

COUNCIL

24 July 2025
6.10 - 9.40 pm

Present: Councillors Ashton, Baigent, Bennett, Bick, Bird, Blackburn-Horgan, Clough, Dalzell, Davey, Divkovic, Dryden, Flaubert, Gardiner-Smith, Gawthroe Wood, Glasberg, Griffin, Hauk, Holloway, Hossain, Illingworth, Lee, Lokhmotova, Martinelli, McPherson, Moore, Nestor, Payne, Porrer, Pounds, Robertson, Sheil, Smart, A. Smith, S. Smith, Swift, Thittala, Thornburrow, Todd-Jones, Tong, Wade and Young

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

25/61/CNL Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Hauk, Howard and Swift.

25/62/CNL Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Reason
Thornburrow	25/66/CNL	Personal: Lived in a shared house which was a form of a HMO when first lived in Cambridge. Daughter had also recently left a similar living arrangement.
	25/74/CNL	Personal: Three-year term sitting on the Cam Conservator which ended in December. Owns a boat moored on the river outside of Cambridge. Discretion Unfettered.
Baigent	All	Personal: Member of Cam Cycle Campaign
Tong	All	Personal: Member of Cam Cycle Campaign
	25/72/CNL	Personal: Cambridgeshire County Councillor.
A Smith	25/72/CNL	Personal: Ad-hoc work for Andrew Pakes, MP for Peterborough. Discretion Unfettered.
Lokhmotova	25/69/CNL	Personal and Prejudicial: Directly involved in the Civic Quarter Design and did not take part in the discussion or vote.

25/63/CNL Mayor's announcements

It was noted that the Mayor's Diary had been exceptionally full, featuring a wide range of charity events, community engagements, and ceremonies celebrating the activism and philanthropy of both organisations and individuals.

Would be observing both the Women's and Men's First Division Races tomorrow evening before presenting trophies to the winning teams at Town Bumps week.

Requested that Councillors join the Mayor to meet on Saturday 9 August, 12pm, outside the Guildhall, to commemorate Hiroshima and Nagasaki Day.

The Mayor's Day Out scheduled for Wednesday, 13 August, marked the 40th anniversary of this trip to Great Yarmouth. It was hoped that many City Councillors and former Mayors would be able to attend. Members were encouraged to contact the Mayor's Office via email for further details.

The 80th Anniversary Commemoration of VJ Day would take place on Friday, 15 August. The civic procession would depart from the Guildhall at 10:45, followed by a commemorative service at Great St Mary's at 11:00. Tea and coffee will be served on the Guildhall landing after the event. Members were warmly encouraged to attend.

Tribute was paid to John Maris, a long-standing elected tenant representative who sat on the City Council's Housing Management Board and later the Housing Scrutiny Committee.

The Mayor then paid tribute to former Mayor and long-serving Councillor, John Hipkin, recognising his significant contributions to the city.

The Mayor invited the Chief Executive to present the Resolution of Thanks to former Mayor, Councillor Thittala; the Resolution had been passed at the Annual Council Meeting in May 2025.

25/64/CNL Re-ordering of the agenda

The Mayor used their discretion to alter the order of the agenda items and move Minute Item 25/73/CNL up the agenda, after Minute Item 27/65/CNL. However, for ease of the reader, these minutes will follow the order of the agenda.

25/65/CNL 4 Day Week - Shared Services South Cambridgeshire District Council

Resolved (36 votes to 1, with 1 Abstention) to:

Approve the inclusion of services hosted by South Cambridgeshire District Council and shared with Cambridge City Council, specifically Greater Cambridge Shared Planning and Shared Waste Services, within South Cambridgeshire District Council's plan and process to become a permanent 32-hour per week, four-day week employer.

25/66/CNL Update on Local Government Reorganisation

Resolved (38 votes to 0) to:

- i. Note the progress to date on Local Government Reorganisation.
- ii. Note that of the proposed geographies, 'Option B' best meets key Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) criteria for Local Government Reorganisation, as outlined at paragraph 4.6 of the Officer's report.
- iii. Agree to hold an Extraordinary Council meeting to discuss the final proposal(s).

25/67/CNL Public questions time**Question 1:**

What measures would the Council take to resolve persistent anti-social behaviour on housing association property where the housing association refuses to bring the behaviour to an end?

The Cabinet Member for Safety, Wellbeing and Tackling Homelessness responded with the following:

- i. Where there was anti-social behaviour in housing association properties, the Council would work together with the housing association and other partners to address this.
- ii. Cases could be referred to the Council's problem-solving group where supportive; preventative or enforcement options could be considered.
- iii. The Council could also assist the housing association over the issuing of community protection warnings and notices, where appropriate.
- iv. Housing associations had regulatory obligations regarding effective anti-social behaviour management, including a formal complaint process.
- v. The community trigger, also known as anti-social behaviour case review, allowed victims of anti-social behaviour to ask for review of their case if

they feel that no or inadequate action has been taken. The anti-social case review can be requested via the city council's website.

Question 2:

From March 2025 Cambridge City Council has had a contract with Re-Gen Ltd, to take all blue bin recycling to Warrenpoint in Northern Ireland for sorting. I object strongly to the length of this trip, 400 miles, and the contribution to global warming of all the diesel that the lorries burn on this trip. In this case, the ends does not justify the means!

On 28th February 2025 Cambridge City Council stated that "The Re-Gen MRF is based in Newry, Northern Ireland, so initially this is where the blue bin recycling will be taken for sorting. However, Re-Gen says that 'within the first half of this year, it will take over a MRF on the UK mainland. This will negate the need to transport the recycling to Northern Ireland.' "

What has happened to this plan for our blue bin recycling to go to a new MRF in England? Please give me updates on progress with this plan.

