

Public Document Pack

Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee

EnvCm/1

Thursday, 21 March 2024

ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 21 March 2024
6.10 - 9.45 pm

Present: Councillors Divkovic (Chair), Nestor (Vice-Chair), Ashton, Glasberg, Hauk, Levien, Payne, Pounds and Swift

Executive Councillors: Carling (Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services), Gilderdale (Executive Councillor for Community Wealth Building and Community Safety and Deputy Leader (Statutory)), Moore (Executive Councillor for Climate Action and Environment) and Wade (Executive Councillor for Communities)

Officers:

Assistant Chief Executive: Andrew Limb

Assistant Director, Housing and Homelessness: Samantha Shimmon

Asset Development Manager: Anthony French

Culture & Community Manager: Frances Alderton

Environmental Quality & Growth Manager: Jo Dicks

Strategic Delivery Manager: Alistair Wilson

Strategy and Partnerships Manager: David Kidston

Technical & Specialist Services Manager: John Richards

Urban Growth Project Manager: Tim Wetherfield

Committee Manager: James Goddard

Meeting Producer: Boris Herzog

Others Present:

Market and Street Trading Manager: Tim Jones

Public Art Officer: Nadine Black

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

24/12/EnC Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillor Payne who would arrive late. Councillor Levien would attend as alternate until she arrived.

24/13/EnC Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
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Councillors Tong and Glasberg	24/15/EnC	Personal: Petition was put in by a colleague - Sarah Nicmanis (Green Party MP Candidate for Cambridge and City Council Candidate for Coleridge ward).
Pounds	24/20/EnC	Personal and Prejudicial: Made an application for a Public Art grant to be considered at E&C on 21 March (Romsey Rec Ground project). Withdrew from discussion and room, and did not vote.
Gilderdale	24/21/EnC	Personal: Worked for 'It Takes A City' which worked with the Council on the Social Impact Fund which was mentioned in the Officer's report.

24/14/EnC Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to the following amendment:

(24/7/EnC) Councillor Glasberg requested a change to the recommendation in the officer's report to remove (O) 'Cambridge Canoe Club additional storage' as planning permission has not been received for the Canoe Club extension.

24/15/EnC Petition: Climate and Ecology Bill

The Lead Petitioner made a presentation to Committee setting out background information.

Statement:

We, the undersigned, petition Cambridge City Council to: (i) Support the Climate and Ecology Bill (CE Bill); (ii) Inform the local media of this decision; (iii) Write to our local MP, Daniel Zeichner, asking him to support the Bill; and (iv) Write to Zero Hour, the organisers of the cross-party campaign for the CE Bill, expressing Cambridge City Council's support (councils@zerohour.uk).

Justification:

The cross-party CE Bill would require the UK Government to develop and achieve a new environmental strategy. As the crises in climate and nature are deeply intertwined the Bill requires a new plan to:

- reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with the 1.5°C required under the UK's Paris Agreement obligations;
- set nature measurably on the path to recovery by 2030;
- prioritise nature in decision-making;
- end fossil fuel production and imports as rapidly as possible; and
- provide for re-training for those currently working in fossil fuel industries.

Originally introduced to Parliament by Caroline Lucas, it came before the House of Commons in May 2023 as a cross-party Bill. Cambridge City Council needs to join other councils, along with 881 organisations, politicians, and scientists from all over the UK and across 12 political parties, as well as some 42,000 members of the public, in giving it their backing.

In response to the petition:

- i. The Executive Councillor for Climate Action and Environment said:
 - a. Supported the petition and undertook to bring a motion on climate change to Council in May 2024.
 - b. The City Council was recognised as a leader in the field of councils taking climate change action.
 - c. Cambridge was an 'A List City' by the Carbon Disclosure Project.
- ii. Lib Dem Councillors asked for evidence-based targets and strategies to meet net zero as soon as possible but supported the petition.
- iii. Green Councillors supported the petition and referred to the Cambridge City Council Climate Change Emergency Declaration in 2019.

24/16/EnC Public Questions

Question 1

Cam Valley Forum understand that £480,000 of the £550,000 that was allocated for the 'River Themed Public Art Programme', in 2016, remains unspent. We request to be involved in consultations on how this public money might be used, and ask that this is not delayed.

It was thought that it might fund a sequel to the highly acclaimed film 'Pure Clean Water' about Chalk streams. It might tap into the rich local musical talent to sponsor the commissioning and performing of musical compositions inspired by the Cam. It could fund a project by Rowan, who produce outstanding works of art, working with adults with learning disabilities, such as

the recently completed mural to celebrate Cherry Hinton Brook. It could fund outreach into schools' art departments, and it could heighten awareness of the beauty of the Cam and the need to nurture our river.

Perhaps it could fund a sculpture that would appeal to locals and visitors alike. Many cities and towns have commissioned such works of art to enrich areas of high footfall by being relevant to the specific history of the place. Might there a life-size sculpture depicting the laundresses at work on Launderess Green, or a sculpture to celebrate the many years of river swimming at Sheep's Green?

Such sculptures should be well affordable within the allocated funds. We note that in 2019 the London Borough of Waltham Forest commissioned a statue of their local footballer, Harry Kane, which cost just £7,200.

We urge that the money available should be put to good use bringing lasting benefit and joy to people who love Cambridge and its river. It might even have the potential to reverse the tide of defeatism and depression that seems to be engulfing our city?

We look forward to hearing how Cam Valley Forum might be able to assist in steering this arts programme forward.

The Executive Councillor for Communities responded:

- i. There was no public art S106 funding still allocated to the River Cam public art programme.
- ii. In March 2016, following a report to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee, the then Executive Councillor for City Centre and Public Places agreed a River Cam public art programme with a maximum combined budget of up to £550,000. This was to be funded in part by an allocation of £450,000 of public art S106 contributions, plus external funding bids. However, no external funding was secured, so the funding available was focussed on the £450,000 S106 funding.
- iii. In January 2018, again following a report to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee, the then Executive Councillor for Streets & Open Spaces approved the use of up to £120,000 (from the £450,000 of S106 funding allocated to the River Cam public art programme) for the River Cam (later, called the 'To the River') public art residency.
- iv. In October 2019, following a report to the Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee, the then Executive Councillor for Communities agreed to de-allocate £330,000 of public art S106 contributions allocated

to the River Cam public art programme. This was returned to the Council's public art S106 funds for use on other public art projects. This meant that only the £120,000 allocation for the 'To the river' public art residency remained.

