

## **COUNCIL**

16 July 2026  
6.00 - 10.12 pm

**Present:** Councillors Ashton, Baigent, Bick, Bird, Bennett, Blackburn-Horgan, Cleminson, Clough, Dalzell, Davey, Davison, Dryden, Fisher, Flaubert, Gardiner-Smith, Gawthroe Wood, Glasberg, Griffin, Grimwood, Haithcock, Hauk, Hossain, Illingworth, Martinelli, McPherson, Moore, Nestor, Nicmanis, Payne, Porrer, Sage, Sheil, Smart, Swift, Taylor, Thornburrow, Todd-Jones, Tong, Toye Scott, Wade and Whitmore

### **FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**

#### **26/59/CNL Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Young.

#### **26/60/CNL Declarations of Interest**

| <b>Councillor</b> | <b>Item</b> | <b>Reason</b>                                                                                                |
|-------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Thornburrow       | 26/64/CNL   | Personal: Lives in rented accommodation so affected by Renters' Right Act and has previously lived in an HMO |
| Nestor            | 26/65/CNL   | Personal: Trustee of Museum of Cambridge                                                                     |
| Moore             | 26/64/CNL   | Personal: Child who lives in an HMO                                                                          |
| Baigent           | 26/69/CNL   | Personal: Member of River CamCycle and ACORN                                                                 |

#### **26/61/CNL Minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2026 and reconvened meeting held on 1 June 2026**

The Minutes of the meetings of 21 May 2026 and 1 June 2026 were approved as a correct record and would be signed by the Mayor.

#### **26/62/CNL Mayor's announcements**

The Mayor noted that the funeral had taken place for honorary councillor and former mayor Terry Sweeney, who had died on the 26 June aged 85. Paying

tribute, the Mayor said that he was known to many as a warm-hearted and generous man, was a long-term tenant rep for Lichfield Road residents, stood on the city's council housing committee and was mayor from 1987 to 88.

The Mayor reported on her chosen themes of community, biodiversity and heritage as well as her chosen charities: Abbey People, Cambridge Museum of Technology and the Museum of Cambridge.

Recent events of note in the Mayor's diary had included the 'Party in the Park' to celebrate the city's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, events celebrating different cultures in Cambridge (including India Day, the Chinese Dragon Boat Race and the Szeged Society), Refugee Week (which culminated in the 'Voices of Hope and Compassion' concert), the 'Beating of the Bounds' of Stourbridge Common, and the Independent Living Service's 'Summer of Love' party. The Mayor paid tribute to everyone involved in organising all the events she had attended.

Councillor Todd-Jones was then invited to speak and he paid tribute to the council's communities team for organising screenings of the football World Cup semi-final at the Meadows Centre and at Clay Farm.

The Mayor encouraged members to attend the 'Mayor's Day Out' on 11 August (a trip to Great Yarmouth), take part in painting the new murals at Crater Bridge on Friday 7 August, and to attend the screening of the 'People's Emergency Briefing' film on 29 July.

Finally, the Mayor highlighted the 'Little Free Libraries' project being run by Abbey People and noted that by the age of five, children from disadvantaged backgrounds may know up to 10,000 fewer words than their more affluent peers. The Mayor encouraged members to consider supporting similar initiatives in their ward.

## **26/63/CNL Public questions time**

### **Question 1)**

I am writing as a dad in East Chesterton, Cambridge, who feels strongly that the paternity pay offer from Cambridge City Council should be much better.

Proper paternity leave benefits all parents and their babies. Polling by the [Dad Shift](#) campaign showed that 90% of dads agree that fathers today want to be a bigger part of their children's lives, and 86% of the public agree it's better when both parents have equal opportunities to be caregivers.

You may know that the Government is currently reviewing the statutory offer for fathers and non-birthing parents, which is currently the worst in Europe. As

part of that review, The Dad Shift have researched paternity leave offerings from local authorities. You can find their league table here: <https://tinyurl.com/local-gov-pat-leave>.

As reported in Cambridge Independent, Cambridge City Council only offers 2 weeks full pay for paternity leave. Currently, 42% of births occur by caesarean section, for which doctors recommend birth parents need six weeks to recover. I have personal experience of this; my daughter was born by emergency c-section, and I am so relieved that I was able to take additional time to support her recovery and care for my new child, despite only receiving two weeks statutory paternity leave from my employer.

Cambridge city council has the opportunity to do far better for the dads you employ and their families, leading by example and enabling all parents to be fully involved in their children's lives with an enhanced paternity leave offering. For wider context, the European average is eight weeks at full pay.

In light of the above, my question is: will the council commit to improving its paternity leave offer to at least six weeks at 90% pay, and to officially call on the Government to introduce at least six weeks of fully paid statutory paternity leave nationally?

Thank you for your consideration and the work that you do.

The Cabinet Member Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Operations replied:

- i. The Council was committed to its staff and supporting those that are growing their families.
- ii. Following changes to the Employment Rights Act 2025, statutory paternity leave (two weeks at statutory pay) has become a day-one right from 6 April 2026. The council has welcomed this change and our policy has been updated to align with it.
- iii. Therefore, if you have 26 weeks service but less than 1 year by the beginning of the 15th week before the due date, an individual will receive 2 weeks Statutory Pay or 90% of their average weekly earnings (whichever is lower). If the individual has 12 months or more continuous service by the beginning of the 15th week before the due date, they will receive 2 weeks at full pay (inclusive of Statutory Pay).
- iv. Eligible employees could also request shared parental leave in line with statutory guidelines. This allowed parents to share the care of their child during the first year, choosing the arrangements that work best for their family.

**In response to the Supplementary Question:**

The Cabinet Member Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Operations responded:

- i. The Council had recently undertaken benchmarking work on how our policy compares with other Councils and other private sector bodies leading in this area.
- ii. The Council was considering options regarding any potential changes to its policy, particularly in the context of future Local Government reorganisation.
- iii. Had asked for these options to be presented to myself as Lead Member for consideration over the summer and would ask for Officers to bring an update to any policy changes as part of a future Employment Committee meeting.

### **Question 2)**

Our 2006 Local Plan took a significant amount of land out of the Green Belt in order to build an urban extension on the Southern Fringe. This was to address the problem facing a city with many more jobs than houses.

This has been very successful in Trumpington, where higher density housing has enabled us to create two large new public open spaces which are benefitting humans and wildlife alike.