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

- i. Following an extensive competitive public sector tender process for a materials recycling facility (MRF) contract, conducted by all the Cambridgeshire district councils and Peterborough City Council under the umbrella of RECAP, Regen was awarded the contract for Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service. This contract was based on their facility in Newry, Northern Ireland.
- ii. Regen, a family business, won Team of the Year Award 2024 at the annual national recycling awards in London last year. It is one of the largest MRF providers in Europe and continues to expand its operations in the UK and beyond.
- iii. As part of its expansion plans, Regen intends to commence operations of a MRF on the UK mainland. It is hoped this facility would be suitable and available to cater for the waste from Greater Cambridge Shared Waste.
- iv. The award of the contract to Regen was not based on a UK mainland facility. The procurement process was based on the facility in Newry.
- v. Regen is continuing to pursue the UK mainland MRF, but the Council does not have an update on this facility yet.

Supplementary Question:

In Great Britain only four other councils in Wales and Scotland are sending their blue bin recycling to Regen in Northern Ireland. That's less than 5% of the total and they are all much nearer to Northern Ireland than us. The huge majority of councils use local MRFs. They minimize their CO2 emissions that transporting and recycling material involves. You considered local sites. You inexplicably chose Northern Ireland. You have maximized your CO2 emissions. How did you get your procurement process for recycling so scandalously wrong?

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

- i. Regen offered the best option based on costs, quality of processing, compliance and fulfilment of all the Council's requirements.
- ii. Regen accepted the full range and quantity of recyclable materials that were currently collected.
- iii. Because the new MRF had been modernised, compared to the previous provider, up to 20% more blue bin content could be recycled.
- iv. Recycling was a global market and supply chains for the recycler and the finished products could be international. Although transporting recycling to Newry was not ideal, it was just a drop in the ocean of the transportation involved in recycling.
- v. Recycling was better than sending anything to landfill in terms of climate change, use of resources and for nature. However, it is not a panacea to waste issues. Reducing waste should be everyone's priority. Second is reuse and third is recycling.

Question 3:

November 2024 -To the Council, question on the important issue of HMO Motion - actions on report, Article 4, register, SPDs:

Full Council used the provision on the important HMO motion "to move to the next business" thus curtailing debate. If this had not have happened, and Cllr Porrer NOT given the floor, we may have had more answers and action. Action for communities now requesting the need for permitted developed rights to be removed, SPDs to be approved. An Article 4 Report to be produced, with a commitment to get a Landlord Register for HMOs of 2+ units up and running NOW. All with an aim to establish balanced cohesive communities, with a mixed tenure, existing across Cambridge. This would stop areas being ravaged by HMOs, sweeping up all their small family housing, decimating mixed tenure communities.

November 2024: Council was asked and agreed to consider a Register of all Landlords of HMOs, of more than 2 units, via a report on an Article 4 directive produced by the summer of 2025. Where are the agreed actions at - NINE MONTHS LATER?

Having lived in Cambridge for decades, I and people in the communities I talk to are very disappointed in the Council's failures, in relation to HMOs. This is a pivotal part of the housing market, meant to be affordable and a stepping stone on the housing ladder. There also appears to be a lack of protection for tenants' rights in HMOs. Rents as high as £1,030 for a single room per month, living with up to nine strangers. HMO growth is decimating housing tenure and community cohesion in Cambridge. Where is the Council's commitment and enforcement, of balanced neighbourhoods with decent standards and affordable housing for CAMBRIDGE RESIDENTS???

There are national recommendations for decent housing standards. To have no more than 10% of HMOs in a street, and no sandwiching, whereby one HMO is not within 100m, or next door to another HMO (of more than 2+ units). There is massive impact on the communities the HMOs sit within. This is compounded when whole estates and streets are not complying with the 10%, instead have from 30-70% of HMOs across the City of Cambridge.

Surely there is a commitment to good environmental practices to reduce the impacts of waste, parking stress, noise, pollution and anti-social behaviours a possible increase in crime that can be hidden in plain sight. Not to mention the excessive comings and goings of people and vehicles. (Way above those of regular tenured households) A transient population is no guarantee of stability and may not necessarily become part of the community and its cohesion. Many residents in our community want 2 and 3 bed homes, as others seeking to work or settle. They cannot rent or buy such properties, as they are being taken out and turned into 4 -10-unit bed HMOs. No one can compete to either rent or purchase homes, such as a small family or a couple. Housing stock is being removed on mass as HMOs, and there is no accurate record or map of locations as to what is happening within our city. Is Cambridge the city of GREED NOT NEED?

The Council needs to get a grip and control. Make HMOs to a high standard, perhaps encouraging developers to consider the provision of purpose-built HMOs, fit for purpose. This should be part of affordable standard homes delivery. Fair realistic controlled rents, thus stopping the break down and imbalance of Cambridge's communities. They could be based in specific locations where needs arise. This would show a Council commitment to spread HMOs of more than 2 units equally across roads, wards and the city.

So what is the Council doing to stop the decimation of our communities, whilst protecting the most vulnerable and those living in our society who want decent homes. Where is your report, consideration of Article 4 and SPD's for HMOs. Where is The Register of all HMOs Landlords who own 2-10 units at vast profit? This request is for the Council to commit to the actions it agreed to NINE MONTHS AGO and report back to the public by the summer as agreed last November. Awaiting reply with some action and answers on this important issue. PROVE WE ARE A CITY OF NEED NOT GREED - Are we?

The Cabinet Member for Planning & Transport responded with the following:

- i. There are currently 862 licensed HMOs in the city. The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service is in the process of comparing data sources on council tax exemptions to identify student homes, along with complaints of noise and refuse, and the locations of the registered HMOs. The aim is to determine a correlation between these data sets which would justify a submission to the Secretary of State for an Article 4 direction removing permitted development for specific parts of the city.
- ii. This follows changes to the national planning guidance preventing the use of a blanket ban that would have had an exemption for the whole city.
- iii. The emerging joint local plan would contain a policy on HMOs where permission is required. Subject to Cabinet agreement, the local plan and its policies would be consulted upon later this year.
- iv. There is currently no scope to introduce an SPD because there is no suitable policy in the adopted local plan justifying an SPD.
- v. A national private rented sector database is part of the measures proposed within the Renters' Rights Bill, which will be enacted in winter 2025/26. It is anticipated that the database will be launched from winter 2026/27. It is proposed that this will help landlords understand their legal obligations and demonstrate compliance, alongside providing better information to tenants to make informed decisions.

