

CABINET

7 July 2026
5.10 - 8.55 pm

Present: Councillors Moore (Vice Chair as Chair), Smart, Todd-Jones, Bird, Gawthroe Wood and Nestor

Other Councillors present:

Councillors Bick, Bennett, Baigent, Fisher, Tong and Young

Also present (virtually) Councillors Flaubert and Porrer

Officers Present:

Chief Executive: Robert Pollock

Chief Finance Officer: Jody Etherington

Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development: Stephen Kelly

Assistant Director Housing & Health: Samantha Shimmon

Communities Director: Sam Scharf

Assistant Director Public Realm & Environment: Alistair Wilson

Strategic Environmental Health and Public Safety Lead: Yvonne O'Donnell

Deputy Democratic Services Manager: Claire Tunnicliffe

Democratic Services Officer: Matt Hussey

Officers Present Virtually:

Assistant Director Homes & Commercial: Sean Cleary

Assistant Director People & Change: Hannah Ralph

Peter Birch: Fleet Manager, Fleet and Garage

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

26/32/Cab Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Thornburrow.

26/33/Cab Declarations of Interest

No declarations were declared.

26/34/Cab Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2026 were approved and signed by the Chair.

26/35/Cab Public Questions

Friends of St Thomas Park submitted the following statement:

The Friends of St Thomas Park represent around 70 residents in Coleridge ward who came together in 2023 to raise their concerns about the way the Council was proceeding at that time with its plans to develop housing on a semi-derelict garage site and a significant part of St Thomas's Park.

The July 2026 Cabinet paper on the small sites development programme refers to the plans to develop the site at St Thomas's in Coleridge ward as having been 'paused' but are now being reactivated. No plan is included with the St Thomas site item but the report refers in a number of places to the proposed development being likely to have an impact upon the park area.

St Thomas Park

St Thomas Park is just over an acre in size, located behind and overlooked by two storey housing. It is largely open with a central fenced area with children's play equipment in it. It is well used for active recreation, play, football, ball throwing, dog walking etc. The seventy people, children and dogs who turned out for the photograph and who signed the E-petition in 2023 value it.

The park is a protected open space in Coleridge ward (through the Cambridge Local Plan 2018 and in the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan).

Coleridge is a ward that is deficient in open space when measured against the council's own standards for open space provision across the city.

Since 2023 a Friends group has been formed and a celebration event was held in summer 2024 to mark 75 years since the park was created.

A master plan for the park has been prepared by the Friends Group and surveys of birds, bats and biodiversity have been undertaken by local residents. New biodiversity features supporting growth in pollinators have been constructed. In early 2026 new trees were provided by the Council's Tree team and a tree planting event was held with local councillors and residents. This work has all been undertaken with the support of the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces and local members.

What is Cabinet being asked?

The semi-derelict garage site adjacent to St Thomas Park is a brownfield site and its redevelopment to provide a small-scale housing scheme makes sense.

That said, St Thomas Park is a protected open space, in a ward that has a deficit of open space areas. The park is valued for its recreation and play contribution, it supports local biodiversity and the community has come together and continues to demonstrate its value and importance to them.

Cabinet is asked to confirm the continued importance of St Thomas Park and support the work being undertaken there by ward members, council officers and local residents. Ongoing support for this important piece of local green space (consistent with the Council's own policies) can best be achieved if it is moved to the Nature, Open spaces and City Services portfolio and any future development of the garage site be undertaken on the brownfield area only.

The Cabinet Member for Housing responded:

- i. Have heard from residents and Ward Councillors regarding the importance of the park and was aware of the community work that Friends of St Thomas Park had undertaken, including tree planning, installation of bird boxes and community events.
- ii. The Cabinet report made it clear that Officers would review what would be possible to utilise the brownfield space only and minimise any impact on the park.
- iii. Officers would work with residents to ensure that all changes were agreed before designs were progressed.
- iv. Residents and Friends of St Thomas Park would be updated as the project progressed.
- v. Officers would work to see how the space could be adopted as a park as part of the Council's nature, open spaces, city services portfolio.
- vi. Acknowledged it was important to protect the space to allow residents, including those council tenants who have moved into their new council homes to enjoy.

Supplementary

Recognised the redevelopment of the garage site was an important brownfield site project and were not opposed to redevelopment of the area.

Acknowledged that every site mattered in the city. However, green spaces mattered too. This principle run through the Council's corporate policies, the emerging Local Plan, and the long-standing approach to protecting open spaces. Across successive Local Plans, the protection of these spaces and their contribution to health, wellbeing and the enjoyment of the city had been a consistent theme.

What had been surprising was the strength of feeling that this proposal has generated among local people.

Had looked carefully at the wording in the report but remained concerned by phrases such as “mitigate the impact” and “work with residents to agree”. The Cabinet needed to take a clearer position.

Why could the Council not give a definitive commitment that development would be restricted to the brownfield area only, and that the protected public open space, as identified in the Local Plan and other Council strategy documents, would remain protected from development, including any temporary use during construction works?

In short, why can the Council not give a clear and unequivocal assurance that this open space will be protected, rather than relying on wording that leaves the position open to interpretation?