- v. In March 2022, following a report to the Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee, the Leader and Executive Councillor for Communities agreed to allocate between a further £80,000 to £150,000 of off-site public art S106 'strategic' funds to enable the delivery and/or future development of the public art installation arising from the "To the river" residency, subject to a constructive public consultation response, planning permission and other necessary consents and confirmation of project affordability within the proposed increased budget range.

Question 2

Abbey People feels that the decision making on the S106 Public Art allocations has been patently unfair, and in breach of the spirit and structure of the Community Wealth Building Strategy.

The decision to fund two centrally decided projects (More Playful Art Please and Urban Voices) instead of community generated projects is in breach of the council's Community Wealth Building policy. These projects were centrally run by officers and have been developed by central officers rather than community groups. Using any area allocation for a central project should only be a last resort if funding is in danger of expiring. As there were a number of local projects that could have been developed, we feel strongly that any Abbey S106 art allocation should be allocated to one of the local community lead projects, rather than central projects. To decide otherwise is in breach of the spirit and letter of the Community Wealth Building strategy.

We feel the decisions and allocation was patently unfair, paragraph of the report 1.2 b states:

b. Although a grant application from Romsey ward did not fully meet the selection criteria, it has provided a starting point for developing an enhanced project at Romsey Recreation Ground as part of the Commissioning Programme. This would engage local residents about what that local green space means to them and community life.

As the report has stated that the application did not meet selection criteria but has been taken forward for commissioning, this opportunity should have been

offered to all the unsuccessful applicants before any local S106 Art allocation was applied to centrally decided and run projects.

We ask that Councillors reject the report's recommendations and ask officers to review the applications with a new panel, giving all applicants that did not meet selection criteria the opportunity to develop an enhanced project as part of the Commissioning Programme. This work should be completed before any centrally-originated projects are taken forward.

The Executive Councillor for Communities responded:

- i. The report to the Scrutiny Committee, particularly in sections 3 and 4, provided a comprehensive explanation of the background to/and the grants round process, including the criteria used to assess applications. The applications were assessed by the Councils expert officers in Public Art, Culture, Community Development, the Community Grants team and a subject matter expert on S106 funding. The expert Panel assessed the grant applications to determine if they would meet the purposes for which public art S106 funding was intended and which, offered less flexibility than other funding streams. If a proposal did not meet the criteria, then it could not be funded.
- ii. In March 2022, the Executive Councillor at the time approved a Manifesto for Public Art, called 'The Cambridge Perspective – Making Public Art Work' in response to concerns about expiry dates related to s106 public art contributions. Officers were also instructed to seek and identify eligible proposals for new public art projects through the development of a Commissioning Programme to ensure that the S106 contributions that fund public art projects could be used effectively and on time, so as not to have to return the funding to developers.
- iii. As well as developing the Commissioning Programme, the Council had undertaken a 2023/24 S106 public art grants round to be able to take stock of ideas from local communities for local public art projects (which included the application from Abbey People) and to support the effective use of time limited S106; a belt and braces approach had been taken to ensure projects were funded on time and with genuine community benefits.
- iv. The development of the Programme involved considering feedback from a public consultation for the Manifesto, conversations with local communities and external partners as well as colleagues from across the

Council. It is underpinned by the principles and criteria set out in the Council's Public Art Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and links to other council strategies including the Community Wealth Building Strategy. The two projects the questioner referred to had not been proposed from a central Council position but rather through a consultation process and from community feedback to develop projects with meaning to community and to meet funding deadlines.

- v. The Council must follow established criteria and a decision-making process in relation to Section 106 allocations, but in keeping with the spirit of the Community Wealth Building Strategy. The Council sought to engage community groups in the process where possible through the Grants Round process and through proposing the More Play Please! And Urban Voices projects in the Commissioning Programme.

Question 3

I ask the following question as Chair of the Friends of Sheep's Green and Lammas Land. A quarter of children are obese when they leave primary school, and the projected cost of childhood obesity for the NHS has recently been estimated at £8 billion. We are concerned to learn about the proposal (in the Outdoor Play Spaces Investment Strategy document) to rank playgrounds into tiers, with a view to closing lower tiers and concentrating resources in large play spaces. Having an easily accessible local playground may be the only feasible opportunity for exercise for many children. Larger playgrounds will also become less attractive to children if they become overcrowded. A stated aim of the project is 'Ensuring that the play space provision aligns with the local community's needs' (4.1(b)). Please can you explain, then, why no consultation with the city's playground users on their needs has been undertaken? We would also like to know more about the proposal to resurface the playgrounds with 'versatile, year-round surfaces'. There is growing scientific concern about the toxic off-gassing of surfaces made from rubber crumb, i.e. recycled tyres. Surfaces made of rubber crumb have been found to contain significant levels of carcinogens and neuro-toxins, including lead and other heavy metals. These pose major health risks, especially to children and pregnant women. Rubber crumb is increasingly banned in US playgrounds on health grounds. Please can you confirm that rubber crumb will not be used in the renovation of Cambridge playgrounds, and that the toxicity profile of all potential surfaces will be carefully reviewed?

The Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services responded:

- i. Provision of play areas was incredibly important to the Council. Thought the points raised by the questioner about the shocking prevalence of childhood obesity really underlined how essential it was that everyone did their part to promote physical activity and healthy lifestyles from a young age.
- ii. The tier system in the Officer's report was a tool (and information) to feed into decisions the Council made in the future about where to strategically target the limited resources we had. It's about identifying gaps in provision for different age groups, and different types and sizes of play area across the city. For example, one of the clear messages from the tier system was an under-provision within the Newnham area, and knowing that, the Council could look to address it.
- iii. This wasn't about concentrating resources into larger sites, it's about helping the Council make informed, data-driven investment decisions, which also took into account local information and rates of usage. Regarding consultation, the Executive Councillor wished to reassure the public speaker that this was about the underlying principles and tools, and that consultation would be important in decisions made using them.
- iv. When we go forward and look to invest more in play areas, the Council would continue to put public engagement at the heart of that, as with the recent investment of £165,000 into Pulley Park in King's Hedges (the new equipment, would have a real positive impact on those communities). This investment strategy was about doing more of that.
- v. It's also about equipping the Planning Team with the evidence they need to push for better, more coordinated provision from new developments. Developers often met their planning obligations by installing very small play areas on sites. Whilst there was a need for those, what the data from this work had shown, was that there could sometimes be too many of those, when what the Council really needed was a mix of large and small-scale provision. Having this data would empower the Council to push for that through the S106 mechanism.
- vi. Was happy to provide reassurance on the point about health and safety; the Council would conduct thorough safety reviews of the materials used in play areas. Loose materials like rubber crumb were detrimental on environmental grounds as they could easily spread around and act to introduce microplastics into wildlife ecosystems. Stated there was no reason we would want to use loose materials like this.

Question 4

When the issue of the lack of Traveller sites in Cambridge was raised by a public question last month, this Council responded:

“Once we have received the final report from the [Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment], which should be ready around springtime, we can understand the need for both permanent and temporary stopping sites in the Greater Cambridge area and where it would be best to locate a site if a need is demonstrated.”

But the ‘biodiversity proposals’ for Arbury Town Park — from which Travellers have been evicted on several occasions in recent years — demonstrate that this Council understands full well the urgent need for temporary stopping sites in Cambridge. With wire fencing, bollards and soil bunds blocking all possible unauthorised vehicle access, these plans are transparently contrived to block Travellers from staying on the green space.

It is all well and good to say that the local community is inconvenienced when Travellers are forced to park their vehicles in Arbury Town Park in order to, for example, visit family or attend a funeral. But unauthorised encampments will continue in Cambridge for as long as Travellers are not provided with legal stopping places. No amount of evictions and hostile architecture will change that. As this Council stated in its July 2021 ‘Motion on [the] Policing Bill’: “No family willingly stops somewhere they are not welcome”.

Due to the long-standing policy failings of Cambridge’s local authorities, Travellers simply have no option but to stop without authorisation. It is egregious that this Council is finding new ways to punish them for this, all the while the GTANA report continues to face delay after delay.

What progress, if any, has this Council made towards finding possible locations and funding sources for temporary stopping site provision in Cambridge, and towards providing negotiated stopping agreements in the interim? Why does this Council appear to be moving faster to forcibly exclude Travellers from Cambridge than to accommodate them?

The Executive Councillor for Communities responded:

- i. A contractor was appointed in 2019 to carry out an assessment of the Accommodation Needs of Gypsies, Travellers, Travelling Showpeople, bargee travellers, and other boat and caravan dwellers. This covered not only Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire but other authorities in

- Cambridgeshire and beyond. In early 2020 the work was paused for a few months as face-to-face interviews could not be carried out due to the Covid pandemic. Following lengthy discussions with the consultants the contract was subsequently terminated in late summer 2022, as the local authorities who had commissioned the work were not satisfied that it was sufficiently robust to give an accurate picture and stand up to scrutiny.
- ii. The contractors currently working for Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils were formally appointed in spring 2023 and their work had progressed according to plan. Officers received the first draft report at the end of last week and were currently working through the initial findings and further work would be required before it was ready to be published.
 - iii. A publication date for after the May elections would need to be agreed between the two councils.
 - iv. Some work had already taken place in trying to identify suitable solutions for enabling Gypsy/Roma/Traveller communities to stop temporarily in the area. Officers would continue to consider options and would reach out again to wider partners once we could share the results of the report with them.
 - v. The Council was consulting on biodiversity initiatives in Arbury Town Park aiming to seek a range of views and opinions. These proposals were not intended to target or exclude Travellers from the area. The measures mentioned by the public speaker were being implemented at the request of residents' and the Council designed the response with the primary aim of protecting and improving the biodiversity of the park and to ensure its sustainability for all members of the community.

Supplementary question:

Made the following supplementary points:

- i. It strained credibility the biodiversity project was not a way to stop Gypsy/Roma/Traveller communities using the land in Trumpington.
- ii. This appeared to be part of a pattern to stop Gypsy/Roma/Traveller communities using land in general.

The Executive Councillor responded:

- i. Biodiversity initiatives in Arbury Town Park were planned for some time after the building was finished.
- ii. The latest initiative was in response to consultation with residents (undertaken as standard) as part of an Environmental Improvement Programme project to improve the area.

Question 5

This question is submitted on behalf of the Friends of Sheep's Green Learner Pool and relates to Item 11 on the Agenda.

S106 contributions are paid by developers to mitigate the impact of development on communities. Why, therefore is it recommended that the largest contribution of this year's generic S106 2023/24 sports and community facilities funding (£40,000) be allocated to a Private Limited Company for the purpose of building a large extension for storing members' canoes, which will involve *developing* public Common Land that will deprive the public of access to land that has been in their use for over 1,000 years?

The Cambridge Canoe Club has many supporters, but this is a commercial enterprise unavailable to general members of the public. People cannot turn up at the Club and just take out a canoe, and becoming a member costs money and involves undertaking training that is frequently oversubscribed.

Furthermore, planning permission has not yet been granted. The application is contentious because it does not comply with the requirements outlined by the Secretary of State regarding changes to Common Land and it may not actually be granted permission. This raises two concerns. First, on Page 11 of today's meeting papers, it says that "At 18/01/24 Committee Members agreed to delay grant funding for Canoe Club until planning permission was received." This risks putting undue pressure on the Planning Committee to approve the application. Secondly, there is a concern that, even if planning were to be granted, the project may not be completed within the allotted time frame, depriving the public of money that could fund more timely improvements to other City facilities.