Supplementary Question:

Could the Council give a firm commitment to their effective management of HMOs from 2+ units (people) to have safe well maintained and affordable homes.

SPDs Article 4s and a Landlord Register will aid tenants to have decent standards of homes.

In addition, this protection can decrease community breakdown from saturation of HMOs in any one street.

When in 2018 it was estimated over 600, were not registered, how many under 5 units (people) do not meet fire regulations with basic items like lifesaving fire doors in place?

Recent Council enforcement action for those not meeting statutory requirements has protected tenants, how will this be extended across the City? How will Council protect our tenants to have decent affordable homes where they do not live in fear of no-fault eviction or no reference if they ask for repairs!

Officer's written response to the supplementary:

- i. Under the Housing Act 2004, the definition of a HMO is a house / flat that is occupied by more than 3 people forming more than one household. Only properties that have more than 5 people are required to be licensed, but we do have the enforcement powers to regulate all HMOs as per the definition.
- ii. The Council proactively identify all types of HMOs and take the necessary action to get them up to a safe and suitable standard, including fire precautions, overcrowding, amenities, reducing hazards, energy, damp and mould.
- iii. The Council respond to all private sector housing complaints and take the necessary enforcement action. Under current legislation tenants are protected from retaliatory eviction if a Housing Act notice has been served for repair/ safety works to be carried out. New legislation coming in under the Renters Rights Act would tighten this up and bring in protection for tenants against non-vault eviction.
- iv. We also investigate harassment and illegal evictions and have taken prosecutions against landlords

Question 4:

I am here to alert all Councillors to issues with public involvement in the Civic Quarter project, particularly in relation to the Market Square. The only 2 advertised public consultation meetings were in an obscure back room of the Guildhall, and in the Coleridge community hall. The trial demountable stalls, on which the Market Square proposals depend, only arrived for the last 2 weeks of the consultation period. There has been continual very misleading information, as one group is told one thing, and another group is told something else. Feedback from the trial stalls, which were instantly revealed to be unfit for purpose, was reported to last week's Traders' meeting, along with a "Work in Progress" revised layout, but not to the Liaison Group earlier the same afternoon. I only know this because, after officers tried to exclude me from the Traders' meeting, the traders unanimously asked me to stay. Cllr Moore was quoted in that morning's Cambridge Independent saying that the

number of permanent stalls would be increased to 44, but this was not disclosed to the Liaison Group. There is still no sign whatever of any viable demountable stalls, yet officers are rushing headlong towards a planning application.

And are Councillors aware that the project intends to sweep away all the existing stalls, and with them, our traditional market? Our change.org petition "Please help us to Save Cambridge's traditional locals' market, and its traders" shows that people do not want to lose the vital services and intangible heritage of their traditional market. Our petition now has nearly 900 signatures, showing that people from near and far want to keep Cambridge's traditional market. We need our Councillors to act to prevent our traditional market from being swept away.

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

- i. The proposals for the market committed to a thriving seven-day a week market, with new permanent stalls alongside new demountable stalls to allow the Market Square to be used for other purposes when the demand isn't there from market traders for all stalls to be in use.
- ii. Proposals included more seating, a better surface for accessibility, more greenery, better lighting to improve safety, underground bins to reduce clutter, and restoration of the existing fountain.
- iii. Over 500 people responded to the public consultation and provided feedback on the Council's Civic Quarter plans. The trial of the demountable stalls was planned to be for a fortnight, and traders were informed of that before it started.
- iv. The project team and Cabinet Member had been meeting monthly with the traders to update them on design changes, the business plan, the options for the temporary location of the market while the works are being completed, and to get feedback.
- v. The liaison group and the members' liaison group have been meeting less often but generally the presentations for all three groups have been the same. At the most recent meetings, there were some last-minute changes to the slides for the meeting later in the day, which could have caused some confusion.

Supplementary Question:

The petition that my wife and I have organized has now passed 1,200 signatures of people who are very concerned not only at the loss of the traditional market but the impact of the proposals on the traditional traders, because having a market that will work for the traders is the issue here.

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

- i. From the start of the project, it had been made clear that plans were for new flooring, new infrastructure and new stalls, including demountable stalls.
- ii. The first designs included 100% demountable stalls, but following feedback from the traders, the plans now have around half the square covered with permanent stalls.
- iii. The consultation showed that there was overall support for the proposals including maintaining the current size of the market, providing the seating area and restoring the fountain.
- iv. The council intends to provide new stalls which would cover a slightly larger area than now, but with improved facilities for the traders and the public. The number and design of the stalls has not yet been finalised.

Question 5: On behalf of the Cambridge University Labour Club

Earlier this week the Daily Telegraph drew attention to the plight of at least forty Palestinian students - including students with offers to Cambridge University - who are unable to take up offers of scholarships at UK universities because the government is insisting that they complete biometric verification in order to get a visa, despite there being no visa office in Gaza and no possibility for them to travel to neighbouring countries to fulfil the requirement.

Authorities in France, Ireland and Italy have waived the visa requirement to bring students from Gaza but so far neither the Foreign Office nor the Home Office have responded to requests to do so.

One of the students, nineteen-year-old Malak Hani, has a full scholarship to study here in Cambridge, at Downing College. Like the other Gaza students, Malak has overcome unimaginable odds to achieve her place at Cambridge. She has the full support of Professor Graham Virgo, Master of the College, and local MPs including Andrew Pakes, MP for Peterborough, have spoken out in her favour.

As a student at Cambridge University myself, I ask the Council to add its voice to those calling on the government to show its concern and find a way to let Malak and other students from Gaza take up the places they have earned at British universities.

The University, and Cambridge as a whole, will benefit from having her here during her studies, and she will be able to take advantage of the chance of an education that she has worked so hard for.

The Leader of the Council responded with the following:

- i. Expressed congratulations to all students from Gaza who have been awarded places at UK universities for next year and in particular the two students who had gained places at the University of Cambridge.
- ii. The Council fully supports and would be happy to add its voice to recent calls by University of Cambridge academics and MPs for the students' applications to be swiftly considered, and for the Home Office to do all it could to ensure all necessary checks could be completed and assistance provided for students to take up their places in the autumn.
- iii. The Leader and the Chief Executive would write to the Home Office regarding this case.