Hobsons Park is the area to the east of Trumpington, between the new housing on Clay Farm and the railway line. It includes a children's playground, a skateboard park, a large allotment site, an artificial hill, an all-age trim trail and a network of paths and benches for walkers, runners, and sitters.

It has also created significant new habitats for wildlife in the four balancing ponds, the new hedgerows, the hundreds of new trees and the grassland. The resulting Biodiversity Net Gain has been truly remarkable, but it's future is far from guaranteed.

As in other new developments, the adoption of roads, drainage and public open spaces has been a major problem. Years of delay have caused some of these new neighbourhoods to deteriorate because they have not been maintained properly. Road and pavement surfaces are being damaged by weed growth, and new areas of open water are being choked by vegetation. Developers clearly lack the resources or incentives to develop adequate maintenance programmes, and handovers are further delayed.

My question is this: Is the City Council developing detailed written plans for the maintenance and management of the various areas of Hobson's Park, and are they involving residents and groups to ensure that these plans are informed by local knowledge and sustained in future by active partnerships between paid officers and volunteers?

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport said the following:

- i. Welcome the question and also recognise the motion before Council today regarding accountability and transparency on unadopted residential developments.
- ii. Agree that Hobson's Park illustrates many of the issues that could arise where the delivery, maintenance and eventual adoption of new infrastructure involved a number of different organisations over an extended period.
- iii. Management and maintenance plans for open spaces were an important consideration through the planning process and formed part of the long-term arrangements agreed as developments come forward. However, it was also recognised that as time moved on, sites mature, community expectations evolved and the management needs of open spaces could change as they become established.
- iv. Following the adoption of Hobson's Park, the City Council was now responsible for its long-term management. The immediate priority had been to ensure that routine maintenance, inspections and operational arrangements were in place to provide a safe and well-managed public space.
- v. Looking ahead, where resources allowed and taking account of priorities across the city, the Council would look at reviewing and developing management plans for significant open spaces, including Hobson's Park.
- vi. Any future review would seek to reflect current best practice, the Council's Biodiversity Strategy and Urban Forest Strategy, operational experience gained through adoption, and opportunities to work with residents, Friends groups, allotment holders, environmental organisations and other stakeholders whose local knowledge can help shape the future management of the site.
- vii. As with all the Council's parks and open spaces, this work would need to be balanced against the Council's wider responsibilities and available resources. Nevertheless, the Council recognised the value of active community involvement in helping to care for these important public spaces and look forward to continuing to work with local people as Hobson's Park developed over the years ahead.

**Supplementary Question:**

Sadly, in the five years since Hobson's Park has been handed over by the developers has been marred by delay and neglect.

For example, the hedges have never been cut by the Council, and we have now discovered that the ditches around the site make it impossible to reach many areas. No suggestions to help plot holders manage their hedges, or

anything else, have been made. We have been left, to a great extent, to fend for ourselves.

Raised beds had to be removed because the timber was rotten, and only yesterday the entrance gate post finally broke off at ground level.

This is a new allotment site which, by now, should be a feature that Cambridge is proud of.

We should be welcoming visitors to see how allotments can contribute to the health and wellbeing of our residents and our city's wildlife.

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport said the following:

- i. Was sorry to hear of the issues reported and would be interested to understand whether this meant the management plans that came under the planning consent was not effective.
- ii. Would consider what had caused these issues and determine whether this was a planning matter or a wider maintenance issue.
- iii. Would work with the Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Spaces and City Services and would be happy update the public speaker.

### **Question 3)**

Speaking as chair of Trumpington Residents' Association.

The first residents on the Southern Fringe developments started moving in 14 years ago. They moved in with an expectation that the roads, green spaces, play areas, and so on, would be adopted by the relevant authority within a reasonable timeframe, an expectation that was encouraged by the developers' own sales teams.

Yet of the roads, only a handful on Trumpington Meadows have been adopted. Not a single road associated with the Clay Farm and Glebe Farm developments has been adopted yet, even though it's been 4 years since the last of the construction was completed. It's been 7 years since the demise of Southern Fringe Forum, which was our chance to have planners, developers and residents in the same place at the same time. Since then, the area committee meetings have also ceased. There are still green spaces that remain to be adopted. There are still recreation areas that aren't even accessible, let alone adopted.

- *How* has this been allowed to continue for 14 years?
- *Why* is it considered acceptable that chasing developers and their contractors, for example to fix street lights and enforce parking

restrictions, should be left to residents' associations and individual residents?

This is a major topic at meetings of Trumpington Residents' Association. As Chair, my inbox regularly fills up with complaints from residents and copies of messages that residents themselves are having to send to developers and even to the developers' own contractors.

- *Where* are we as residents supposed to go for updated information about plans for adoption?
- *What* should local residents be able to expect by way of support from Cambridge City Council now and potentially a development corporation in the future?

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport said the following:

- i. Understood the frustration from the residents regarding these new developments.
- ii. The adoption of streets by the County Council as Highway Authority and open spaces by the City Council was not always straightforward. However, as a result of technical, legal and resourcing issues, could take longer than expected until adoption occurred. Roads and public open space remained privately maintained, and responsibility for repairs would rest with the developers or owners of the land.
- iii. In respect of the process of road adoption in these areas, it was understood that the developer of these sites submitted applications to agree the detailed design of the roads and ultimately their adoption to the County Council a number of years ago. Whilst these applications were granted a technical approval, the developer never completed the necessary legal agreements. This meant that there was no certainty of adoption, which should have been highlighted by a conveyancing solicitor when residents purchased their property.
- iv. Understood that the County Council had, however, inspected the work and was still expecting to adopt the infrastructure with agreement from the developer. Before this could happen, the developers must undertake technical remedial work, mainly in relation to street lighting. In respect of the adoption of the open spaces, this had now taken place and the Council was reviewing its approach to future management and maintenance.
- v. The adoption of highways was a matter for the County Council and residents seeking updates and clarification should take this matter up with their County Councillor. In respect of open spaces, this was a City Council responsibility and local Councillors should be able to assist in securing feedback on the progression of these works.