Cambridge City Council is committed to Equality and Diversity, and yet proposing to fund development on Common Land in this way discriminates directly against low-income groups and the children and young people that depend on free access to Common Land for their recreation. Funding per play park in Cambridge is at a shockingly low c. £1,602 *per annum* (see Item 12) making the decision to award £40,000 to a Private Limited Company baffling.

The Friends of Sheep's Green Learner Pool have repeatedly asked the Council to reinstate the heating of the Learner Pool, something that was in operation when the pool was first built in the 1970s. The Learner Pool is the only facility in the city where children can learn to swim for free. It is a vital resource that saves lives and it deserves investment. The Friends of the Learner Pool were told we were not eligible to apply for S106 funding, and yet the Learner Pool is exactly the sort of facility that should be deserving of developer funding. It is free. It benefits the most disadvantaged in our society, especially children who come every year from the most deprived areas of the City. It is hugely popular on hot days and local schools have told us that they would use it for swimming lessons if the water was heated.

We therefore ask the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services why he is recommending funding a Private company rather than using developer contributions for the genuine benefit of the City, for example, by properly maintaining and heating the Learner Pool – a facility that would benefit countless children into the future?

The Executive Councillor for Communities responded:

- i. The question did not actually relate to item 11 (2023/24 S106 funding round [Streets & Open Spaces]) on the agenda of the Environment & Community Scrutiny Committee meeting on 21 March 2024. This was not a matter for the Executive Councillor for the City Services and Open Spaces.
- ii. Instead, it related to the report on the 2023/24 S106 funding round [Community and Sports Facilities], which was considered by the Committee on 18 January 2024 and which came under the remit of the Executive Councillor for Communities (Councillor Rachel Wade).
- iii. Officers offered to withdraw the recommendation in the 18/1/2024 report - for a £40,000 grant to be made to Cambridge Canoe Club - when it became clear at the committee meeting that planning approval was still awaited (because the funding round selection criteria excluded proposals requiring planning permission).
- iv. Page 8 of the Committee's 21 March 2024 agenda papers included the minutes of the 18/1/24 meeting which state that "Councillor Glasberg requested a change to the recommendation in the Officer's report to remove (O) 'Cambridge Canoe Club additional storage'....The Committee unanimously approved this amended recommendation. The

Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations as amended.”

- v. The S106 funding round guidance made clear that community groups and sports clubs could apply for a S106 grant, provided that they both met the selection criteria and would be prepared to enter into a community use agreement for making the improved facilities available for community use and/or affordable hire for an agreed number of hours per week for five years. This was highlighted in the first paragraph of the front page of the grant guidance and was reflected in selection criteria 4 on page 3 of the guidance.

Question 6

We are delighted with the progress of the Herbicide Reduction Plan as discussed at recent meetings of the Herbicide Reduction Working Group on which we sit, and as outlined in the latest Report ([https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/documents/s65481/Final](https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/documents/s65481/Final%20of%20Herbicide%20Reduction%20Plan%20with%20Appendices%20and%20EQIA%20060324.pdf) of Herbicide Use Reduction Plan with Appendices and EQIA 060324.pdf). We look forward to further collaboration with Cambridge City Council now that the purchase of a range of new equipment has been approved which will allow for the rollout of herbicide-free weed control across the city. We are especially keen that our combined public communications plan is pursued urgently given the misleading media coverage over Cambridgeshire County Council's disappointing reversal of its earlier decision to stop using herbicides on its Highways. It is important that residents are aware of the interrelated ecological, public health, and disability rights justifications for the City Council's Herbicide Reduction Plan, to encourage both ongoing public support, as well as a wider shift away from herbicides and insecticides on privately owned land.

As agreed at recent Working Group Meetings, can the Report please be amended to include reference to two current initiatives that depend, and build on the success of the HPR? i) our Pesticide-Free Schools (<https://www.pesticidefreecambridge.org/schools-campaign>), backed by Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire county Council, and the combined authority Mayor. ii) Pesticide-Free Cambridge Colleges, a collaboration between ourselves and Cambridge Climate Society (<https://www.pesticidefreecambridge.org/colleges-campaign>).

Finally, the disability access element of pavement plants is mentioned four times in the Report, under 3.4a, 4c, 10b, and again in the EQIA (9), where

weeds are also presented as potentially hazardous to parents with buggies and prams. We feel it is vital to include reference to pesticide exposure itself, even at very low doses, as not only a public health and biodiversity issue, but also a disability access one which impacts disproportionately on people with certain chronic illnesses and allergies/hypersensitivities to active ingredients. It is also a concern for parents of babies and young children whose growing nervous system makes them especially vulnerable to the toxic effects of synthetic pesticides. Can these points be added to the EQI please?

The Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services responded:

- i. Was pleased to hear of Pesticide Free Cambridge's satisfaction with the progress of the Herbicide Reduction Plan and their commitment to further collaboration.
- ii. Agreed it was crucial for residents to be informed about ecological, public health, and disability access to garner ongoing public support and to encourage a wider shift away from herbicides and insecticides, and these ambitions were set out in section 5 of the Officer's report. Intended to speak to a journalist about initiatives to publicise work the Council had been able to do.
- iii. Regarding the request to amend the report to include reference to two current initiatives that build on the success of the Herbicide Reduction Plan, namely the Pesticide-Free Schools and Pesticide-Free Cambridge Colleges campaigns, the Council would ensure these initiatives were appropriately acknowledged and referenced. The report could not be amended to include the above initiatives as it referred to Council operational details.
- iv. Understood the speaker's concerns regarding the disability access and pavement plants and the need to address pesticide exposure as a public health and disability access issue. An EQIA could be reviewed at any point, and this would be done after Committee to reference pesticide exposure and ensure its potential impacts on vulnerable populations were included in the Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) section of the Report.

Question 7

The Council's support (or lack of it) for market traders, including the role of the market in providing sustainable food.

The Chair had ruled this draft question out of time due to the high number of other public speakers who had registered. If question details were finalised a response could be sent after committee.