Supplementary Question

Malac, like her fellow students in Gaza, is living through the most intolerable circumstances under daily bombardment in fear of her life. Some of the students offered places at the UK universities have been killed whilst waiting.

Just this week, over 100 aid agencies warned that mass starvation is spreading across Gaza. And according to the UN, nearly 8,000 children have been killed in Gaza since October 7th. Does the Council agree that the Government should be doing everything in its power to push for an immediate ceasefire and end to all the killing, a release of all hostages, and a surge in humanitarian aid to avoid full-scale famine across Gaza and protect the lives of young students like Malac.

The Leader of the Council responded with the following:

- i. That the Council did agree. The scenes witnessed in the last year and a half in Gaza had been unbearable. No one, and especially no child, should be left without food or forced into starvation, and no innocent civilian should be killed.
- ii. The Council had been calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and across the Middle East for a long time, and was even more urgent now.
- iii. Recognised that many people in Cambridge have been deeply and personally affected by this war.
- iv. Noted that the Council passed a motion calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, Israel and the West Bank and for the suspension of all UK arms sales to Israel. The Council stood by that motion and reaffirmed its calls.

- v. The Council had also, through cross-party statements, repeatedly condemned the horrific attack by Hamas on the 7th of October. The Council had called for an immediate ceasefire, the return of the hostages, unfettered access for humanitarian aid, peace in the Middle East, international support for a two-state solution, and the upholding of international law.

Question 6:

Following recent concerns raised in the National Media in relation to Uber and many delivery services, and following TFL's decision to revoke Ubers licence to operate on the grounds Safety Violations, Unauthorized Drivers, Impersonation of Drivers, Insurance Issues, Lack of Confidence in Future Safety", What proactive measures do the Council have in place to monitor and remove fraudulent behaviour / persons and offer safety to the public in Cambridge?

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

- i. In Cambridge, Uber was treated the same as every other private hire operator. They were inspected annually, which included looking at their records and ensuring their DBS checks were up to date. All drivers were required to have enhanced DBS checks, which were updated every six months.
- ii. Complaints were investigated and appropriate enforcement action would be taken. This could include being called to a sub-committee hearing where their license could be revoked, suspended or not renewed.
- iii. Drivers had equalities training, a knowledge test, a medical test, and a driving test. They must display their badge in the vehicle.
- iv. The licensing team carried out proactive operations, including nighttime operations in conjunction with the police.

Question 7:

Taxpayers Alliance said that they had campaigned rigorously regarding the campaign against Working From Home (WFH).

Was this the case during the Council Elections in May 2024 and any elections in 2025?

When it would seem the PUBLIC had plenty of opportunity to discuss this subject with the Candidates and NOT vote for any who wanted to maintain this WFH regime.

The Leader of the Council responded with the following:

- i. Some staff worked in a hybrid way which allowed them to be more flexible in the way that they worked. Sometimes to avoid long commutes or to meet family commitments.
- ii. A hybrid way of working was appropriate for a modern council that cared about the well-being of its staff and to ensure that the Council provided services to residents in the most effective way possible.

Question 8:

I am a second generation market trader who grew up on the market square. In June of this year in response to the proposed development plans for the market I conducted a survey of market traders to get their thoughts on the type of stall they wished to trade from in the future. I have 59 responses which is half of all traders. The breakdown of the replies were 22 % hot food traders, 52% retail, 8.5% cold food and 17% other, which is very comparable to the breakdown of all traders. Without consideration of eligibility criteria of these 57.9% would be interested in trading from permanent kiosk type structures, only 20.3% would be interested in trading from a dismountable gazebo. The most interesting results are in the fact that 83.1% of all traders if given a preference would wish stalls to stay as they are, with 15.3% preferring kiosks and just 1.6% wishing for a gazebo.

The traders have repeatedly asked for traditional market stalls, as they are now, to be provided in the redeveloped market as they provide the versatility required for all traders, they are robust, proven and weather resistant. The design team has increased the number of permanent stalls in the latest design to 44 which they are calling "market stalls" however this is incredibly misleading as they are in fact permanent structures, which we have been told will have five year leases, be rateable with the additional costs of waste, water and electricity. Analysis of the council's business plan shows that due to the rent being paid over 365 days a year on these units the increase cost to almost all traders will be huge, and this will impact more on the market retail sellers as there is only one that trades seven days a week. For example, The Bike Mans rent, if trading from a kiosk would go up 99%.

We have a petition with 1800 signatures that asks for 54 permanent stalls. We wish to ask that at least half of these stalls are of the traditional style that we have now, and not all kiosks that take away the essence of market trading. Will the chamber recognise the unsuitability of the current proposals to fill two

thirds of the market square with permanent shop type units the project team are currently proposing?

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

- i. Thanked the member of the public for the work they have done, including the survey, analysis, and feedback at monthly traders' meetings. The Council had responded already by changing plans for traffic flow in the market based on feedback.
- ii. The Council acknowledged that traders would like to keep the scaffolding type stalls that are permanently affixed to the market square. However, one aspect of the project would be to create an open space when the market is not on, for residents to use.
- iii. An aim of the project would also be to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, which was facilitated by the permanent stalls.
- iv. In March this year, 17 crimes were recorded by the police on the market square, 5 of which were violent or sexual.
- v. Other successful markets such as Norwich and Spittlefields had permanent stalls. A mix of permanent and demountable stalls would allow the market to expand and contract throughout the week and throughout the seasons.
- vi. The number and the design of the stalls is still being worked on by the civic quarter project team and this survey provides valuable feedback for that.

Supplementary Question:

The member of the public raised concerns about the terms used during the consultation on the market square and in the design feedback. Flexibility had not been demanded by traders. And using the term market stalls was incorrect as the spaces were more like kiosks.

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

- i. Clarified that the use of the term demand was related to the demand for hiring a stall on set days.
- ii. Following a suggestion from traders, the team now referred to the stalls as kiosks.
- iii. Acknowledged that the market was not only a vital source of income, but traders felt very passionately about the market.