**In response to the Supplementary Question:**

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport said the following:

- i. Previously had been a Councillor for Trumpington and recognised the issues that had been highlighted. Spent lots of time, chasing the developers and the County Council to get these issues moved forward and therefore understood the issues experienced.
- ii. There would be a motion on this matter at the Council meeting and hopefully would be able to bring together some information about how residents can could obtain updates. However, there was also the issue of enforcement.
- iii. Enforcement was very specific in terms of what could be done regarding explicit planning conditions. Unfortunately, many of the adoption issues related to the legal arrangements in place and to technical matters where standards were not being met.
- iv. The matter was very complicated and could be very frustrating, but there would be a debate on the motion tonight and the Council would be taking this work forward and returning to it in the future.

**Question 4)**

The former Leader of Cambridge City Council, Cameron Holloway, met with ACORN Cambridge to discuss our concerns regarding bailiff use by the City Council. Will the new leader of the Council, Councillor Katie Thornburrow, continue negotiations with ACORN regarding the continuing issue of bailiffs being used to terrorise the most vulnerable members of the community, or will she be appointing another member to represent the Council in this issue?

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport said the following:

- i. The language used in this question was unacceptable and had not been taken lightly. It was not appropriate to make an accusation that people were being terrorised and this would only make it harder to have a proper discussion and contributed to an overall angry and negative atmosphere that infected so much of today's politics. Would ask to be more thoughtful about this in the future.
- ii. The Council had a responsibility to all residents to ensure that Council Tax was properly collected, not just for the services that were delivered directly, but for other local authorities that accounted for most of the Council tax collected.

- iii. However, the Council also believed that where residents were genuinely unable to pay, they must get the support needed. Officers work hard to ensure that happened.
- iv. If a resident was in arrears, they were likely to feel vulnerable and totally understood the emotional aspects of being visited by an Enforcement Officer
- v. In answer to previous questions on this subject given on 26 February this year, the Council had already set out that the use of Enforcement Agents by Cambridge City Council were an absolute last resort.
- vi. There was very significant support available for any resident facing difficulties in paying their Council tax, including a Council tax reduction scheme that discounted the whole amount for residents on the lowest incomes.
- vii. Comprehensive information about the available support was available on the Council's website, and in all written communications to residents.
- viii. Customer Services staff, who were often the first point of contact, were trained and able to refer people on to the right support.
- ix. Would be more than happy to offer a follow up meeting as originally agreed by the former Leader and looked forward to hearing from representatives.

### **Supplementary**

Thank you for agreeing to meet.

Would like to emphasise that the group could be contacted by e-mail to arrange this meeting to discuss the concerns raised.

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport replied:

- i. Would respond via e-mail to agree a time to meet.

### **Question 5)**

Could the Council mandate, as a condition for future Planning Permissions most widely and immediately for

- City Council WCs,
- Public Buildings
- Schools + Colleges
- Churches
- Pubs and Clubs
- Cubicled Toilets with Hand-washing Sinks atop the cistern to flush directly?

This spares our fragile Chalk Streams, as well as Saving Space Architecturally, as Greywater from hand-washing would immediately flush the

Toilet, thus halving water abstracted from our precious aquifers for wasteful WCs which needlessly and sacrilegiously guzzle expensive potable water, in relieving inordinate numbers of Transients (9 million plus Tourists per annum, 60,000 University students) periodically swelling our Water-Stressed Town's Resident population for free unsustainably.

We are highly indebted to our Cam River System and must stop using it as a sewer. Massive reduction in water usage could easily be achieved by installing loo flushes of this kind. Art Work Posters could educate the world as to why Cambridge has made this choice in the extreme heatwave of 2026 - to Save our Chalk Streams.

Examples of such facilities:

Sisters Grimm Theatre off the Tottenham Court Road in London.

Increasingly switched-on individuals, and now the real possibility Cambridge Councils could thereby spearhead Chalk Stream Recovery. The Japanese have been doing this, (respecting Water, instead of flushing inordinately excessive amounts down the pan), since 1953!

Please consider and implement this most urgently.

Architects back to the drawing board.

It's a No-Brainer, so obvious when you think about it. Do-able now.

**The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Spaces and City Services, outside of the meeting as the public speaker was not present:**

- i. The existing Cambridge Local Plan had already set the highest possible requirements for water efficiency for new non-residential development, seeking at least a 55% reduction from baseline water use using the BREEAM methodology. This required a range of measures to reduce water use, including water efficient fixtures and fittings and the use of either rainwater recycling or grey water reuse. Planning conditions were already in use to require these levels of water use.
- ii. The Council would also be seeking high levels of water efficiency through the new Greater Cambridge Local Plan. There were regulatory limitations, currently being reviewed alongside a pilot in Eddington on use of its existing Grey Water system, about the re-use of grey water in buildings that the Council would also be monitoring to determine what else may be possible in future years.
- iii. The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, backed by Government funding of over £5 million was supporting the implementation of a water retrofit programme across a number of Council properties to deliver part of the Greater Cambridge Water Efficiency Programme and helped address water scarcity locally by installing water saving devices in existing Council-owned buildings.

- iv. The Council would continue to explore how, through integrated water management (outlined in the Local Plan evidence base) but also working with the Cambridge Growth Company and the Governments "Water Scarcity Group" for Greater Cambridge, further mitigation of demand could be achieved to help safeguard existing supplies and minimise potential adverse environmental effects.  
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/news/2026/02/25/councils-awarded-5-million-to-install-water-saving-measures-in-council-buildings>

### Question 6)

Questions: 1) Why is the Council not including all areas of Cambridge, in controls of over concentration of HMOs. Focus seems to be in the city centre residential areas.

Surrounding areas such as Cherry Hinton, Queen Edith's and Trumpington are part of Cambridge and not receiving an A4 with ABC, sandwiching, and the 100m rule, maybe that's the same for all of Cambridge - who knows.

2) Why is the data on HMOs not up to date, and accurate on the number of HMOs in CH and surrounding areas, indeed for Cambridge as a whole! Is this not a high priority to ensure that all who live and work here have good quality housing. It should be registered, regulated and up to standard, monitored and price controlled.

3) Main employers: not in the city centre, such as ARM, Addenbrookes, the New Hospitals and the Biomedical Campus deserve and require good honest purpose-built regulated HMOs, why are they not being built or funded by these corporations who take much out of our city?

4) This problem concerns the residents of the outer regions of CH, Queen Edith's and Trumpington and probably central Cambridge. Over concentration of HMOs have a negative impact on local communities and decreases the supply of family homes. We ask why has Cambridge resisted being more responsible for HMOs, rather than giving in to opportunist developers or unscrupulous landlords? Oxford and other large cities embraced this long ago so why hasn't Cambridge. We want to know is Cambridge the city of GREED not NEED for this situation is appalling!