Question 8

The Cultural Strategy's support (or lack of it) for individual artists, musicians and performers, and the provision of facilities essential to enable their cultural activities.

The Chair had ruled this draft question out of time due to the high number of other public speakers who had registered. If question details were finalised a response could be sent after committee.

24/17/EnC Greater Cambridge Air Quality Strategy 2024 - 2029

Matter for Decision

Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) requires Local Authorities to monitor key pollutants (NO₂ & PM₁₀) across their district and report against target levels. Data shows objective levels had now been achieved across Cambridge. National legally binding PM_{2.5} targets had been set under the Environmental Target Regulations and levels in Cambridge were around the target annual mean.

As objective levels had been achieved within the Air quality Management Area (AQMA) the Council were required to revoke this; negating the need for an Air quality Action Plan. Under the Environment Act 2021 an Air Quality Strategy was required if LAQM objective levels were achieved. The Strategy must outline how air quality would be maintained and improved; including how it would help achieve national PM_{2.5} targets.

It was agreed at the Environmental & Community Scrutiny Committee, October 2023 to pursue a joint Air Quality Strategy with South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) and to work towards World Health Organisation (WHO) air quality guideline targets. SCDC agreed these decisions at their equivalent committee in December 2023.

It was widely accepted there was no safe level of air pollution. Greater Cambridge was a major growth area with large scale development and population increase coming forward in the next 10-20 years. This Strategy sought to strike a balance in supporting the productivity, economy, and prosperity of Greater Cambridge; whilst continuing to deliver improvements in air quality and the positive health outcomes that improved air quality would

deliver for both residents and visitors to the Greater Cambridge area. The Strategy focused on sources of pollution that could be influenced locally by all partner organisations.

Interim targets had been set to be delivered over the lifetime of the strategy. Where appropriate, mechanisms for delivering these improvements working alongside delivery partners had been identified. These were outlined as an Action Plan (Appendix B of the Strategy).

The strategy met Council legislative responsibilities under LAQM.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Climate Action and Environment

Approved the adoption of the 'Greater Cambridge Air Quality Strategy' as per Appendix A of the Officer's report.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Environmental Quality & Growth Manager.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Asked for publicity of actions to improve air quality to be publicised eg through Cambridge Matters to engage the public and show progress.
- ii. Data needed to be accessible for residents to understand why they needed to change their behaviour.

The Environmental Quality & Growth Manager said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. It was difficult to convert pollutant levels into easy to digest comparisons for the public such as numbers of lives saved by reducing pollutants by X amount. There was little information nationally available since 2019. Would work on this next year to give tangible outcomes from the Air Strategy.
- ii. Various sites periodically measured pollutant levels across the city.
- iii. Air quality had generally improved across the city over the last twenty years and now met statutory guidelines. Particulate levels varied day-to-day and during the day. Exposure levels varied between different types

of pollutants. This made it hard to mitigate their effects. For example Officers had worked with schools to suggest staggering closing times. It was hard to measure the impact as pollutant levels varied.

- iv. New legislation was in place about solid fuel burning and smoke control areas. Officers needed to quantify what was occurring and how to address issues eg when to take enforcement action.
- v. Agreed it was possible to promote work to improve air quality now national legal standards were met. For example initiatives such as Ultra-Low Emission Vehicle policies for taxi vehicles in the city. The Council had limited resources so needed to put these in the best place to bring about change in residents' behaviour. Verified annual data reports could be published in Cambridge Matters (data had to be verified before it could be published).

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

24/18/EnC Cambridge Market Status and Powers

Matter for Decision

The Council recognised the important contribution that the market could make to the local economy and the character of the City. Markets could deliver economic growth and regeneration; they offer an opportunity for small businesses to get started for a relatively modest financial outlay, help increase city centre vitality and contribute in a number of ways to the local communities they serve.

The recommendations in the officer's report were relevant to the current day-to-day operation of its markets. The Council aims to create a market trading environment that compliments the surrounding area and retail offer, was sensitive to the needs of all users of our city and provided a diversity of choice for consumers. It sought to encourage and stimulate investment from local traders and to create a quality and sustainable offer to our residents and visitors.

It was recognised that it was important that the Council had clarity on the nature of its Market Powers so that there was a reference point for any action

the Council might want to take in respect of protecting and supporting its current and future Markets.

The Officer's report summarised the work undertaken by the Markets team and the advice received from The National Association of British Markets (NABMA) Legal and Policy expert and makes a series of recommendations on the operation of modern and successful markets in Cambridge.

The Council's Markets were currently operated under the provisions of the City of Cambridge Act 1985 which incorporates section 50 of the Food Act 1984.

The Council was advised that its Markets would benefit from being operated under the provisions of the City of Cambridge Act, 1985 and Part III of the Food Act 1984, as Part III of the Food Act was the current statutory framework for all modern markets and its provisions were wider than those contained in Part 11, section 50 of the Food Act 1984 for which the Market currently operated.

Use of these additional Part III provisions would provide the Council with a comprehensive range of powers, and it was the intention to consult on the impact of proposed changes.

The proposed engagement framework for consultation on the impact of any proposed changes was detailed in Section 5 of the Officer's report.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Climate Action and Environment

Agreed to:

- i. Operate Markets in Cambridge using the provisions of the City of Cambridge Act 1985 and Part III of the Food Act 1984.
- ii. Review current Byelaws, review current regulations and consult on the impact of proposed changes to terms and conditions and current licensing arrangements. These documents would then to be consolidated into one single document.
- iii. Approve the production of consultation plan (as set out in Section 5) for the development of a Market Licensing Policy, a Balance of Trade Policy, and the impact of any proposed changes to the General Market Terms and Conditions.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Strategic Delivery Manager.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Queried if the city could had more markets, particularly if requested by new developments. Who would control these, the City Council or another organisation?
- ii. Queried if existing traders would be consulted (with others) on introducing a new market, and if so, able to block possible competition?