The meeting broke for 10 minutes at the conclusion of this item.

25/68/CNL To deal with oral questions**Question 1:****Councillor Clough to Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport.**

Our local planning committee is quasi-judicial and follows several rules designed to ensure that it is not only impartial but seen to be impartial. How does the council reconcile this with having our local planning committee make decisions on applications made by its in-house developer, Cambridge Investment Partnership? Is this not the same as marking one's own homework?

The Cabinet Member responded with:

The situation whereby a council applies for planning permission for development was not unique. Across the country, applications were made every day by councils for developments in their own area. The Town and Country Planning Act makes no specific provisions in relation to that process.

Nevertheless, in contemplation of that scenario, this Council's constitution, in line with most other authorities, states that all such applications are considered by the planning committee in public to enable the public to witness the consideration of the item and its decision.

A comprehensive report by officers was prepared to support each application, identifying the material planning considerations and included a recommendation in all such cases. The Council's constitution and code of member conduct also provided for clear declarations around any conflicts of interest amongst committee members. In this way, the process of decision making could take place in the usual way as contemplated by parliament under the Town and Country Planning Act.

Question 2:**Councillor Jean Glasberg to Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment.**

I refer you to the question previously raised below by Rostrevor Action Respecting the Environment ("RARE") based near the Re-Gen Materials Recycling Facility ("MRF") in Newry, Northern Ireland. In this they quoted a Cambridge City Council press release dated 28 February 2025. This stated that Re-Gen would take over an existing MRF on the UK mainland in the first half of the year and this would negate the need to transport the need to transport the recycling to Northern Ireland.

We are now in July and there are no signs that a new UK mainland MRF has been acquired by Re-Gen or that such an acquisition is due to take place.

Could the Cabinet Member confirm that Cambridge's recycling is still being sent to Newry?

Would the Cabinet Member share what steps have been taken to investigate this apparent failure?

This appears to be a material misrepresentation of facts on which the council relied upon in making its procurement decision. Would the Cabinet Member take steps to reopen the procurement decision and consider terminating the contract?

The Cabinet Member replied:

Confirmed that recycling from all residents was being sent to Newry in Northern Ireland for sorting. The procurement process was based on the MRF in Newry and it was on that site that Regen won the contract. The plans for a UK mainland site were only known after the contract was signed. Regen was still in the process of acquiring a site on the UK mainland. It was hoped that all of Cambridge City's recycling would be sorted there once that MRF came online.

Question 3:

Councillor Blackburn-Horgan to the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport

Could the Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport update Council on the report due by Summer 2025 on Article 4 directives that we requested to ensure a fairer and less exploitative HMO rental market in Cambridge, and explain when this would be published?

The Cabinet Member said the following:

Officers in the shared planning service, working with Housing and Environmental Health, were gathering evidence on HMOs in Cambridge. Based on their work, officers would develop a planning policy and evidence paper for inclusion in the draft Greater Cambridge Local Plan. This would be brought forward for consideration by Members in the autumn prior to a public consultation. The evidence would also allow subsequent consideration on whether there are any areas of the city on which a case could be made for an Article 4 directive.

Question 4:**Councillor Illingworth to the Cabinet member for Nature, Open Space and City Services**

The Council aims to remove offensive graffiti within one day of receiving a report, and all other graffiti within five days.

Is the Council keeping up with these standards for removing graffiti and offensive graffiti?

The Cabinet Member responded:

Graffiti was illegal. It spoilt property and could be costly to remove. The Council was responsible for removing graffiti from public property and buildings, monuments and street furniture such as benches. The Council did not have a duty to remove graffiti on private property.

The aim was to remove offensive graffiti within one day of receiving a report and all other graffiti within 5 days. Teams worked between 6:00a.m. and 4:00p.m. every day. Offensive graffiti included anything that might be considered racist, sexist, obscene, or inflammatory. The Council's operations team worked hard to meet these response times and prioritise offensive or hate related graffiti in line with Cambridge City Council's values and enforcement policy.

In the past calendar year, the service had received 1,136 reports of graffiti, of which 283 were classed as offensive. Performance monitoring data indicated that of the 274 offensive graffiti matters, 44% were removed within one working day, and of the 820 detrimental graffiti items, 84% were removed within the five working day limit.

Where graffiti delays had occurred, they were typically due to access issues, graffiti located on private property requiring consent or where specialist removal equipment was needed for surfaces such as brick or historic stonework.

Question 5:**Councillor Bick to the Leader of the Council**

Does the Leader agree with Equalities Minister Bridget Phillipson's statement following the recent Supreme Court judgement, that trans women should only use public toilets for their biological sex?

The Leader replied with the following:

As a Council, we want to support everyone, including trans people to live safely, free from discrimination and with dignity. On this specific question, we

as a public body must follow the law. The legislation on access to single sex services and facilities had not changed. The Council was awaiting legal guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission following the Supreme Court ruling.

25/69/CNL To consider the recommendations of Cabinet/Executive for adoption

25/70/CNL Outturn Report 2024/25

Councillor Tong recused themselves from this item.

Resolved (23 votes to 3, with 11 abstentions) to:

- i. Note this 2024/25 outturn report, including the final net underspend on the General Fund of £3.762 million which will be transferred to the Civic Quarter reserve as agreed by council in February 2025.

Resolved (23 votes to 3, with 11 abstentions) to:

- ii. Approve the carry forward of General Fund capital budgets totalling £55.172 million as set out in detail at Appendix A(iv), together with the carry forward of £2.145 million of associated General Fund revenue funding.

Resolved (26 votes to 0, with 12 abstentions) to:

- iii. Approve the carry forward of £280,000 of Housing Revenue Account revenue budget allocated for transformation purposes (see paragraph 5.8).

Resolved (26 votes to 0, with 12 abstentions) to:

- iv. Approve the carry forward of Housing Revenue Account capital budgets totalling £50.941 million as set out in detail at Appendix B(iv).

25/71/CNL To consider the recommendations of Committees for adoption

Civic Affairs & Audit Committee - Proposed Amendments to Member Allowances

Councillor Dalzell proposed and Councillor Porrer seconded the following amendment to the recommendations (additional text underlined and deleted text ~~struck through~~).