**The following response was provided by the Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport outside of the meeting as the public speaker was not present:**

- ii. To inform the Greater Cambridge Local Plan the Council commissioned a new study to explore the role of HMOs in meeting the housing needs of Greater Cambridge, the impacts of HMOs, and the potential solutions. The report provided updated data and made clear the important

contribution that HMOs played in meeting a part of the Cities existing and future housing needs.

- iii. The emerging Local Plan policy focused on ensuring HMOs were of a suitable quality, amenity impacts were managed and required appropriate management arrangements to be demonstrated.
- iv. The Council kept a register of licenced HMOs and other known HMOs, which have used this alongside other data sources to inform the new study.
- v. Whilst outside the Plan making process, there was a strong case for developing an Article 4 Direction, so that small HMOs would also require planning permission. The Council was currently exploring the case for and extent of an Article 4 to bring greater control to the establishment of small HMO's. It was expected to bring a report to Cabinet later in the year seeking authority to consult on an Article 4 to support the better management of this tenure. Alongside the proposed Joint Local Plan policy, this would ensure that the quality of this important housing tenure could be more successfully secured across Cambridge.

### Question 7)

#### Cambridge's Planning Safeguards

Why are residents doing the Council's scrutiny?

The Christ's College library is a documented test of Cambridge's planning safeguards. Those safeguards have repeatedly failed.

#### **FOUR ERRORS. CONSENT TO QUASH.**

Four serious errors reached the Planning Committee. Residents brought a judicial review. The Council and Christ's College conceded all four grounds. They consented to quash the permission; the Council agreed to pay residents' legal costs. The High Court gives its reasoned judgment on 20 October.

#### **APPLICATION RE-RUN. ERRORS RECUR AND GROW.**

On the first application, the Planning Committee was never told that Historic England had warned of harm from the building's excessive bulk and massing. On the identical re-run, the Council failed to consult Historic England at all. Again, residents discovered the omission and pressed the Council to correct it.

#### **FOUR ERRORS. ANSWER REFUSED.**

Residents asked the Council to confirm that its new officer report would address every conceded ground and explain how each error had been corrected. The Council said it was "not obliged to respond."

**PUBLIC SCRUTINY CANCELLED.**

Seventy-five residents met every published requirement for a Development Control Forum. Christ's College refused to attend. The Council treated that refusal as a veto and cancelled the Forum, although no such veto appears in its rules. Residents were forced to issue a formal legal challenge. The Council reinstated the Forum.

**The pattern is systemic: the Council's safeguards fail. Residents identify the failures. Residents force their correction.**

**The questions**

1. Did any Council safeguard identify the failures in officer advice, consultation or public participation before residents did? If yes, which safeguard identified which failure, and when?
2. Did the Council change any planning safeguard after four errors reached the Planning Committee? If yes, what changed and when? If no, was the identical application re-run without any safeguard being changed?
3. How many other planning decisions has the Council audited for similar undetected errors? If none, does the Council have any other evidence that these failures are confined to the Christ's College applications?

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport replied with the following:

- i. Limited to what could be said as this was a current planning application and the matter before the high court.
- ii. The Shared Planning Service always sought to learn from all complaints and comments received through the planning process or decisions that had been made.
- iii. Where changes to the systems or processes we required, Officers worked through the services independently, audited quality management system to program changes, which were then implemented alongside the planning system and process changes as appropriate.
- iv. The Council's in-house and external Legal Advisers carefully considered the outcomes of planning appeals and judicial proceedings and discussed these with Officers, Leadership team of the service and Councillors to identify areas that required change of policy or approach and that would be the case here.

**Supplementary Question:**

- i. Would like the Council to turn to a safeguard that cannot fail to be considered following the High Court's decision.

- ii. The Council had already consented to the closure of the first College Library. Why is it now deciding a second application concerning the same library, the application due to be determined in September.
- iii. On 20 October, the High Court was expected to issue its reasoned judgment, which would only be a few weeks after this application was scheduled for determination. That judgment would set out what went wrong and exactly what people are right.
- iv. The Council can extend the determination deadline through a simple written agreement. Would the Council ask the applicant to agree to an extension until after the High Court's judgment. If not, what safeguards are the Council relying upon?

The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport replied that they could not comment due to the matter being a live planning application and the ongoing legal process.

### Question 8)

I've just come back from Warrenpoint in Northern Ireland, where I met up with fellow campaigners Fionnuala McKinley and Colum Sands. We discussed Cambridge's recycling contract with Re-Gen over there in Newry.

There is a recent development. On the 19th of May, Cambridgeshire County Council discussed a possible project to build their own MRF (Materials Recovery Facility) in this county. This would obviously avoid the huge level of carbon emissions generated by the Re-Gen lorries taking all our blue bin recycling 400 miles to Northern Ireland for sorting. (And almost all of this is then brought back well over 400 miles to England, Belgium, Sweden and the Netherlands for actual recycling.)

There are several difficulties involved with building an MRF here. Ros Hathorn, chair of the Environment and Green Investment committee, particularly mentioned that local residents might object to an MRF near them. But campaigners over there could introduce her and you to hundreds and hundreds of residents, particularly in Warrenpoint, who object to Re-Gen's storage of rotting bales a few hundred metres from their town square. Re-Gen are allowed to store up to 21,000 tonnes at the harbour for (each bale for up to 3 months,) and they spray it daily with toxic insecticide and deodoriser to try to kill the flies and disguise the smell. For comparison, the equivalent distance from Market Square here would be if those 21,000 tonnes of bales were dumped on Christ's Pieces.

A new MRF here would mean Cambridge would no longer be exporting its problem for another country to deal with. It is the solution that should have

been decided on right at the beginning. Many British councils do own their own local MRFs.

I know this period of transitioning to unitary authorities makes all change more difficult and uncertain. But please could you tell me what you and the Cambridge City council think of this plan? Do you agree that it could be a much better solution for dealing with our recycling than the way we export it now? If so, are there things this council will actively do to support it?