The Strategic Delivery Manager said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. The aim of the Officer's report was to ensure the market had balance of products (not too many or too few).
- ii. The city had an existing market and could create more under existing legislation. Officers would respond to a request when contacted by people wishing to set up a market.
- iii. The Council had regulatory powers to deal with markets in competition with its own that were set up on private land.
- iv. A consultation had been drafted and would go ahead after May 2024.
- v. A report on the market, consultation results, balance of trade etc would be brought back to committee in the future.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

24/19/EnC Creativity and Culture for All. Cambridge City Council's Cultural Strategy (2024-2029)**Matter for Decision**

The 2019 Cultural Cities Enquiry Report considered how the Council could radically increase the ability to use culture to drive inclusive growth. It stated, 'The value of culture to our civic life was now indisputable. There was a great opportunity to release reserves of untapped potential in our cities through

investment in culture. Culture could help our cities to define a shared vision for the future, to promote innovation and positive change in our businesses and institutions, to equip communities to deal positively with change, and to realise more equitable opportunities for all individuals to succeed.'

The development of a strategy to maximise cultural dividends in Cambridge was a key to realising Cambridge's cultural potential as it adapts to a period of rapid growth and change.

The Cultural Strategy 2024 -2029 was a new strategy that sets out the Council's role and commitment to work with partners to deliver a cohesive, coordinated and collaborative approach to managing change as the identity of Cambridge City and the region adapts.

Following approval of the Strategy the documentation would be redesigned to ensure it met all requirements on accessibility and fitted with the wider suite of Council strategies.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Communities

Approved and adopted the Cambridge City Council's Cultural Strategy (2024 – 2029).

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Culture & Community Manager.

The Culture & Community Manager said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. Officers had been communicating and consulting about the Cultural Strategy with key partners within the city and the region eg Cambridge Arts Network.
- ii. Large events contributed towards community cohesion in the city. They also attracted people from outside the city. This was an income stream. Officers would work with other organisations so costs could be shared to run events that benefitted city residents and visitors from across the region (so city residents would not subsidise the cost of events that other

- people used). Officers had worked with commercial organisations for five years.
- iii. A Culture Infrastructure Strategy (to be drafted) would run alongside the Cultural Strategy to review the infrastructure in place and also what was needed in the city over the next ten to twenty years. Officers were working alongside the Planning Department and South Cambs District Council on the 'regional draw' of events to the city and what cultural events South Cambs District Council could provide themselves. Officers also worked with the Arts Council and Combined Authority.
 - iv. Officers were looking at how to measure the impact of culture for the economic and cultural benefit of the city.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

24/20/EnC Public Art Commissioning Strategy and the use of S106 Funding for Public Art

Councillor Pounds withdrew from the meeting for this item and did not participate in the discussion or decision making.

Matter for Decision

Following the approval of a Public Art Manifesto in March 2022, a Public Art Commissioning Programme had now been developed. This set out a package of future S106-funded projects in Cambridge, which would help the relevant time-limited public art developer contributions to be used effectively and on time. It featured new proposals for public art commissions.

The programme also included the public art commission at Nightingale Recreation Ground (Queen Edith's ward) to which the Executive Councillor allocated £40,000 of S106 funding in January 2024. An artist was being commissioned to design and deliver bespoke artwork/s inspired by the recreation ground, its new pavilion and its community garden.

As well as developing the Commissioning Programme, the Council had undertaken a 2023/24 S106 public art grants round in order to be able to take stock of ideas from local communities for local public art projects and to support the timely and effective use of time-limited S106 funding.

Paragraph 5.2 of the Officer's report featured a table that set out how emerging public art projects come together to form the overall programme, along with possible timescales for when these projects might be commissioned.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Communities

Agreed to:

- i. Note the updated S106 funding availability analysis in Appendix A and the de-allocation of public art S106 funding from a number of a few projects that either stalled or were not taken forward (see paragraph 3.7 of the Officer's report).
- ii. Allocate a £30,000 S106-funded public art grant to the Menagerie Theatre Company for its 'Trials of Democracy' project, subject to business case sign-off, a public art grant agreement and project completion or significant progress within 18 months (see Section 4 and Appendices C and D).
- iii. Allocate public art S106 funding to the following new public art projects, subject to further engagement with councillors, communities and professional artists and business case sign-off (see Section 5 and Appendix F of the Officer's report).

Project	Public art S106 funding
More Playful Art, Please!	Up to £60,000
Urban Voices (four x phase 1 Area projects of up to £30,000, plus a phase 2 project)	Up £187,000
Romsey Recreation Ground	Up to £66,000

- iv. Delegate authority to the Director of City Services, in consultation with the Executive Councillor and Opposition Spokes for Communities and

the Chair of the Environment and Community Services Scrutiny Committee to add to the Commissioning Programme any time-limited opportunities for funding small-scale (under £30,000) public art projects opportunities may arise before the next Committee meeting in June 2024 (see paragraph 5.3 of the Officer's report).

- v. Approve the draft Public Art Commissioning Programme (see Appendix F of the Officer's report).

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Strategic Delivery Manager. He clarified that due to a communications glitch during the application process, Officers had not responded to one group's email (Riverside Residents' Association). Officers would contact the group to allow them to resubmit their application, so they were not disadvantaged.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. What could be done in future to rectify issues, so they did not occur again?
- ii. How many applications were refused and what could be done about it?
- iii. Suggested residents engaged with Ward Councillors to seek help with the application process. Recognised that Officers were tied by the legal/application process.

The Strategic Delivery Manager said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. Referred to Appendix A of the Officers' report which set out the process followed and how applications were considered.
- ii. It was regrettable that not all projects could be approved. Each application had to be considered against the public art S106 funding criteria.

The Urban Growth Project Manager said that, having overseen every S106 funding round over the last twelve years, he was satisfied that the assessment of the public art applications received in the recent public art S106 funding grant round had been fair and consistent.

The Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services said the City Council was looking at how to improve Environmental Improvement Programme and S106 funding processes. Various Councils across the country were also doing this.