The Committee agreed the following recommendations to Council.

- i. Without approval, conveys to the Independent Review Panel for their evidence-based assessment for consideration for 2026-27 the Labour Party's aspiration to The uplift in the Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) to the Leader to 4 times the basic allowance.
- ii. Without approval, conveys to the Independent Review Panel for their evidence-based assessment for consideration for 2026-27 the Labour Party's aspiration to Amend amend the overall number of SRA's that can be claimed to a maximum of 3.
- iii. Removal of the allowance paid by the City Council to members of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) for those sitting on the CPCA Overview & Scrutiny and Audit & Governance Committees.

The amendment was **lost by 18 votes to 21, no abstentions**.

Councillor Robertson proposed and Councillor Gawthrope-Wood seconded the proposed amendment to the recommendation (additional text underlined and deleted text ~~struck through~~).

The Committee agreed the following recommendations to Council. Such changes shall take effect from the date of the annual meeting of Council 2025, and any adjustments back-dated on a pro rata basis

- i. The uplift in the Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) to the Leader to 4 times the basic allowance.
- ii. Amend the overall number of SRA's that can be claimed to a maximum of 3.
- iii. Removal of the allowance paid by the City Council to members of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) for those sitting on the CPCA Overview & Scrutiny and Audit & Governance Committees.

The amendment was **carried by 21 votes to 17 with 1 abstention**.

Resolved (22 votes to 17, no abstention) to:

The Committee agreed the following recommendations to Council. Such changes shall take effect from the date of the annual meeting of Council 2025, and any adjustments back-dated on a pro rata basis

- iv. The uplift in the Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) to the Leader to 4 times the basic allowance.
- v. Amend the overall number of SRA's that can be claimed to a maximum of 3.
- vi. Removal of the allowance paid by the City Council to members of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) for those sitting on the CPCA Overview & Scrutiny and Audit & Governance Committees.

25/72/CNL To consider the following notices of motion, notice of which has been given by:

25/73/CNL Councillor Holloway: Local Government Reorganisation

Councillor Holloway proposed and Councillor Bick seconded the following motion:

This Council notes:

Cambridge is served by two tiers of local government – Cambridge City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council. Each provides different services over different geographies, with some overlapping responsibilities. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority also serves this area, as does the Greater Cambridge Partnership.

Unitary authorities combine the functions currently carried out by county councils and district-level councils.

On 19 October 2023, Cambridge City Council passed a motion on 'A Unitary Council'¹, asking the Leader and Chief Executive of the Council to:

“... initiate discussions... to identify options for a less fragmented and more cohesive model of Government for Cambridge, that best serves the needs of its residents. These discussions should involve and engage with the people of the city in a meaningful way, thereby recognising the need for our governance structures to reflect the wishes of the people we serve.”

In summer 2024, Cambridge City Council carried out an initial engagement exercise on the 'Future of Local Government for Cambridge'^[1]. Around 60 people attended in-person workshops and over 500 people responded to the online survey. Nearly 83% of respondents thought that a unitary authority for the Cambridge area should be explored.

A report on this engagement exercise was considered at Full Council on 28 November 2024^[2]. Councillors agreed that the Leader should report back about next steps in summer 2025, following discussions with other local leaders and ministers.

In December 2024, the Government announced that local government in England would be reorganised, inviting proposals for new unitary councils from all two-tier areas^[3]. On the current timetable, new unitary councils for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough would come into being in 2028.

Since the Government's announcement, all seven existing councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have engaged in a collaborative process to explore options for local government reorganisation.

Leaders have set out three geographical options for proposals to be worked up.

A public survey on issues relating to local government reorganisation, agreed by all councils in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, is running for just over one month, closing on 20 July^[4].

The Local Government Reorganisation item in these meeting papers sets out the current situation, including relevant data and context for deciding which geographical configuration of unitary councils might be most appropriate for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

This Council believes:

- That a unitary authority based on the current boundaries of Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, alongside viable arrangements for the rest of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, is likely to be the best option for the residents of Cambridge.

This Council resolves:

- To work with other local authorities in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough on a proposal for the whole area that can be submitted to the Government by 28 November 2025.

- To continue to collaborate with all councils across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, including providing information to support proposals that are not its preferred option.
- To launch a further engagement exercise to better understand Cambridge residents' views on their preferred geography for local government reorganisation.

[1] ¹ <https://engage.cambridge.gov.uk/en-GB/projects/cambridge-local-government>

[2] <https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/documents/s67343/241119%20Council%20report%20on%20Future%20of%20Local%20Government.pdf>

[3] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-devolution-white-paper-power-and-partnership-foundations-for-growth/english-devolution-white-paper>

[4] <https://can-campaigns.co.uk/local-councils-in-cambridgeshire-and-peterborough-are-changing/>

Resolved (by 33 votes to 0, with 3 Abstentions) to approve the motion as worded above.

25/74/CNL Councillor Dalzell: Securing Arbury Court's Future as a Thriving Community Hub

Councillor Wade recused themselves from the item.

Time (9.40pm) Under Council Procedure Rules 1.9.2 as the time allotted for the meeting had concluded Members went straight to the vote on the amendment to the motion. No discussion was held as the meeting time had passed.

All remaining business on the agenda went straight to the vote at this point.

Councillor Dallzell proposed, and Councillor Illingworth seconded the following motion:

This Council notes:

- i. The vital role Arbury Court plays as a community hub serving North Cambridge residents;
- ii. The ongoing 'Shaping North Cambridge' consultation and the positive engagement between officers, local businesses, and the community regarding future redevelopment plans;

- iii. The constructive approach taken by officers in engaging with local businesses and residents during the consultation process;
- iv. Current uncertainty facing existing businesses due to lease arrangements ending in 2030;
- v. The strong preference expressed by local businesses for replacement retail facilities to be built before existing premises are redeveloped, avoiding the need for temporary accommodation;
- vi. That detailed consultation findings and proposals will not be presented to Cabinet until October 2025.