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

- i. Cambridge City Council was the waste collection authority for the City and Cambridgeshire County Council the waste disposal authority.
- ii. Therefore, the County Council were responsible for disposing of the residual black bin waste here in Cambridge which is sent to landfill in Water Beach.
- iii. The Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service held a contract with Re-Gen for dry materials recycling only which was sorted at Re-gen's waste's materials recovery facility known as MRF.
- iv. None of the waste referenced at Warren Point mentioned in the public question was generated by a contract with Cambridge City Council or the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service.
- v. Regarding the Council having its own MRF in Cambridgeshire, the plan referred to in the question at County Council was a shared proposal being developed through RECAP, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership.
- vi. It was through RECAP that the Council signed the Re-Gen contract and as a group are investigating all options for the future including an in-house option.
- vii. Personally favoured having a publicly owned and run MRF. However, a lot of work was needed to be done to investigate this and would require a large capital investment if the options appraisal recommends it.
- viii. The Council had recently signed the new RECAP waste and resources and waste strategy 2025 to 2031 which provided an overview of the collection and disposal arrangements for waste management for all local authorities within the RECAP partnership area. One of the strategies eight themes was waste management infrastructure which would fall under this strategy.

### **In response to the Supplementary Question:**

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

- i. The Council's recycling went to the new modern energy efficient site in Newry.
- ii. The Shared Waste Service worked hard to reduce contamination in recycling collections. Contamination referred to items placed in blue bins that should not be there, such as dirty nappies, food waste and other materials that cannot be recycled.
- iii. One of the benefits of the Re-gen contract is that they can recycle much more. They can recycle what's called the findings, such as little bottle tops and things.
- iv. Any residual waste that cannot be recycled is baled and transported via Warrenpoint Port. It was not stored at the Warrenpoint facility but passed through the port and is loaded for onward transport to an energy-from-waste facility.
- v. As said previously in public at a meeting of Services, Climate and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026, that no recycling or waste collected by the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste service was sent to the Warrenpoint refuse centre. Any contamination such as dirty nappies, food and clothes that is separated out and cannot be recycled, was stored at Re-Gen's Derryboy Road site and then sent to Sweden to an energy-from-waste facility. The importance of the waste hierarchy (reduce, re-use, recycle) was emphasised along with the extended producer responsibility (EPR) scheme.

### **Question 9)**

Red Cross Areas in Queen Edith's has an over concentration of HMOs, many lived in by our valuable NHS. How can these be improved and still have small flats and family housing in the same neighbourhood for them to be able to move on to and stay part of the community keeping their networks of support for work, children's schooling, family, friends and health services like their local GP?

**The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Housing outside of the meeting as the public speaker was not present:**

- i. The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport had spoken on the matter of HMOs in question 6.
- ii. The Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) development at Newbury Farm which was Council led would be offering 60 Council homes with some at 80% market rent targeting local workers such as nurses.

- iii. Residents, including nurses that currently lived in that area were welcome to approach the Council in order to be made aware when these homes would be available.

### **Question 10)**

How much longer do families and members of the public have to wait for new public toilets on Jesus Green?

The existing toilets date back almost a hundred years and are totally inadequate, particularly as Jesus Green is so heavily used by families and visitors. This does our City no credit whatever.

Jesus Green Association and ward councillors have been pressing the Council and recommending very suitable alternatives for some 10 years but there has been no progress at all.

**The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Space and City Services outside of the meeting as the public speaker was not present:**

- i. The Council shared the concerns regarding the existing public toilets on Jesus Green. They were approaching 100 years old and, despite repair and improvement works over recent years, increasing vandalism and their age meant they did not provide the standard of facility that people rightly expect.
- ii. Rather than continuing to invest significant sums in a building that had reached the end of its useful life, the Council's long-term ambition was to provide new, modern and accessible public toilets as part of the wider redevelopment of the Jesus Green Lido site.
- iii. Alongside this, the Council were developing a coordinated investment plan for Jesus Green that would also consider the future of the Rouse Pavilion, wider public realm improvements, accessibility, event infrastructure and the best use of available Section 106 funding. Bringing these projects together would enable Members to consider a single long-term vision for the park rather than a series of disconnected schemes.
- iv. In the meantime, the Council recognised that people continued to rely on the existing facilities. Therefore, repairs were being undertaken, improving their appearance, using more durable replacement materials where appropriate and applying anti-graffiti coatings to ensure they remained safe and operational while permanent replacement facilities were progressed

### **Question 11)**

I have a query about houses of multiple occupation in my area and wondered if you could tell me what the council's stance is on them?

I understand that many Addenbrookes staff reside in the shared accommodation in the Red Cross area but wonder what provision is set out for them to move up into more individual accommodation - are there any smaller affordable flats/houses in the areas being built now?

**The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Housing outside of the meeting as the public speaker was not present and gave the same response provided to question 9:**

- i. The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport had spoken on the matter of HMOs in question 6.
- ii. In addition, the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) development at Newbury Farm which was Council led would be offering 60 council homes with some at 80% market rent targeting local workers such as nurses.
- iii. Residents, including nurses that currently lived in that area were welcome to approach the Council in order to be made aware when these homes would be available.

### **Question 12)**

Will Council commit to instruct officers to begin immediate work on implementing an Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights for the conversion of family homes into HMOs across the City to include RedCross Areas in Queen Edith's Ward? How is Council committing to introduce strict saturation policies and thresholds in planning policy, including maximum numerical density limits and buffer zones to prevent clustering of HMOs on individual streets e.g. no 3 in a row, an adjacency rule for housing most at risk small, terraced houses not designed for HMO living, to ensure Council strengthens licensing and enforcement?

Will Council commit in 12 months to in RedCross Areas:

- To listen to Cambridge residents first and not the lobbying of institutions, employers Landlords
- An Article 4 - to include 2+ HMOs
- SPD
- Additional Licencing
- A Register of all HMOs including 2+ available to residents
- A rogue Landlord register available to residents
- No 3 HMOs in a row, 100m rule, adjacency rule, no sandwiching of a family home between 2 HMOs
- Tougher licence conditions on landlords covering noise, waste, antisocial behaviour, and property standards so our residents in RedCross Areas have decent well-maintained homes?

- Increasing inspections and resourcing enforcement teams to ensure compliance?
- Pursuing maximum penalties against rogue landlords, including licence revocation?
- To stop the creeping overconcentration of HMOs taking out family housing and unbalancing communities

### Question 13)

When Government Directives and other leading Cities across the UK have developed HMO planning policy from 2010, why are Cambridge City Council HMO Controls not in place in line with these in 2026?