The Cabinet Member for Housing responded:

- i. The development was at the early stages of the process and as yet there were no final design or detailed scheme in place.
- ii. It was vital that residents and interested external parties such as Friends of St Thomas Park were involved as options were explored to determine what could be delivered on the site.
- iii. The development could provide three or four family homes, although that may reduce to three depending on what was required through the design process. A lower number of homes would, of course, provide greater flexibility in terms of the available space.
- iv. Could not give a definitive answer at this stage because the proposals have not yet been developed in sufficient detail.
- v. Remembered previous discussions held many years ago and was very aware of the strength of feeling locally. Knew the area well, having lived in St Thomas Square and understood the concerns that have been expressed.
- vi. Declared that Friends of St Thomas Park would be involved throughout the process. As proposals were developed and consultations took place, residents would have the opportunity to review the plans and provide feedback. Engagement would help shape the scheme progressed.

26/36/Cab Budget Setting Context 2027-28

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Operations introduced the report.

The report provided an update on emerging financial risks and asked the Cabinet to agree the early strategic direction for setting the Council's 2026/27 budgets.

In response to questions from the Leaders of the Liberal Democrat and Green Party, the Cabinet Members for Finance and Corporate Operations and Housing and the Chief Finance Officer said the following:

- i. Noted that the comment that the use of the Members' Finance Working Group was welcomed.
- ii. Officers appreciated engagement with the Members' Finance Working Group on the design of the consultation before it was made public.
- iii. The significant year-end overspend on the Housing Revenue Account had arisen from a combination of factors. The previous year was the first which the full impact of Awaab's Law was experienced, and demand pressures had been underestimated during budget forecasting. Forecasts were based on the Quarter 2 position, and the seasonal nature of demand, particularly over the winter period, had not been fully anticipated. Lessons had been identified to improve forecasting in future years.
- iv. Approximately £3 million of the overspend related to clearly identifiable one-off pressures, such as the waking watch and incidents at a number of housing blocks. As a result, around half of the total overspend could be attributable to exceptional, non-recurring expenditure.
- v. Work was ongoing with the service to bring expenditure back into line with the approved budget. The additional investment approved by the Council had not been limited to increasing repairs budgets but had also funded improvements to staffing processes and contract management arrangements.
- vi. It was recognised that the benefits of these measures would take time to be realised. An updated position on performance against budget would be provided in the Quarter 1 Monitoring Report to Cabinet in September.
- vii. Noted that comment that it was important for all forty-two councillors to feel empowered and able to scrutinise the Council's finances.
- viii. Noted comments that concerns regarding the under-reporting of housing repairs had been raised by the Green Group's housing spokesperson, supported by evidence from tenant representatives, void property data and customer audits.
- ix. Improvements had been made to financial reporting, noting that the quarterly performance reports were designed to be accessible and understandable to all. The revised format provided greater transparency and made it easier for all Members and residents to understand the Council's financial position and performance.

- x. The involvement of Members in budget discussions at an earlier stage could only be seen as a positive development.
- xi. Encouraged all Members to engage with the quarterly performance reports and associated performance indicators, highlighting their value in improving understanding of the Council's financial and operational performance.
- xii. In relation to housing repairs, residents should be encouraged to report issues. The housing condition survey and tenancy audit provided important sources of information and helped Officers to identify issues that may not otherwise be reported through standard channels.
- xiii. Progress had been made in relation to housing repairs, particularly in addressing damp, mould and condensation issues. Efforts were continuing to support residents in getting necessary works completed as quickly as possible.
- xiv. Officers were working to bring responsibility for damp, mould and condensation work back in-house. This would give greater control over service delivery and enable repairs to be carried out more promptly.
- xv. Highlighted the importance of fulfilling regulatory requirements, including undertaking stock condition surveys. These surveys identified additional maintenance requirements and provided information to support effective asset management and ensure that properties continue to meet required standards.
- xvi. Highlighted an error on paragraph 6.9 and 6.10, p35 of the agenda pack, the meeting dates quoted in 2026 should be 2027.

The Cabinet **unanimously resolved** to:

- i. Note the economic update and emerging pressures set out in sections 4 and 5. 2 of the Officer's report.
- ii. Agree the high-level approach to budget setting for 2027/28 set out in section 6. 3 of the Officer's report.
- iii. Agree the high-level approach to public consultation set out in section 8 of the Officer's report.

26/37/Cab Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2021 – 2028

The Cabinet Member for Communities introduced the report.

The report detailed the background to the introduction of an extended Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2021 -2028) and Local Action Plan to cover the period June 2026 – March 2028.

In response to questions from Cabinet Members and those Councillors present, the Cabinet Member for Communities, the Chief Executive and the Assistant Director, Housing and Health said the following:

- i. Had attended a homelessness conference which included contributions from individuals with lived experience of homelessness which highlighted the value of drawing on their insights and perspectives when considering homelessness services and policy.
- ii. Emphasised the importance of ensuring these voices were heard across all Homelessness Charter support pillars, including the Council-led pillar, to help shape future work.
- iii. It was critical that people with lived experience helped to shape the Council's work.
- iv. Noted that while such perspectives were often gathered informally through partner organisations, embedding them more systematically in the Council strategies and decision-making would be beneficial.
- v. Had arranged a visit with Cyrenius to view modular housing sites and to learn more about their plans to deliver additional modular homes across the city.
- vi. It was important through the Council's partnership working to increase the provision of modular homes.
- vii. An example of the Council leading multi- agency working were as follows:
 - Co-Chair on the Homelessness Charter Group.
 - Sat on the Charter Board with the Assistant Director Housing & Health.
 - The Strategic Housing Advice Lead Officer, lead the Housing pillar Working Group.
 - A Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Board was in the process of being established, chaired by the Assistant Director Housing & Health at Officer level.
- viii. The Council recognised the need to balance close partnership working with the many organisations delivering homelessness services in the city while also providing clear leadership and direction.
- ix. Confirmed that, while partnership working would remain central, key elements of the homelessness agenda would be led by the Council.
- x. Noted the comment of thanks to the Strategic Housing Advice Lead Officer and their team for the swift outreach response during the recent heatwave, and the request for feedback in on successes, challenges and lessons learned.
- xi. Agreed that homelessness was a complex area, covering statutory duties and a range of support services. Confirmed training would be

available to all Councillors to help better understand the services available and the Council's responsibilities.