The Committee resolved by 7 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

24/21/EnC Community Wealth Building Strategy

Matter for Decision

The Officer's report presented the Council's Community Wealth Building strategy for approval, which aims to address poverty and inequality in Cambridge and help create a more sustainable and inclusive economy. The Community Wealth Building Strategy represented an evolution of the Council's approach to these issues and it would replace the Anti-Poverty Strategy from April 2024 onwards.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Community Wealth Building and Community Safety

Approved the Community Wealth Building Strategy.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Strategy and Partnerships Manager.

The Strategy and Partnerships Manager said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. As part of its Community Wealth Building work, the Council would explore progressive procurement approaches, which could include increasing opportunities for different types of businesses to access the

Council's supply chain, including community led co-operatives and other non-traditional business models.

- ii. Officers actively involved stakeholders in the development of the strategy. For example, two interactive stakeholder workshops were held in November and December 2023 at the Guildhall and the Meadows, which were attended by nineteen community and voluntary organisations, business bodies and public sector partner. Attendees were based on partners the City Council knew were working on relevant areas so could contribute to the community wealth building discussion.
- iii. The Community Wealth Building Strategy approach included a focus on building the six capitals identified by the Bennett Institute for Public Policy at the University of Cambridge, including natural capital and social capital. Referred to agenda page 256. Officers took advice on how to quantify and measure these capitals so they could be reported on in future. Referred to section 3 plus Appendices A and B in the Officer's report. It may be possible to set targets to be reported in future setting out progress made between 'current' and 'past' positions.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

24/22/EnC 2023/24 S106 Funding Round (Streets and Open Spaces)

Matter for Decision

The Council helped to mitigate the impact of housing development on local facilities and amenities through the use of S106 contributions. The Officer's report took stock of the contribution types within the Executive Councillor's remit and recommended use of generic informal open space S106 funding for a number of eligible projects.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services

Agreed to:

- i. Allocate generic informal open spaces S106 funding, subject to business case approval and community use agreement (as appropriate), to the following project proposals:

	Project proposals	Amount	See
a.	Towards mature tree-planting programme in parks across the city	£60,000	Paragraph 4.3
b.	Footpath improvements at Five Trees open space, East Chesterton	£10,000	Paragraph 4.4
c.	Open space improvements at Romsey Recreation Ground	£11,500	Paragraph 4.5

- ii. Allocate around £47,600 of generic informal open spaces S106 funding to eligible projects previously approved for Environmental Improvement Programme (EIP) funding in 2022/23 and 2023/24 in place of EIP funds (see paragraph 4.6 and Appendix C of the Officer's report);
- iii. Allocate an additional £5,000 of generic informal open spaces S106 funding to supplement the funding available for the St Alban's Rec Ground biodiversity project (see paragraph 4.6d and Appendix C of the Officer's report);
- iv. Note that relevant specific informal open spaces S106 contributions may be used to supplement new and existing generic S106-funded projects (e.g., for the mature tree-planting programme and improving open spaces at Romsey and Cherry Hinton Recreation Grounds and Coldham's Common BMX track) (see paragraph and 4.7 of the Officer's report);
- v. Note that some projects allocated S106 funds in previous generic S106 funding rounds had not been able to proceed (see paragraph 3.5 of the Officer's report);
- vi. Approve a new process whereby any generic S106 funds in the informal open spaces, play provision and public realm categories that were within two years of the date by which they need to be used or contractually committed may be de-allocated from a project which was unlikely to deliver on time, so that they could be re-allocated to another relevant project (related to where the S106 contributions were from) which could make timely use of this funding (see Section 5 of the Officer's report).

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Technical & Specialist Services Manager.

The Technical & Specialist Services Manager said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. A report of S106 funding for play facilities would be compiled for a future Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee meeting (likely June 2024). The report for agenda item 12 in the March Committee also referred to the Outdoor Play Spaces Investment Strategy.
- ii. The Planning Authority secured S106 funding contributions from developers to help mitigate the impact of new developments; with City Council Officers providing professional advice on needs and appropriate uses. Adopted policies and strategies provided helpful tools to guide the planning process in securing S106 contributions for an area.
- iii. Officers were working hard to make sure that all S106 contributions were used effectively and on time.

The Urban Growth Project Manager said:

- i. The approach to this funding round reflected decisions made following recommendations in a report to this Committee in October 2021.
- ii. The Outdoor Play Spaces Investment Strategy would help the City Council to identify suitable play area improvement projects that would help to make use of remaining S106 contributions for play provision for children and teenagers.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

24/23/EnC Outdoor Play Spaces Investment Strategy**Matter for Decision**

The Outdoor Play Place Spaces Investment Strategy (Strategy) detailed in Appendix B of the Officer's report provided a framework to steer future outdoor play provision and associated investment decisions. The Strategy was supported by a Business Intelligence (BI) Platform¹ which would enable the Council to use real time data to respond to changes in the play portfolio in an informed, timely and business efficient and effective manner.

The Strategy had been developed using an updated audit of outdoor play provision including an assessment of the play portfolio's current quantity, quality, and accessibility against current and future population growth.

The results of this assessment had been used to devise a 'tiered' system to identify where deficiencies and over provision exist in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility and explored how these factors could be evaluated and overcome.

The Strategy updated and reviewed the previous work dated 2016-2021 and responds to population growth but also the delivery of new play provision in the City as well as proposing a new data driven approach.

The strategic approach informs how the Council could think differently about the future of the service delivery and to investigate ways to make smarter decisions, the project and its outputs had been led using the Power BI Platform.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services

- i. Approved and adopted the proposed Outdoor Play Spaces Investment Strategy as set out in appendix B of the Officer's report; and
- ii. Instructed Officers to adopt and implement the key conclusions and recommendations from the report as follows:
 - a. To licence the software platform to enable the council to maintain real-time data for the play space provision strategy and drive business efficiency within the portfolio,
 - b. Implement the proposed tiered structure for the play space provision, incorporating different tiers to streamline processes, enhance efficiency, and provide a more organised approach to the delivery of play spaces across the City.
 - c. To review financial focus, direct attention and resources towards sites that currently had limited equipment, aiming to diversify and enhance recreational offerings.