RARA welcomes Cllr Thornburrow stating as the new Leader of Cambridge City Council at full Council Committee 2026

"I am looking immediately at options for control on concentration of smaller Homes of Multiple Occupation"

But RARA asks Council, Cambridge Council and its members knowing these issues from 2010 another consultation is not required actions are, is this Council committed to address the City as a whole to achieve decent housing in all tenures including HMOs avoiding overconcentration of HMOs whilst not allowing any caveats to enable non compliance by any one Landlord?

Can Council commit to:

- Article 4 being put in place means planning is required for new 3+ HMOs, across Cambridge and in RedCross Areas?
- Special Planning Documents put in place (help know how many HMOs in any one street with the Register available to public)?
- Additional Licensing Scheme for over concentrated areas including RedCross Areas?
- The Government Guidelines of numerical thresholds 10% (some at 20/25%) within 50m or 100m?
- No sandwiching a family house between 2 HMOs?
- No ABC 3 HMOs in a row?
- An adjacency rule so inappropriate terraced housing are not continued to be taken out of the family housing market?
- Proactive A4 that protect and stop overspill of one or key Landlords need dominating and breaking down a cohesive community?
- Protections of amenity by inspections and clear strict enforcement
- To ensure mixed tenure of both 10% HMOs and all housing are available on every street in Cambridge, avoiding overconcentration and the ensuing negative impacts like those in RedCross Areas?
- Not allowing any caveats to enable non compliance by any one Landlord?

**Question 14)**

Many NHS live in HMOs in Red Cross Areas how is the current over occupation going to be managed so they can move on into their own or family home locally near their vital work.

**The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Housing outside of the meeting as the public speaker was not present and gave the same response provided to question 9 and 11:**

- i. The Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport had spoken on the matter of HMOs in question 6.
- ii. In addition, the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) development at Newbury Farm which was Council led would be offering 60 council homes with some at 80% market rent targeting local workers such as nurses.
- iii. Residents, including nurses that currently lived in that area were welcome to approach the Council in order to be made aware when these homes would be available.

**Question 15)**

The renewed proposals to build housing on the park adjacent to St Thomas's Road risk reopening a deeply divisive chapter in our community's history. Previous plans, confusing communication, and uncertainty over property, garages and demolition caused anxiety, division and a loss of confidence in the council's decision-making. BARA's position is clear: we support the park as a vital community asset and are committed to protecting and enhancing it for everyone. Working alongside residents and the Friends of the Park, we champion biodiversity, community engagement, cultural capital and inclusive development. BARA's priority is a commitment to developing a non-religious community space that serves the community covered by the Birdwood Area Residents Association. This should be an integrated priority, not an afterthought. The park is a valued community asset, should its protection and enhancement not be placed at the heart of any future plans and ensured for the rest of this century?

We recognise the significant pressure on local authorities to deliver much-needed housing and support growing demand. However, a larger population also requires investment in the facilities, services and shared spaces that enable communities to thrive. As the park celebrates 75 years of serving local people, it is fair to ask whether our community has also spent 75 years waiting for the resources and infrastructure it deserves. BARA believes that any future development must place community provision at its heart, ensuring that homes are matched by accessible, inclusive spaces and facilities that strengthen

community life for generations to come. Should any new development proceed without first ensuring that the community infrastructure needed to support both existing and future residents is delivered alongside it?

The Cabinet Member for Housing replied with the following:

- i. Noted the concerns raised and would like to thank you for all the work that Birdwood Area Residents Association undertook in the park.
- ii. The Council want to look at the garage site only.
- iii. The approved Cabinet papers stated proposals for these council homes would review what was possible in utilising the garage space area only and to minimise impact on the park.
- iv. Officers would work with residents to ensure that all changes to the green space were clearly agreed before designs were progressed to planning.
- v. Officers would also look at how the space could be adopted as a park as part of the Council's portfolio.
- vi. The planning process would in due course assess the merits of any proposal and present a report to the Planning Committee to make the final decision on the planning merits in the usual way.

#### **In response to the Supplementary Question:**

The Cabinet Member for Housing responded:

- i. When the Council were first looking at the sites of the garages, it was for both side of the road and there was a thought that perhaps a community centre could be included in the design.
- ii. However, it is on the right-hand side only which is being developed with either three or four homes.
- iii. Have instructed that the park should be protected and have publicly said this before to those who came to the last Cabinet meeting.
- iv. Would be happy to meet outside of this meeting to discuss this matter further.
- v. Have lived in the area so understood the importance of the park and know exactly where the park was located.

#### **Question 16)**

How is Council addressing the negative impacts of HMO overconcentration in RedCross Areas reported and increasing over the last decade resulting in a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme needing to be set up in 2020? How will Council address the ongoing and increasing anti-social behaviour from this overconcentration of this tenure of housing negatively affecting the previously balanced and cohesive community?

The concentration of shared housing in areas like RedCross In Queen Edith's have created several key challenges for the local community how is Council going to address these?

- **Community Cohesion:** The erosion of family-oriented streets, long-term neighbourhood stability, removal of single-family homes meaning residents cannot move from a HMO to the next stage on the housing ladder in their community. Will Council introduce a Article 4, SPDs, 100m rule, additional licensing, ABC, sandwiching, adjacency rule in RedCross Areas as recommended by Cllr Davies?
- **Environmental Strain:** Increased issues with waste, overflowing bins, vermin and obstructed bicycle storage. Will Council introduce more inspections and enforcement actions in Red Cross Areas as the 2022 Place Based Review brought in to address overconcentration and its negative impacts on the neighbourhood found not 15% HMOs as believed but over 50% HMOs with many inspected failing fire and Health & Safety requirements in place up to 7 years previously.
- **Parking Stress:** Higher vehicle density creating severe local parking congestion, anti social behaviours parking on and blocking neighbouring properties and rights of egress including compromising 24/7 emergency vehicles access.
- **Excessive comings and goings:** 1 family home average 20 vehicle journeys a week to 1 HMO 100 vehicle journeys per week. When garages are removed for more HMO rooms this creates more comings and goings onto others parking areas.
- **Noise and anti social behaviours:** when more than 1 HMO in 100m the issues are exacerbate exponentially. When residents are from the same 3 local key employers residents state it is impossible to complain within or living externally to a HMO. As fears around continuing to live in the HMO, living in the community, job security, tenancy security and the ability to receive a reference to move on to their next home/job. Can Council assure residents their needs are being put first and lobbying from local employers, institutions and Landlords for HMOs and higher profit is not put first? Additionally, noise is not just from the overconcentration but that the design of the house was for a single-family and single storey use, now a HMO some with adjacent HMOs noise transmission is excessive house to house how will Council address this?
- **Overcrowding:** HMO management not addressing over occupation in double rooms, families living in living rooms, sub-letting and residents doing hot sheeting or offering bed and breakfast off the books.
- **Housing Imbalance:** In RedCross Areas there is now reduced availability of affordable single-family homes as landlords take out family homes valued at 1.6-2.4 as returns for HMOs are 3.2-7K in RedCross Areas.