- xii. In relation to the slide in the Officer's report Pathway 3 – routes to accommodation (priority singles), p157 of the agenda pack, acknowledged that over half of those supported required assistance due to a physical disability and emphasised the importance of ensuring that appropriate accommodation, services and support were accessible to meet their needs.
- xiii. Residents with physical disabilities who experienced homelessness often required both suitable accommodation and additional support and work was often linked with the Development Team.
- xiv. The Council had expanded its Tenancy Sustainment Team to provide early, proactive support, including home visits for those moving through homelessness pathways, this would allow a more proactive approach with new tenants. Officers could also utilise the Council's Disabled Adaptations Budget within the Housing Revenue Account when adaptations were required.
- xv. Agreed that health, mental health and addiction issues were also key factors in homelessness and tenancy sustainment and stressed the importance of the NHS Integrated Care Board's involvement in addressing these challenges.
- xvi. Highlighted the critical role of the Access Surgery on Newmarket Road in supporting people experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping, and the need to increase capacity for such services.
- xvii. Expressed support for strengthening healthcare provision within the homelessness strategy and hoped that practical capacity and support could be developed further through the Action Plan over the coming years.
- xviii. Officers had been working with Jimmy's Cambridge on potential future sites beyond the current lease and emphasised that a clear understanding of demand, funding and partner contributions, including from the County Council's Streets to Homes partnership, would be required before any proposals could be progressed.
- xix. The Homelessness Strategy focused on supporting individuals to move away from rough sleeping through outreach and support services, rather than providing facilities that may enable rough sleeping to continue, such as portable toilets in known rough sleeping locations. Individuals were signposted to appropriate facilities and services.
- xx. Sharps bins could be found in all Council owned public toilets, although acknowledged the facilities were not opened twenty-four hours a day and that more could be done. Most pharmacies also had these bins which could be accessed by rough sleepers.

- xxi. The Homelessness Strategy had been developed by the views and priorities of those people who had experienced homelessness.
- xxii. Highlighted the support available through initiatives such as Street Aid, which members of the public could contribute to. This would help provide practical help to people who lived or had lived on the streets.
[Street Aid: Help for people on the streets - Cambridge City Council](#)
- xxiii. Agreed that an increased awareness of the range of services to support street life people that the Council offered would be beneficial.
- xxiv. Agreed to review the proposed two-year extension of the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan.
- xxv. The Housing Needs Register was open to anyone seeking housing assistance, including those already housed and people presenting as homeless. The Council recognised the need for good-quality accommodation across the city and remained committed to providing as much social rented housing as possible, within existing constraints, to meet housing needs.

The Cabinet **unanimously resolved** to:

- i. Approve the introduction and implementation of the draft extended Cambridge City Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2021 – 2028) and accompanying Local Action Plan as set out in Annexes 1 and 2 of the Officer's report.

Post Committee Note:

In response to the following question from Councillor Flaubert a full response was provided by the Homelessness Prevention and Solutions Manager outside of the meeting which can be read below:

What measurable progress has been made in reducing repeat rough sleeping since the adoption of Priority 6 of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy?

As stated in the Cabinet agenda pack, page 77, Rough sleeping tends to last longer than other forms of homelessness and is much more likely to be cyclical. As such, it is difficult to provide evidence over such a short period of time about the adoption of the priority and its effectiveness on services. Rough Sleeping Services use quarterly statistics, which are provided to MHCLG, and generally yearly statistics for measurement. Rough sleeping is split into 2 different types– short term rough sleeping and long-term rough sleeping.

There are measurements in place for people with a history of repeat rough sleeping. The Target Priority Group (TPG) identifies individuals who experience long-term or cyclical rough sleeping and are furthest from services.

It consists of entrenched, named individuals furthest from the system who are least likely to ask for, accept, or receive standard support. Each year, using the TPG definition set by MHCLG, the Council measures the amount of people that meet this definition, collectively with our partners at the Street Outreach Team, HEaRT team (Drugs & Alcohol Support) and Housing First.

Over the last few years, Cambridge City Council has been successful in reducing the number of individuals within the TPG, however due to the high number of people that fall within this group, there is still a lot of work to be done. The Council's Team around a Person (TAP) model, introduced in 2023, has brought together a multi-agency approach to resolving rough sleeping within the TPG. People within the TPG have specialist TAP's coordinated by the City Council, to bring together the services to work together to get people into accommodation. The steps are individualistic, with professionals deciding between them the best route to get people to engage, and then into housing. It is important to note that work in this area needs to be small incremental steps, designed for that person, otherwise lack of engagement and distrust of services, will continue to lead to cyclical rough sleeping. This is why the time period to measure a reduction in rough sleeping is important. For example, getting a person to attend a group, a GP or scripting services can take several months.

Below are the statistics provided to MHCLG since TAP was introduced (full financial year).