This Council believes:

- i. Local businesses and residents deserve certainty about Arbury Court's future and their role in it now, rather than waiting for final proposals;
- ii. The positive collaborative approach between officers and the community should be formally endorsed and protected;
- iii. Any redevelopment must enhance rather than diminish Arbury Court's function as a community retail hub.

This Council resolves:

- i. That any development proposal for Arbury Court will prioritise the construction of replacement retail facilities before existing businesses are displaced;
- ii. To ensure that existing businesses will receive appropriate lease extensions or firm relocation commitments extending well beyond 2030;
- iii. To ensure the redevelopment enhances retail provision and community facilities rather than diminishing them;
- iv. To establish these principles as non-negotiable parameters for any development brief or partner selection process.

Councillor Bird proposed and Councillor Divkovic seconded the following amendment to the motion (additional text underlined and deleted text ~~struck through~~)

This Council notes:

- i. The vital role Arbury Court plays as a community hub serving North Cambridge residents;
- ii. The ongoing 'Shaping North Cambridge' consultation and the positive engagement between officers, local businesses, and the community regarding future redevelopment plans;
- iii. The constructive approach taken by officers in engaging with local businesses and residents during the consultation process;

- iv. Current uncertainty facing existing businesses due to lease arrangements ending in 2030;
- v. The strong preference expressed by local businesses for replacement retail facilities to be built before existing premises are redeveloped, avoiding the need for temporary accommodation;
- vi. That detailed consultation findings and proposals will not be issues raised during the engagement period will be given careful consideration before being presented to Cabinet as soon as possible, in October 2025.
- vii. That, if a recommendation for investment in the North Cambridge Framework for Change work is approved by Cabinet, there will be further consultation with the public on the specific proposals for the area.

This Council believes:

- i. Local businesses and residents deserve certainty to be involved in and informed about ongoing discussion on ~~about~~ Arbury Court's future and their role in it;
- ii. The continuation of the positive collaborative approach between officers and the community ~~should be formally endorsed and protected~~ is vital to the success of this project;
- iii. Any redevelopment must enhance rather than diminish Arbury Court's function as a community retail hub, including, as far as possible, retaining and enhancing independent shops.

This Council resolves:

- i. That any development proposal for Arbury Court will prioritise, as far as practicable, the construction of replacement retail facilities before existing businesses are displaced;
- ii. ~~To ensure that existing businesses will receive appropriate lease extensions or firm relocation commitments extending well beyond 2030 The Council will seek to;~~ To seek to maintain business continuity in any proposed redevelopment, allowing, as far as possible, the current retail offer to continue, and to support shopkeepers and existing businesses through the consultation process and any future development process;
- iii. To ensure that, if any redevelopment of Arbury Court goes ahead, it enhances retail provision and community facilities rather than diminishing them;
- iv. To bring forward proposals that will establish ~~these~~ principles that align with those set out in this motion, ~~as non-negotiable parameters for any development brief or partner selection process.~~ to guide any development work carried out at Arbury Court as part of the North Cambridge Framework for Change project.

The amendment was **approved by 20 votes to 15.**

Resolved by 38 votes to 0

This Council notes:

- viii. The vital role Arbury Court plays as a community hub serving North Cambridge residents;
- ix. The ongoing 'Shaping North Cambridge' consultation and the positive engagement between officers, local businesses, and the community regarding future redevelopment plans;
- x. The constructive approach taken by officers in engaging with local businesses and residents during the consultation process;
- xi. Current uncertainty facing existing businesses due to lease arrangements ending in 2030;
- xii. The strong preference expressed by local businesses for replacement retail facilities to be built before existing premises are redeveloped, avoiding the need for temporary accommodation;
- xiii. That issues raised during the engagement period will be given careful consideration before being presented to Cabinet as soon as possible, in October 2025.
- xiv. That, if a recommendation for investment in the North Cambridge Framework for Change work is approved by Cabinet, there will be further consultation with the public on the specific proposals for the area.

This Council believes:

- iv. Local businesses and residents deserve to be involved in and informed about ongoing discussion on Arbury Court's future and their role in it;
- v. The continuation of the positive collaborative approach between officers and the community is vital to the success of this project;
- vi. Any redevelopment must enhance rather than diminish Arbury Court's function as a community retail hub, including, as far as possible, retaining and enhancing independent shops.

This Council resolves:

- v. That any development proposal for Arbury Court will prioritise, as far as practicable, the construction of replacement retail facilities before existing businesses are displaced;
- vi. To seek to maintain business continuity in any proposed redevelopment, allowing, as far as possible, the current retail offer to continue, and to support shopkeepers and existing businesses through the consultation process and any future development process;

- vii. To ensure that, if any redevelopment of Arbury Court goes ahead, it enhances retail provision and community facilities rather than diminishing them;
- viii. To bring forward proposals that will establish principles that align with those set out in this motion, to guide any development work carried out at Arbury Court as part of the North Cambridge Framework for Change project.

25/75/CNL Councillor Tong: The Failure of Jesus Lock Island and Baits Bite Lock Island

Councillor Tong proposed and Councillor Glasberg seconded the following motion:

The River Cam faces an existential threat. The islands of the two locks that maintain a steady water level, Jesus Lock and Baits Bite Lock, are both at risk of failing due to the disrepair. Meanwhile, in their [June update, titled An Organisation in Crisis](#), the Conservators of the River Cam announced that they were in dire financial straits. While the urgent work needed to Baits Bite Lock island has been approved, the Conservators of the River Cam have said that a much-needed rebuild of both lock islands would be impossible given the cost, even without factoring in the fact that Jesus Lock island also requires stabilisation in the short term.

While the damage caused to both the local environment and tourism would be a problem in itself, the harm that this would cause to the local community would be most devastating. [A representative of Cam Valley Forum](#) has acknowledged that if the water level of the river lowered, local residents could be exposed to centuries of waste that has laid buried, posing a significant health risk.

Urgent action must be taken, yet the Conservators of the River Cam do not have the funds to do so, stating that they believe ‘unless specifically instructed by state or court, the necessary funding required by the Conservancy to ensure long-term survival will not be made available.’