Housing pressure and insecurity for families as their homes are targeted to buy by local HMO consortiums and Landlords. What is Council putting in place to stop the erosion of a balanced community in RedCross Areas?

**The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Housing outside of the meeting as the thirty minutes for public questions had expired**

- i. Referred to the Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport regarding HMOs in question 6.
- ii. In addition, the Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) development at Newbury Farm which was Council led would be offering 60 council homes with some at 80% market rent targeting local workers such as nurses.
- iii. Residents, including nurses that currently lived in that area were welcome to approach the Council in order to be made aware when these homes would be available.

### **Question 17)**

I am writing regarding the housing situation in the Red Cross area of Queen Edith's ward near Addenbrookes Hospital.

The area has a mix of residents including families with school age children, pension age/older vulnerable residents, and many NHS and key workers providing vital services and living in houses of multiple occupancy. The latter make up a large proportion of the local population in the area, and many find themselves living in poor quality accommodation for short term lets before they move on to more permanent homes, at some distance from their place of work. The situation creates a problem for all residents in the area. The key workers and NHS residents who feel they have to move on due to the poor quality of accommodation in their HMOs do not get a chance to settle and make friends and connections in the local community. The families and older members of the community also find the constant high level of change in the local population and poor housing conditions a challenge for creating a strong and stable sense of community. In addition, it takes considerable effort from more permanent residents to ensure that anti-social behaviour is appropriately managed.

I urge you to consider this and put in place plans that will bring more stability and balance to the area better serving the needs of the permanent local residents as well as the transient NHS/key workers, some of whom would likely choose to settle rather than move on if their housing situation was improved.

**The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Housing outside of the meeting as the thirty minutes for public questions had expired**

- i. Referred to the Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning and Transport regarding HMOs in question 6.
- ii. Would refer to the earlier response to questions 9, 11,14 and 16. The Cambridge Investment Partnership (CIP) development at Newbury Farm which was Council led would be offering 60 council homes with some at 80% market rent targeting local workers such as nurses.
- iii. Residents, including nurses that currently lived in that area were welcome to approach the Council in order to be made aware when these homes would be available.

**Question 18)**

I understand that the Council have brought in a rule banning the public bringing in soft drinks and food to the main arena at this year's Cambridge Folk Festival. I have been to and planned to go to a number of folk festivals this year, they include Ely, Folk East, Cropredy, and Shrewsbury Folk Festivals. I have never seen or heard them having such a policy. Please do all you can to get the council to rescind this ruling.

**The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Communities, outside of the meeting as the thirty minutes for public questions had expired**

- i. Had considered the comments by the public speaker, and other comments, and the information that had been presented at first point of sale and are happy to review the previous statement.
- ii. One of the things the Council valued most about Cambridge Folk Festival was the incredible community that surrounds it.
- iii. After hearing feedback, Officers have reviewed the Council's policy and this year would be allowing festivalgoers to bring food & soft drinks into the festival arena for personal consumption.
- iv. The Council simply ask that it's kept modest – boxes or hampers within reason please, there would not be a measurement check. Would allow sealed soft drinks (no glass) and would love to keep single use plastic to a minimum.
- v. Empty, refillable bottles would also be allowed and due to the current weather conditions, more water points around the festival site have been installed.

- vi. No BYO (Bring Your Own) alcohol would be permitted into the main arena.
- vii. Hope that the public would continue to support our amazing independent food and drink traders. They were a much-loved part of the festival and play a huge role in creating the atmosphere and experience that makes Cambridge Folk Festival so special.
- viii. With any new or revised event, Officers were working with the public and stakeholders to help them adjust to the new festival format and different measures and were working to make sure the Council can develop the future festival sustainably with their support and all feedback is so valuable as part of this process so thank you for your comments.

### **Question 19)**

Can I welcome the family-friendly, alcohol-free screening of the England Argentina World Cup semi-final, possible final, and ask if the Council are planning such events in the future.

**The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Communities, outside of the meeting as the thirty minutes for public questions had expired.**

- i. The Council continued to develop the programme of events at our community centres across the City.
- ii. The success at the World Cup has presented an opportunity to compliment the great support the public and businesses had given the team with a different offer to the pubs in the City.
- iii. The Council would review the demand for the showing of the semi-final and possible final before considering a plan for future events such as these.

### **Question 20)**

Question to the Leader about potholes

The state of our roads is a major concern for all of us in Cambridge and beyond. Whether we walk, cycle, take the bus or drive, poor road conditions affect us all. I've spent months walking my local roads with county councillor Bry Goodliffe, logging hundreds of issues on the County Council website, and even bringing the Under Secretary of State for Transport to Coleridge, where I live, to see for himself how poor the roads are.

Clearly the City Council is not responsible for the state of our roads – it is a County Council function. But I know that it is an issue that affects us all, and that therefore it is something many councillors at the city care deeply about.

The County Council are getting the best part of £188 million over 4 years to fix our roads. They have a highways budget this year of £58 million. The people who live, work and study here don't expect a magic wand, but they do expect to see results, and they expect the money to be spent wisely.

And yet as residents, we are still seeing far too many degraded surfaces. We are fed up with waiting months for a fix that, when it finally comes simply patches the largest hole and leaves several around it unfixed because they aren't deemed 'serious enough. We are fed up with roads which had very little degradation being resurfaced whilst roads in a much worse state are still waiting to be fixed. And we are fed up with that surfacing being poor quality, impeding access to drains and leaving roads without markings for weeks.

This is an issue that impacts all of us.

Many of us were shocked to discover that the County Council has recently renewed their pothole contract with the same contractors. We need reassurance that this is not going to mean 'more of the same'.

Can the leader tell us what is being done to hold the County Council to account on the state of our roads, and will she write to the County Council to ask what public scrutiny there will be of contractor performance so that residents can understand how wisely the £58m budget for highways repairs is being spent?