Year	Number of TPG in April	Breakdown of Sex	Number of people carried over to the following year	% reduction from previous year
24/25	44	F – 12 M - 32	19	57%
25/26	44	F – 13 M - 31	18	59%
26/27	34	F – 10 M - 23	17	23%

Of the 34 individuals in the TPG in 26/27, so far, 5 have permanent accommodation and 7 have precarious accommodation (e.g. Jimmy's East Road, staying with family or s188 temporary accommodation but not owed a s193 duty at time of writing). 20 have multiple complex needs (3 or more of domestic abuse (perp or survivor), criminal justice, mental health, physical health or Drugs/ alcohol). Only 10 have a local connection to Cambridge and 9 have No Recourse to Public Funds (of which a large percentage are the

individuals carried over each year as they have limited options that the Council and our partners can provide).

Question - Which actions within Priority 6 have been fully implemented, and which remain outstanding?

Please see each priority below with the response below it.

Work with providers to help speed up move on from hostels, whilst at the same time reviewing how evictions and abandonments can be reduced.

The Council introduced the Team Around a Person Prevention Panel (TAPPP) in 2025. Building on the success of TAP, the Panel meets each week to discuss people in adult services that are likely to face eviction or abandon their accommodation. The TAPPP has also been integrated into the Street's to Home weekly meetings. TAPPP brings together Cambridge City Council (Single Homeless Coordinator and Homeless Prevention Support Officers), HEaRT, Dual Diagnosis Street Team (Drugs and Alcohol), accommodation providers and the Street Outreach Team to provide support to individuals and accommodation providers. This support is individual to the needs of the person or accommodation service and decisions vary from paying off arrears, having drug/ alcohol support plans amended through to managing behaviour to help keep accommodation. This will be extended to the Young Futures Partnership in 2026 to bring the same successes to young people.

Regarding move on, the Council has an officer dedicated to move on from supported accommodation and holds monthly Hostel Allocation & Resettlement Panels (allocating band A to hostel licensees that are ready to move on). In addition to this, RSAP accommodation has been amended to take on people with support needs, that provide long term accommodation for people. Whilst a lot of work is being completed in this area, it does not increase the amount of accommodation that the Council can move people into, which causes delays in move on.

Work with providers to review the scope and effectiveness of hostel-based support, particularly in relation to move-on advice.

This work has not started. Supported Accommodation is commissioned by Cambridgeshire County Council, so would require their buy in. However, there is going to be a more general overview assessments of supported accommodation via the Supported Accommodation (Regulatory Oversight) Act and the System Maturity Audit as part of the Long-Term Rough Sleeping Partnership Plan. Although similar, they cover the assessment from different angles – one is an assessment of the accommodation and the other is an assessment as part of the ecosystem for rough sleepers.

Explore whether being excluded from moving on due to previous breaches of tenancy can be prevented.

There is no exclusion for being moved on due to previous breaches, however, particularly via the private rented sector, this itself can be a barrier. The Council has no control over whether a private landlord takes a person, other than those defined within the Renter's Rights Act. It would technically be a breach of licence to have rent arrears and this falls within the Housing Related Debt Policy.

Work with sub-regional authorities to help improve City access to existing hostel beds.

Work on this has not started

Work with the County Council to assess what balance between hostel and other accommodation might be appropriate going forwards.

Work on this has not started and should not start until the Supported Accommodation (Regulatory Oversight) Act and the System Maturity Audit have been completed. Mapping the current needs of both statutory homelessness and rough sleeping is key to good decision making.

Promote and make private rented housing a more attractive option, to help make it available to a wider range of applicants.

Work has started on this, with the officers in the Homeless Prevention & Solutions Team going out to each hostel to explain the Renter's Rights Act and promote services that the Council has, to help people move on. Focus has been on the Young Futures Partnership first, learning from this, before going into adult services via Street's to Home.

Review the effectiveness of the Housing First model of provision and explore whether it should be extended to include private rented sector homes.

Independent Review completed on the effectiveness in 2025, which was positive on the Housing First project and their way of working. Not extended to private rented accommodation currently, namely because of cost and competing demands with statutory homelessness and Townhall Lettings.

Explore with social housing providers whether there are opportunities for short life or low demand social housing available, including to single sharers.

Not started

Expand the provision of modular homes and explore other innovative ways of providing accommodation to prevent and relieve single homelessness.

Not started. Whether modular homes can be used to prevent or relieve statutory homelessness is not straight forward and could be subject to legal challenge. Modular homes remain a good option for people with low/ medium needs but lessons learned with our partners at Jimmy's suggest that they are an excellent model as part of a journey from rough sleeping to independent accommodation but have a poor success for people immediately rough sleeping prior to moving in. Continuing the person's journey to independence and using the modular homes as stepping stone accommodation has produced much better outcomes.

Continue to seek and make best use of funding opportunities to purchase new homes to accommodate rough sleepers.

No funding has been made available from Homes England or MHCLG, for rough sleepers, since adopting the priority. Regular contact between Cambridge City Council and the Rough Sleeping Advisor at MHCLG will continue and put Cambridge in the best place to put in a bid for funding if it becomes available. MHCLG has no current plans to expand RSAP, NSAP or SHAP.

Work with the County Council in considering the need for commissioning longer term supported provision for those for whom mainstream housing with support may not be suitable.

Not started.

Work collaboratively on shifting emphasis from a mainly streets-based towards more of a home-based service model.

Ongoing. The Council's grant conditions under the Homelessness, Rough Sleeping and Domestic Abuse Grant, puts a focus on early intervention and maximising prevention activities, to avoid people rough sleeping. This is one aspect of this work. This will be measured via MHCLG's Local Outcome Framework.

