

REPORT TITLE: Election of Leader of the Council

To: Full Council 21 May 2026

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Wards affected: All

Director Approval: the Chief Executive confirms that the report author has sought the advice of all appropriate colleagues and given due regard to that advice; that the equalities impacts and other implications of the recommended decisions have been assessed and accurately presented in the report; and that they are content for the report to be put to Council for decision.

1. Recommendations

1.1 The Council is asked to:

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

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

2. Purpose and reason for the report

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

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

3. Alternative options considered

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

4. Background and key issues

- 4.1 Following the election held on Thursday 7 May 2026 the Council is now in a position where it needs to appoint a Leader from amongst its numbers in order for the governance of the Council to continue. A proposer and seconder for any nomination will be required in order for the Council to vote on such a proposal.
- 4.2 The Localism Act 2011 updated the existing legislation relating to the appointment of a Leader within the Cabinet model of Executive arrangements by making amendments to the Local Government Act 2000, which have the effect of allowing a Leader to be appointed for a period determined by the Council's Constitution, Article 7.3:

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

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

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

5. Corporate plan and Council Vision

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

6. Implications

Relevant risks

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

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

Financial Implications

- 6.2 There are none.

Legal Implications

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

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

Equalities and socio-economic Implications

- 6.4 There are none.

Net Zero Carbon, Climate Change and Environmental implications

6.5 There are none.

Procurement Implications

6.6 There are none.

Community Safety Implications

6.7 There are none.

7. Background documents

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

7.1 Council Constitution and Localism Act 2011.

8. Appendices

8.1 There are none.

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Dan Kalley, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, email:

dan.kalley@cambridge.gov.uk