The Council resolves to;

- Write to Steve Reed, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, explaining the need for the Conservators of the River Cam to receive funding for these essential repairs.
- To also request that responsibility for overseeing the River Cam is transferred to any future unitary authority comprising Cambridge.

Councillor Smart proposed and Councillor Thornburrow seconded the following amendment to the motion (additional text underlined and deleted text struck through)

~~The Failure of Jesus Lock Island and Baits Bite Lock Island~~

~~The River Cam faces an existential threat.~~

~~The islands of the two locks that maintain a steady water level, Jesus Lock and Baits Bite Lock, are both at risk of failing due to the disrepair. Meanwhile, in their June update, titled An Organisation in Crisis [1], the Conservators of the River Cam announced that they were in dire financial straits.~~

~~While the urgent work needed to Baits Bite Lock Island has been approved, the Conservators of the River Cam have said that a much-needed rebuild of both lock islands would be impossible given the cost, even without factoring in the fact that Jesus Lock island also requires stabilisation in the short term.~~

~~While the damage caused to both the local environment and tourism would be a problem in itself, the harm that this would cause to the local community would be most devastating. A representative of Cam Valley Forum has acknowledged² that if the water level of the river lowered, local residents could be exposed to centuries of waste that has laid buried, posing a significant health risk.~~

~~Urgent action must be taken, yet the Conservators of the River Cam do not have the funds to do so, stating that they believe ‘unless specifically instructed by state or court, the necessary funding required by the Conservancy to ensure long-term survival will not be made available.’~~

~~The Council resolves to;~~

~~Write to Steve Reed, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, explaining the need for the Conservators of the River Cam to receive funding for these essential repairs.~~

~~To also request that responsibility for overseeing the River Cam is transferred to any future unitary authority comprising Cambridge.~~

The Conservators of the River Cam and their work to maintain river navigation on the Cam

This Council notes

In terms of the management of the River Cam from the Mill Pool in Cambridge to Bottisham Lock near Waterbeach, The Conservators of the River Cam is the statutory and responsible body for river navigation and as such is the organisation responsible for Bait's Bite Lock in South Cambridgeshire and at Jesus Green Lock in Cambridge City.

Both Jesus Green and Bait's Bite locks are affected by structural degradation. Enabling works will soon begin at Bait's Bite. A further condition survey of Jesus Green Lock is due in August 2025 to assess the cost of remediation.

The Conservators of the River Cam was constituted under Acts of Parliament in 1702, 1851 and 1922. Any longer-term reform would likely require new legislation to replace or update the existing statutory framework.

Navigation between the locks is clearly restricted at the current time. The Conservators of the River Cam are working to rectify this situation with support from both Cambridge City Council and other stakeholders.

Cambridge City Council has offered assistance to The Conservators of the River Cam including two senior officers, and funding together with South Cambridgeshire District Council to support the development of a business plan for The Conservators of the River Cam to maintain the locks.

The Conservators of the River Cam is working with other stakeholders including the University of Cambridge, riparian Colleges, and the County Council, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and the Environment Agency.

This Council believes

The River Cam is central to Cambridge's identity, economy, and public life. From punting to rowing and leisure walks, and much more besides, the River Cam plays a unique and essential role in the city's daily rhythm and visitor experience.

This Council resolves

1. To continue to work in partnership with The Conservators of the River Cam, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, the

University of Cambridge, and riparian Colleges, and other stakeholders to support the development and application of a viable business plan relating to the maintenance of the locks at Baits Bite Lock in South Cambridgeshire and at Jesus Green Lock in Cambridge City.

a) Support The Conservators of the River Cam in the delivery of urgent stabilisation works at Baits Bite Lock.

b) Assist with the funding and review of the structural condition survey of Jesus Lock.

c) Strengthen the governance, leadership and operational capability of the Conservators to meet their statutory responsibilities.

d) Support the co-development of a sustainable funding model and a detailed asset management plan.

2. To take into account that while this is a pressing local issue, it reflects a broader national challenge in managing ageing navigation infrastructure. Similar investment needs exist in other places nationwide, for example on the Aire and Calder Navigation, on the River Thames, and across the Canal and River Trust's inland waterways network.

3. To work with the Conservators of the River Cam and other stakeholders and in coordination with local and regional partners, develop a shared and costed case for reform and future investment in the assets, and to engage with national government when appropriate.

The amendment was **carried by 35 votes to 0 with 4 Abstentions.**

Resolved (38 votes to 0)

The Conservators of the River Cam and their work to maintain river navigation on the Cam

This Council notes

In terms of the management of the River Cam from the Mill Pool in Cambridge to Bottisham Lock near Waterbeach, The Conservators of the River Cam is the statutory and responsible body for river navigation and as such is the organisation responsible for Baits Bite Lock in South Cambridgeshire and at Jesus Green Lock in Cambridge City.

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This Council resolves

- i. To continue to work in partnership with The Conservators of the River Cam, South Cambridgeshire District Council, Cambridgeshire County Council, the University of Cambridge, and riparian Colleges, and other stakeholders to support the development and application of a viable business plan relating to the maintenance of the locks at Baits Bite Lock in South Cambridgeshire and at Jesus Green Lock in Cambridge City.
- a) Support The Conservators of the River Cam in the delivery of urgent stabilisation works at Baits Bite Lock.
- b) Assist with the funding and review of the structural condition survey of Jesus Lock.
- c) Strengthen the governance, leadership and operational capability of the Conservators to meet their statutory responsibilities.

d) Support the co-development of a sustainable funding model and a detailed asset management plan.

- ii. To take into account that while this is a pressing local issue, it reflects a broader national challenge in managing ageing navigation infrastructure. Similar investment needs exist in other places nationwide, for example on the Aire and Calder Navigation, on the River Thames, and across the Canal and River Trust's inland waterways network.
- iii. To work with the Conservators of the River Cam and other stakeholders and in coordination with local and regional partners, develop a shared and costed case for reform and future investment in the assets, and to engage with national government when appropriate.

25/76/CNL Written questions

No written questions were received.

25/77/CNL To consider any other business

The notification of Cabinet portfolios was noted.

The meeting ended at 9.40 pm

CHAIR