26/38/Cab New Sites Development and Homes England update

Before the item was considered the Chair highlighted the following typo in the report:

- Section 4.1.3 (p225 of the agenda pack) stated a purchase price of £1,125,000 for Haviland Way in King's Hedges. The correct figure was

£1,375,000. The overall budget was not affected for that site and the overall ask not affected.

The Cabinet Member for Housing then introduced the report.

The report provided an update on the Council's Small Sites Programme; an initiative focused on bringing forward underutilised and infill sites across Cambridge to deliver new council housing. The programme had been designed to provide opportunities for the Small to Medium (SME) sector in the region.

In response to questions from Cabinet Members and those Councillors present, the Cabinet Member for Housing said the following:

- i. The provision of a community facility had previously been explored as part of proposals for the St. Thomas Road development. While the current scheme could not accommodate such a facility, future provision on the opposite garage site could be considered but was not guaranteed.
- ii. The Council had adopted the Cam Standard rather than Passivhaus certification. The additional benefits associated with achieving the final stage of full Passivhaus certification were relatively limited in comparison with the additional cost. The last 10% was very marginal in terms of gains for the tenant as outlined in the report. Further, information would be provided outside the meeting.
- iii. Regarding the Horizons site, the Council would work closely with the County Council to ensure a smooth transition and ensure service users and operators were appropriately supported throughout the process. Ongoing engagement with board members would continue.
- iv. The proposed homes on the Hawthorn and Horizon sites would be 100% Council homes, with 5% designed as wheelchair-accessible properties. A builder was yet to be appointed and Officers were currently considering the available delivery options as outlined in the report. Was keen to utilise local builders, contractors and architects where possible in order to support local businesses.

Cabinet **unanimously resolved** to:

- i. Approve the three sites above for inclusion within the Housing Capital Programme, with an indicative capital budget of £37,401,454 to fund all site assembly, construction costs, professional fees, and further associated fees, to deliver a 100% affordable – council - housing scheme which meets the identified need in Cambridge. This budget will be funded from resources previously approved by Council for investment in new homes and not yet allocated.

- ii. Authorise the Assistant Director, Development in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing to approve variations to the scheme including the number of units and mix of property types, sizes, and tenure.
- iii. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director, Development to make a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) in respect of any leasehold interests at Horizons and Hawkins development sites, identified for possible redevelopment that cannot be acquired by private treaty within a reasonable timescale and at a reasonable cost subject to the Director of Economy and Place being satisfied that there is a compelling case in the public interest for the use of compulsory purchase powers, and that all legal and policy requirements for the making and confirmation of a CPO have been met
- iv. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director, Development to serve initial Demolition Notices under the Housing Act 1985.
- v. Delegate Authority to the Assistant Director of Housing and Homelessness to approve a local lettings plan for the proposed developments.

26/39/Cab Reopening of Parker's Piece and Quayside public

Members were reminded that the report for this item also covered agenda items 9 and 10 and that the recommendations for all three items would be taken en bloc.

The Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Spaces and City Services introduced the report.

The report referred to the implementation of the Liberal Democrat proposals on reopening Parker's Piece and Quayside toilets.

In response to questions from Cabinet Members and those Councillors present, the Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Spaces and City Services said:

- i. Noted the comments to thank staff for their work in delivering these services that covered agenda items 8, 9 and 10. Particularly during a challenging period of hot weather and increased seasonal demand.
- ii. Services had been operating with reduced staffing levels for several years, and support was expressed for increased investment and to welcome the prospect of improvements to street cleaning, public realm enforcement, and the reopening of closed public toilets.
- iii. The intention had been to secure approval for the proposals as quickly as possible in order to facilitate their implementation.

- iv. A report on the future provision of public toilets would be submitted to the relevant Scrutiny Committee on 23 September; the matter could be reviewed by the relevant Scrutiny Committee if considered necessary.
- v. The report was not seeking Cabinet approval to introduce charges to the public toilets but to recommend this area was where investment was made. Future toilets should be designed in a way that did not prevent charging from being considered.
- vi. Should a future Cabinet wish to introduce charges at any location, this would require a separate report, supported by a business case, an Equality Impact Assessment, and a formal Member decision.
- vii. On payment methods, the report recognised that traditional coin-operated systems were becoming increasingly difficult to operate.
- viii. Declining cash use meant many people no longer carried coins, while coin mechanisms require cash collection. These were costly to maintain, and were vulnerable to vandalism, theft, and mechanical failure. Cash collection could also present safety risks for staff.
- ix. Contactless systems could address many of the issues raised and offered greater convenience for most users. However, there were concerns about accessibility for those without bank cards or compatible payment methods, which included some young people and overseas visitors. This would need to be fully considered as part of any future charging proposal.
- x. The report did not commit the Council to installing contactless payment equipment. Any future proposal would need to demonstrate that the costs of installation, maintenance, and transaction fees, alongside expected income and operational savings, represented value for money through a detailed business case.
- xi. The Transformation Fund allocation had not been diverted from budgets for maintaining the existing public toilet estate. It was intended to support the reopening of facilities and associated improvements.
- xii. Day-to-day maintenance budgets remained in place and Officers continued to respond to issues as they arose.
- xiii. Acknowledged the wider challenges facing the public toilet network, including those at Jesus Green. The report acknowledged that further investment would be required over time. In the short term, Officers were progressing improvements at Jesus Green while developing longer-term proposals linked to the new leisure management contract and future redevelopment of facilities at the Lido.
- xiv. In relation to Abbey Ward, the report focused on reopening facilities and delivering targeted operational improvements. It was not a review of the overall distribution of public toilets across the city.