- d. Explore the possibility of transitioning the play space surfaces in areas covered only by grass to versatile multifunctional, year-round surfaces that could accommodate various activities particularly in lower order tier sites.
 - e. Use the tiered data to make future recommendations on the allocation of funds for both local and strategic outdoor play provision, such as S106, CIL, bids to the Council's capital plan, and external investment opportunities.
- iii. Instruct Officers to use the data and information to enhance the Councils webpages in relation to outdoor play spaces; to include maps with lists of equipment available at each site and accompanying photographs.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Strategic Delivery Manager.

The Strategic Delivery Manager said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. Figures on the play space webpage dashboard gave estimates of the numbers of people using play areas. Data would be regularly updated to keep it as accurate as possible.
- ii. The EQiA in the Officers' report set out details about accessible play spaces. The public facing online tool would allow people to see the types of play spaces available, facilities and location.
- iii. Officers would visit sites to take pictures of facilities to upload onto the website so people could see what facilities were available ie what was appropriate for their child's needs. The intention was to have a variety of facilities provided across different sites.
- iv. The Outdoor Play Spaces Investment Strategy was a tool to target investment, catalogue facilities, identify facilities that need repair (quicker than possible in the past) and spare parts available for repairs.
- v. The data demonstrated the value of tier 4 play areas so they had merit to be retained.

The Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services said:

- i. The Council wanted a diversity of play space sites across the city.
- ii. There was no proposal to close sites. If some areas were not well used, the Council would engage with residents and Ward Councillors to see if equipment could be used more effectively somewhere else in the city to get best value out of assets available.
- iii. Tier classification for a given play space related to objective characteristics, with size being particularly important.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

24/24/EnC Herbicide Reduction Plan

Matter for Decision

The Council's declaration of a Biodiversity Emergency (18th July 2019) included a commitment to reducing and removing the need to use herbicides on highway verges, roads, and pavements, and to find viable and effective alternatives. This was reflected in the development and application of the Herbicide Reduction Plan (HRP).

The Council's passing of a Herbicide Motion (ref. 21/32/CNLc (22nd July 2021)), included a commitment to undertake a range of tasks and actions to reduce the reliance on herbicides, as a means of managing unwanted vegetation on public property asset within the city.

On the 27th January 2022, the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces, Sustainable Food & Community Wellbeing, after scrutiny, approved a Herbicide Reduction Plan, which included Newnham and Arbury as the two herbicide free wards, and the introduction of up to 12 herbicide free streets outside of these wards. A further decision on the 23rd March 2023 extended the trial areas to include West Chesterton and Trumpington.

The Officer's report updated on the work completed on the HRP, including an evaluation of the four herbicide free wards and the herbicide free street scheme; and makes recommendations to discontinue the use of herbicides¹ in the city's public realm.

The report considered the recent decision by the County Council to review its Highway Operational Standards for Weeds and where this presents an opportunity for the City Council to champion its ambitions to be herbicide free, and for the City Council to contribute during the consultation period for the formulation of the new policy that would include non-use of herbicides and how this would be practically and financially implemented.

The Trial had allowed the City Council to consider a range of alternatives and the use of specialist street cleansing mechanical equipment was deemed to be the most effective and sustainable weed control method available which removes the need to use herbicides on highway verges, roads, and pavements.

The HRP and its Trial were now recommended for closure, and that a new methodology was approved wherein herbicide use was significantly reduced and limited to scenarios where viable alternatives were exhausted or no other alternative was available.

Decision of Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and City Services

- i. Approved the closure of the Herbicide Free Plan and its Trials.
- ii. Approved the new weed control methodology, including the discontinuation of herbicide use in routine operations, for the City Council as outlined in this report.
- iii. Approved the continuation and further development of the 'Happy Bee Street Scheme'.
- iv. Noted the decision of the County Council on their use of herbicides and to assist them with developing a new approach for the city.
- v. Supported the development of a collaborative communication plan as detailed in Section 5 of the Officer's report.

Reason for the Decision

As set out in the Officer's report.

Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Not applicable.

Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Strategic Delivery Manager.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. 'No Mow May' led to areas looking untidy and anti-social behaviour such as fly tipping. Residents asked for equipment to tidy up streets (which some residents viewed as looking untidy due to a build-up of leaf mould and plants) after the Herbicide Reduction Plan trial started.
- ii. There were path and highway issues associated with the Herbicide Reduction Plan.
- iii. Cars parked on the highway prevented streets being deep cleaned. Queried how to engage with residents and commuters who parked in roads to request they move vehicles when deep cleans were timetabled to occur.
- iv. Referenced public question 6 from earlier in the agenda: It was important to inform residents why the Herbicide Free Trial was happening.

The Strategic Delivery Manager said the following in response to Members' questions:

- i. The Herbicide Reduction Plan did not cause problems per se. When the carriageway were in poor repair then leaf mould could grow through the cracks etc. Alternatives to herbicides such as a heat gun were available, the latter was time/resource inefficient.
- ii. If the Officer's report was approved, the weed control equipment listed could be ordered.
- iii. When deep cleans were timetabled to occur in streets Officers would appreciate if Ward Councillors could engage with residents etc who parked in streets to request vehicles were moved. Areas with high weed growth would be targeted instead of a general deep clean around the city.
- iv. The City Council would work with partner organisations to close roads when deep cleans were timetabled. The intention was for multi-agency action at the same time eg County Council repairing potholes whilst the City Council cleaned streets. If cars blocked the road, it may be possible to come back another time or use alternative tools.
- v. Herbicides were only used in exceptional circumstances when weeds (eg Japanese Knotweed) did not respond to other methods.
- vi. The City Council and Pesticide Free Cambridge were working on a communication strategy to inform residents why the Herbicide Reduction Plan was being trialled. A herbicide free scheme should look clean and tidy. The scheme was not implemented correctly if verges and the highway looked untidy.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

The meeting ended at 9.45 pm

CHAIR

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