topical matters which helped us to support and promote counter fraud arrangements.</p> <p>This included updates on the National Fraud Initiative and a briefing on how we prepared for new legislation that introduces a “failure to prevent” offence as part of the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023.</p>
Promoting effective public reporting to the authority’s stakeholders and local community and measures to improve transparency and accountability.	<p>The Committee have produced this annual report summarising the work completed in the year.</p> <p>The Committee reviewed proposed amendments to Member Allowances and made recommendations to Council.</p> <p>The Committee reviewed and discussed the development of a quarterly performance report for Cabinet. The Committees review of the new framework, including its Principles and Approach and report, supports the Committee in fulfilling its role in reviewing corporate governance arrangements.</p>

Continuous improvement



Our focus for the following year

We will continue to review the effectiveness of the Committee by maintaining awareness of emerging best practice guidance on governance from CIPFA, the Local Government Association, and the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.

We will also start planning for Local Government Reorganisation and how we can provide the assurance during the period of change.

Good practice

As a Committee we promote good practice in governance risk and control to those charged with governance.

Seven principles of public life

Our governance framework is supported by the [seven Principles of Public Life](#), and apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder. This includes all those who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in the Civil Service, local government, the police, courts and probation services, non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), and in the health, education, social and care services. All public office-holders are both servants of the public and stewards of public resources. The principles also have application to all those in other sectors delivering public services.

Selflessness	Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
Integrity	Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
Objectivity	Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
Accountability	Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
Openness	Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
Honesty	Holders of public office should be truthful.
Leadership	Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour and treat others with respect. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Employment Committee

19 May 2026

6:20pm – 6.30pm

Present: Councillors Nestor (Chair), Ashton, Bick, Davey, Martinelli and Moore

Officers Present:

Chief Operating Officer: Jane Wilson

Assistant Director – People and Change: Hannah Ralph

Strategic People Manager: Susan Caranese

Deputy Democratic Services Manager: Claire Tunncliffe

RECOMMENDATION TO COUNCIL

Senior Management Review: Consideration of Termination / Exit Costs

The recommendation of the Employment Committee, which met on May 19, 2026, are outlined below:

The Committee **resolved unanimously** to approve the recommendation on to Full Council.

Accordingly, Council is recommended to:

That an individual termination cost over £100k be approved as a result of the Senior Management Review due to contractual severance.

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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Cambridge City Council

Record of Officer Decision

Capital Allocation: Demolition of Council Owned Buildings

Decision of: Jody Etherington, Chief Finance Officer

Reference: Capital Allocation - Demolition of Council buildings, North East Cambridge

Date of decision: 08/05/2026

Date Published on website: 12/05/2026

Decision Type: Non Key

Is Subject to Call in? No

Purpose

To confirm capital budget allocation to enable demolition of Council's buildings Orwell House and Orwell Furlong (Cowley Road, North East Cambridge), to be funded from the GF development fund set up for this purpose by the Council.

Record of Decision to be included within AGM pack for information for Council.

Officer decision:

Approval of capital budget of up to £285,000 + VAT for the demolition of the Council's current buildings at North East Cambridge.

Reasons for decision: As set out in recommendations.

Any alternative options considered and rejected:

A number of alternative options were considered and reviewed.

Scrutiny Consideration: The Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, Chair and Deputy Chair of the Performance, Assets and Strategy Scrutiny Committee were consulted.

Background and Recommendation

Following the Government's decision to terminate the proposals to relocate the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant, the Council has been considering alternative options for the site. Given changing market conditions, and the expected Anglian Water proposals to upgrade the Cowley Road plant, which is likely to impact any redevelopment scheme, the Council is still considering future redevelopment options.

In the meantime, the options for the current buildings have been reviewed. The recommended decision included a review of the current and future costs for securing, maintaining and improving the buildings in line with legislation, legal advice in relation to compliance with the vacant possession strategy that was required to progress the then Hartree scheme, alongside consideration of ongoing liabilities in relation to the current buildings.

The recommended option is to demolish the current buildings and perform associated works to leave the site in appropriate condition for possible future redevelopment. An initial draft quote has been received (£260,000 plus VAT) and a formal Request for Quote is being registered to the contracts portal in line with Procurement Legislation.

The approval of £285,000 (plus VAT) capital funding requires confirmation before completing the planning application for the demolition works, and also provides additional contingency in advance of the final formal tender process. VAT is complex, and currently considered irrecoverable but remains within the Council's exemption level. Residual liabilities would, however, cost the Council in excess of the VAT.

The Council has secured the site since vacant possession on 31st March 2026 and it is monitored.

A prior approval demolition application is being developed in line with Shared Planning Team advice and is due for submission in June 2026. Subject to capital budget and planning approval, demolition would be completed by November 2026.

The demolition will be funded from the GF development fund. The remit of the fund, as approved by Council in February 2018, includes GF investment in commercial or residential property or for enabling works. These works constitute essential enabling works in advance of future redevelopment, and therefore fall within the remit of the fund.

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