- xv. Aware of the issues on Mill Road cemetery and its relationship to the former public toilets, including reports of rough sleeping and other challenges within the cemetery. These were ongoing matters that required attention and extend beyond the provision of public toilets alone. Would be happy to discuss these issues outside of the meeting with Councillors and Mill Road Traders.
- xvi. Could not pre-empt any future reconsideration of previous decisions regarding its operation or investment, such as Mill Road toilets.
- xvii. The report before Cabinet was one step within a wider programme of work to reopen facilities, improve service resilience, and ensure flexibility in future investment decisions.
- xviii. Wider questions concerning individual sites, such as Gwydir Street, would continue to be considered as part of the Council's ongoing review of the public toilet estate and future investment priorities.
- xix. The Council remained open to collaborative approaches that could help improve the long-term sustainability and usefulness of these public facilities.

The Cabinet **unanimously resolved:**

- i. To approve the immediate reopening of as many individual toilets at Parkers Piece as feasible following condition and compliance checks.
- ii. To request officers, bring a paper to 23rd September Cabinet setting out options for the future of Parker's Piece and Quayside toilets, including reopening and operating cost, payment options, and capital investment needed to meet any new accessibility requirements.
- iii. That four temporary staff are recruited as soon as possible to provide additional street cleansing capacity at priority hotspots, including the city centre, and strengthening programmed cleansing activity across the city, to be organised into a new daily 12-7pm shift.
- iv. To agree that officers implement route optimisation and operational redesign informed by performance and REEN smart bin technology data to deliver efficiencies that can release existing cleaning capacity for priority hotspots.
- v. To agree that officers will bring a more detailed paper on longer-term staffing requirements once the additional temporary resource is in place and its impact can be assessed to feed into the budget setting process in late Autumn.
- vi. To agree to the recruitment of two additional temporary Public Realm Enforcement Officers (a permanent appointment would be made in September, which would replace one of the temporary posts) so that a team of 5 enforcement officers will be funded from July to the end of the financial year.

- vii. To agree that officers bring an evidence-based report to Cabinet in November/December setting out the impact of the additional capacity and other reforms to improve prevention and enforcement activity with advice on whether there is sufficient capacity or whether further resources are required.
- viii. That the in-year revenue costs of these proposals are funded using the Transformation and Reinvestment Fund, anticipated to be up to £200k, and that the CFO has delegated authority to approve this.
- ix. That proposals are brought forward as part of the 2027/2028 Budget setting process so that future funding for the costs of toilet reopening, additional street cleaning and enforcement activity can be secured.

26/40/Cab Improvements to Street Cleaning

The Committee noted that the report relevant to this item had partly been considered under Item 8, introduced by the Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Spaces and City Services, and also related to Item 10. The recommendations for all three items would therefore be considered and determined collectively.

The report referred to the necessary steps to hire additional staff on a temporary basis to increase street cleansing and public realm enforcement in the city centre during the busy summer months

The Cabinet **unanimously resolved**:

- i. To approve the immediate reopening of as many individual toilets at Parkers Piece as feasible following condition and compliance checks.
- ii. To request officers, bring a paper to 23rd September Cabinet setting out options for the future of Parker's Piece and Quayside toilets, including reopening and operating cost, payment options, and capital investment needed to meet any new accessibility requirements.
- iii. That four temporary staff are recruited as soon as possible to provide additional street cleansing capacity at priority hotspots, including the city centre, and strengthening programmed cleansing activity across the city, to be organised into a new daily 12-7pm shift.
- iv. To agree that officers implement route optimisation and operational redesign informed by performance and REEN smart bin technology data to deliver efficiencies that can release existing cleaning capacity for priority hotspots.
- v. To agree that officers will bring a more detailed paper on longer-term staffing requirements once the additional temporary resource is in place and its impact can be assessed to feed into the budget setting process in late Autumn.

- vi. To agree to the recruitment of two additional temporary Public Realm Enforcement Officers (a permanent appointment would be made in September, which would replace one of the temporary posts) so that a team of 5 enforcement officers will be funded from July to the end of the financial year.
- vii. To agree that officers bring an evidence-based report to Cabinet in November/December setting out the impact of the additional capacity and other reforms to improve prevention and enforcement activity with advice on whether there is sufficient capacity or whether further resources are required.
- viii. That the in-year revenue costs of these proposals are funded using the Transformation and Reinvestment Fund, anticipated to be up to £200k, and that the CFO has delegated authority to approve this.
- ix. That proposals are brought forward as part of the 2027/2028 Budget setting process so that future funding for the costs of toilet reopening, additional street cleaning and enforcement activity can be secured

26/41/Cab Improving Public Safety and Environmental Enforcement

It was noted that the report relevant to this item had partly been considered under agenda items 8 and 9. The recommendations for all three agenda items would therefore be considered and determined en bloc.

The report highlighted the need to hire additional staff on a temporary basis to increase street cleansing and public realm enforcement in the city centre during the busy summer months.

In response to questions from Cabinet Members and those Councillors present, the Cabinet Members for Nature, Open Space and City Services and for Climate Action and Environment said the following:

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

- i. The issue was first raised in Council approximately two years ago, with significant work undertaken by Planning and Enforcement Officers, with Councillors recently briefed on the on the evidence and findings on 24 June 2026.
- ii. The findings and proposed next steps for the emerging, Local Plan were due to be considered by the Performance, Assets and Strategy Overview and Scrutiny (PAS) Committee on 15 July.
- iii. The PAS published papers included an evidence study on the role and impact of HMOs in Cambridge and any recommendations from Scrutiny would be considered by a meeting of the two Cabinets (Cambridge City

- Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council) on 21 July. If approved, the proposals would be subject to public consultation.
- iv. The evidence identified areas of higher HMO density and would assist Members in considering the introduction of an Article 4 Direction, which would require planning permission for the conversion of family homes into HMOs.
 - v. Officers would review the recommendations and provide a report and their recommendations scheduled for Cabinet on 20 October

Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for Antisocial Driving

- i. Officers were investigating the use and effectiveness of PSPOs for antisocial driving in other areas.
- vi. For a PSPO to be introduced, the Council had to gather sufficient evidence demonstrating that the behaviour and robust evidence base was therefore required:
 - Has a detrimental effect on quality of life;
 - Is persistent in nature;
 - Justifies the proposed restrictions.
- vii. Based on Officers' investigations, the process from evidence gathering to implementation of an enforceable order typically took between six and twelve months, although this would depend on local circumstances. A report was expected to be brought to Cabinet on 20 October.

Equalities Act Guidance

- i. Officers had begun assessing the guidance in May when it was laid before Parliament, which had a statutory 40-day period in which to review the guidance.
- ii. Should Parliament reject or amend the guidance, the Council would review its position accordingly.
- iii. A national petition seeking to reject the guidance had exceeded 10,000 signatures, requiring a Government response.
- iv. Officers would bring a report to the Council once Parliament has reached a decision, after which the Council would consider its next steps.
- v. Some members have expressed a wish for the matter to be considered by the Services, Climate and Communities Committee, potentially at its meeting on 24 September, subject to agreement by the Chair and Vice-Chair.
- vi. The matter was then expected to be considered by Cabinet on 20 October.
- vii. Councillor Davidson's comments were acknowledged and would be considered as part of the Council's response.

The Cabinet **unanimously resolved:**

- x. To approve the immediate reopening of as many individual toilets at Parkers Piece as feasible following condition and compliance checks.
- xi. To request officers, bring a paper to 23rd September Cabinet setting out options for the future of Parker's Piece and Quayside toilets, including reopening and operating cost, payment options, and capital investment needed to meet any new accessibility requirements.
- xii. That four temporary staff are recruited as soon as possible to provide additional street cleansing capacity at priority hotspots, including the city centre, and strengthening programmed cleansing activity across the city, to be organised into a new daily 12-7pm shift.
- xiii. To agree that officers implement route optimisation and operational redesign informed by performance and REEN smart bin technology data to deliver efficiencies that can release existing cleaning capacity for priority hotspots.
- xiv. To agree that officers will bring a more detailed paper on longer-term staffing requirements once the additional temporary resource is in place and its impact can be assessed to feed into the budget setting process in late Autumn.
- xv. To agree to the recruitment of two additional temporary Public Realm Enforcement Officers (a permanent appointment would be made in September, which would replace one of the temporary posts) so that a team of 5 enforcement officers will be funded from July to the end of the financial year.
- xvi. To agree that officers bring an evidence-based report to Cabinet in November/December setting out the impact of the additional capacity and other reforms to improve prevention and enforcement activity with advice on whether there is sufficient capacity or whether further resources are required.
- xvii. That the in-year revenue costs of these proposals are funded using the Transformation and Reinvestment Fund, anticipated to be up to £200k, and that the CFO has delegated authority to approve this.
- xviii. That proposals are brought forward as part of the 2027/2028 Budget setting process so that future funding for the costs of toilet reopening, additional street cleaning and enforcement activity can be secured.

26/42/Cab Community Infrastructure Levy

The report was introduced by the Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment.

The report referred to the results of a six-week public consultation from 16 February 2026 to 29 March 2026 on the Council's draft Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule. This had been conducted alongside a similar consultation by South Cambridgeshire District Council, with stakeholders invited to submit representations on both proposals.

The proposed Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire CIL aimed to generate additional funding from new development to help address the shortfall in funding for strategic transport infrastructure.

In response to questions from Cabinet Members and those Councillors present, the Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development said the following:

- i. CIL charges were index-linked and updated annually to reflect inflation.
- ii. A key issue raised through the consultation responses was whether the proposed rates represented the maximum contribution that could reasonably be secured from developers.
- iii. Some of the charges, compared to other areas were higher, noting this was specifically linked to the strategic transport infrastructure. In contrast, in other parts of Cambridgeshire some areas applied higher overall charges, but these supported all infrastructure, including education, open space, etc.
- iv. The proposed rates were also comparable with the levels of contribution already secured through agreements relating to strategic development sites, examples of which had been set out in the report.
- v. Representations from the development industry generally supported lower charges, although some respondents recognised the benefits of a clear and consistent approach to securing infrastructure contributions. Conversely, some community responses argued that the charges should be higher.
- vi. Officers confirmed that all consultation responses had been considered and that the viability evidence had been reviewed with the Council's specialist viability consultant in light of submissions from developers.
- vii. The Council's view was that the proposed rates strike an appropriate balance between ensuring development remained viable and secured sufficient contributions towards strategic transport infrastructure.
- viii. Whether this balance has been achieved would be considered through the independent examination process. The examiner's recommendations would be reported back to the Council in due course.
- ix. There were many areas, particularly in metropolitan authorities, where there were no parish councils. A range of arrangements had been used

by borough and city councils to distribute the local contribution was which community fixed as a proportion of the CIL receipts to local areas.

- x. There was no immediate solution for the distribution of neighbourhood CIL because of the uncertainty associated with Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the governance arrangements that may emerge from that process. It was important that decisions about how local communities participate in spending decisions were addressed as part of the wider governance discussions linked to LGR.
- xi. Emphasised that local community groups would not be disadvantaged by this approach. If the proposed CIL charging schedule was approved, expected to come into effect in the early part of the following year. The levy would only apply to planning permissions granted after the charging schedule took effect, and there would typically be a further period before development commenced and any CIL liability became payable. It was anticipated that any funds collected before the new governance arrangements were agreed would be relatively limited.
- xii. Considered it to be appropriate to address the issue through a comprehensive governance review as part of the LGR process, rather than introducing interim arrangements. Any CIL funds collected would not be allocated or spent for any other purposes until appropriate governance arrangements had been established.

The Cabinet **unanimously resolved** to:

- i. Authorise the submission of the draft charging schedule, an amended draft instalment policy, and associated evidence for independent examination

26/43/Cab Fleet Decarbonisation and Replacement Project.

Before the Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment introduced the report advised that the fleet decarbonisation and replacement project would be moving to the Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Spaces and City Services portfolio.

The report set out the proposed approach to future fleet replacement and decarbonisation and sought approval for the adoption of an electric vehicle first replacement strategy together with the associated governance arrangements for future fleet investment decisions.

In response from questions and comments from the Leaders of the Liberal Democratic and Green Party the Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment said the following:

- I. EV charging infrastructure were in place at the Operational Hub with more chargers to be easily and readily installed in various locations.
- II. Careful consideration had been given whether vehicles should be leased or purchased.
- III. Would consider how the Teletrac report could be shared with Members.
- IV. The Council did not routinely sell its vehicles but retained them until they reached the end of their operational life, there was no expectation that this approach would change.
- V. As part of the phased replacement programme, consideration had also been given to the potential implications of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), recognising that any future authority may have its own vehicle fleet.
- VI. Although purchasing vehicles would require a higher initial capital outlay, this option would deliver savings in the longer term. Leasing vehicles would involve entering into maintenance contracts, resulting in higher overall costs than purchasing. The purchased vehicles would be managed in-house.
- VII. The decision had not been made just to provide additional work to the garage. Demand for the garage services remained high and a review would be required to determine whether sufficient capacity existed to continue. The decision had been made to secure best value for the Council while ensuring that staff had access to the most appropriate vehicles to carry out their work effectively.
- VIII. The proportion of electric vehicles within the fleet would increase from 12% to approximately 75%, as suitable electric alternatives were not currently available for all vehicle types. However, this could increase as those vehicle types became available as electric.

The Cabinet **unanimously resolved** to:

- i. Approves the adoption of an electric vehicle first approach for future fleet replacement, where operationally suitable and economically viable.
- ii. Notes the approved capital allocation of £2 million in 2026/27 and the indicative future capital requirements of £3 million in 2027/28 and £3 million in 2028/29 to support the Fleet Replacement and Decarbonisation Programme, with future years' funding subject to approval through the Council's annual budget-setting process.
- iii. Delegates authority to the Director of City Services, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Climate Action and Environment and the Chief Finance Officer, to approve individual vehicle replacement decisions and associated procurement activities within the approved capital budget and in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

26/44/Cab Quarterly Performance Report January to March 2026

The Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Operations introduced the report.

The report provided an overview of the Council's performance over the period 1 January to 31 March 2026 (Q4). As the report was for the final quarter of the year it provided additional information collected on an annual basis and included the Annual Customer Feedback report.

The Assistant Director, People and Change and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Operations responded to questions and comments from Cabinet Members and other present with the following:

- i. Noted the request to include trend data in a future report, illustrating the number of complaints received across all years that the data was available.
- ii. Would ensure that the figures were correct on page 4 of the Annual Customer Feedback Report.
- iii. Noted the thanks to the staff carrying out housing repairs, welcomed the reduction in void properties and the decrease in the housing register waiting list.
- iv. Welcomed the comment that the single-report format was an improvement.
- v. Noted the suggestion that future reports should clearly distinguish between one-off cost-related items and underlying financial performance, which would enhance the clarity of the information.
- vi. The newly established Finance Working Group would consider budgetary matters including the Housing Revenue Account, providing an early opportunity for all political parties to contribute.
- vii. The balance between ambition and deliverability were ultimately matters for the administration and political groups.
- viii. The Council remained ambitious in its objectives, as reflected by the significant progress reported across a number of areas within the quarterly report. Unforeseen issues had arisen during the year, meaning that some projects had been delayed or unable to be completed as originally planned, for a variety of reasons.
- ix. Responsive repairs were largely demand-led. Public awareness had increased, particularly in relation to damp, mould and condensation. In some cases, repair requests were not reported as early as they could be, resulting in more extensive and costly works than would have been required had the issues been reported at an earlier stage

- x. Members of the public have become more aware of both the Council's complaints procedure and the services it provided, particularly within Environmental Health. The scope of this service had expanded to include Public Safety and Anti-Social Behaviour. Complaints relating to these areas were previously reported within a different service area, as were those relating to Housing, which had contributed to an increase in the number of complaints recorded. It was important to note the 82% customer satisfaction rate.

The Cabinet **unanimously resolved** to:

- i. Note the contents of the attached Quarterly Performance Report for the period 1 January to 31 March 2026.

The meeting ended at 8.55 pm

CHAIR