### **Question 21)**

Councillors, please listen to traders and to the public: what our City wants and needs is a viable thriving traditional Market.

For 10 years, the Council has been talking about improving the Market Square, but has not listened to its public, or to its market traders. The City Council proposals continually ignore what traders need – both for the continuation of a viable market, as well as for their livelihoods. The Council also ignores what is plain to see – when traders bring their produce and goods to the market, people come to buy. (see change.org petition "Please help us to save Cambridges tradition locals' market -and its traders", now with over 2,800 signatures).

The Council's proposals cannot be implemented without a fit-for-purpose demountable stall (not yet found despite years of searching!) and a viable strategy for decanting the traders during the works.

These crucial issues have been raised repeatedly, but not resolved, in trader liaison meetings. Meetings from which the public were excluded, and whose outcomes have not been made public. These issues were again raised by traders, public and councillors at the 25th March Planning Committee, at which the applications were deferred.

Council Officers presented the demountable stalls and the trader decant as being entirely separate matters from the current application. Leaving both of these issues totally unresolved.

Officers have acknowledged that a separate planning application will be required for the trader decant. The proposal is for this to be submitted in the late Autumn, in the lead up to Christmas which is the traders' busiest time. Making the proposed timescale totally unrealistic, as well as showing a total lack of consideration for the traders, and their livelihoods.

Making this the complete opposite of "One Council: fair for all".

The minute reasons for deferral on 25th March included "4. Clarification on why there was a lack of support for the proposal from market traders." No such clarification has been provided. The only feedback in the currently proposed amendments is "7.2 Market trader engagement has continued, and ongoing feedback has informed the enclosed proposals to introduce a third stall type. Positive sentiment towards the changes was expressed by some market traders, although the team recognises that some traders still have reservations about the project." (Design and Access Statement "Design Evolution", 7.2. There is no clarification of issues raised or how they are to be resolved.

It's not just that the current amendments do not address these key issues. It's also that they continue to demonstrate that, by failing to even report on the nature and extent of concerns raised by the traders, the City Council is just not listening.

Councillors, this project has been a fiasco due to years of mistaken "divide and rule" rather than involving traders and public as key partners together.

Our question remains – when will our City Council begin to listen to its constituents – both the public who use the market and the traders who make it possible?

**The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Skills, outside of the meeting as the thirty minutes for public questions had expired.**

- i. As you know, as you have been present for some of the meetings, there have been monthly trader meetings for the last two years to go through the proposed designs, the decanted market proposals and the market business plan.
- ii. The Council needs to take into consideration public views which expressed concern about anti-social behaviour on the market square as well taking into consideration future proofing the market for the next fifty years to ensure it continued to thrive.
- iii. Traders were asked their preference for the decanted location and were clear in their choice of location which was to be close where the market

is now. They chose this location fully in the knowledge of the challenges this option presented. We are working hard to deliver their choice.

- iv. The Council has tested demountable stalls on the market and was confident that it can deliver one for Cambridge that has worked in many other markets in the UK and abroad.
- v. Finally, the latest planning proposals took into consideration market traders feedback, highways feedback and the results of the demountable trials.

### **Question 22)**

Thank you, Leader and Cabinet members. My name is Alex Smaridge and I am here as the Director of the Museum of Cambridge to raise an urgent matter regarding the White Horse Inn—a unique Grade II listed asset within this council's building stock.

Recently, the council decided that imminent structural repairs are required, which would force the temporary closure of the building's occupier, the Museum of Cambridge. Shockingly, these specific repairs were earmarked and identified several years ago. Yet only now are they being pushed forward.

For years, the Museum has been an exemplary tenant. They have repeatedly engaged with officers to find solutions, manage the building's condition, and attempted to establish a proactive maintenance relationship with the City Council. Despite these efforts, to our knowledge, the council still has no Conservation Management Plan in place for the care of this historic, 17th-century timber-framed asset.

Now, the council is using the imposed cost of these self-inflicted building works to stall and delay negotiations over the Museum's future lease.

In a city that prides itself on being on the brink of major growth—championed by the Cambridge Growth Company and massive expansions over the coming years— Why has the council neglected its fundamental duty of care toward its listed building stock, and when will it stop using its own maintenance delays to block the future of the Museum of Cambridge?

**The following response was provided by the Cabinet Member for Communities outside of the meeting as the thirty minutes for public questions had expired.**

- i. The Council was certainly not trying to block the future of the Museum of Cambridge.
- ii. Indeed, Cambridge City Council had provided consistent and significant financial support to the Museum of Cambridge for at least 28 years, with grant records confirming funding from 1998 onwards. Over this period,

the Museum has relied significantly on Council support to remain operational, and the Council had funded significant repairs in recent years.

- iii. As discussed, when Officers met privately with you, whilst the Council had already begun discussion options with you already for an early renewal of your current lease with seven years remaining, we cannot complete any discussions without clarity on the details and costs of repairs required to the structure.
- iv. We had already discussed with you in private that new information obtained by recent surveys suggests costs may be considerably higher than had been budgeted.
- v. Officer have instructed more detailed survey work to firm up those costs and would keep in contact in coming weeks more is learnt what this means for the timing and duration of works, and for the lease renewal.

## **26/64/CNL Petition**

The Petition organiser spoke in support of the petition highlighting the following points:

- i. The petition called on the Council to introduce stronger planning controls on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) by setting a 10% HMO threshold within a 100m radius and introducing Article 4 Directions for small HMOs (3 to 6 occupants).
- ii. Cambridge was unusual compared with other major university cities such as Oxford, Manchester and Bristol, as it currently had no defined HMO concentration threshold and no Article 4 Direction, limiting the council's ability to manage the spread of HMOs.
- iii. The lack of controls had led to the rapid conversion of family homes into HMOs, contributing to concerns about issues such as parking, waste management, housing quality, neighbourhood stability and the loss of balanced communities.
- iv. Some areas of Cambridge had already exceeded the commonly recognised 10% tipping point at which high concentrations of HMOs can begin to negatively affect residents and tenants.
- v. The proposed measures were widely used planning tools adopted by many UK councils, and would provide clearer guidance for planners, reduce speculative property conversions, and help to maintain sustainable mixed communities while still allowing HMOs where they are needed.

Members debated the petition calling for stronger controls on Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) across Cambridge.

The Leader of the Council raised the following points:

- vi. The Cabinet acknowledged the concerns raised in the petition and noted that HMO issues had featured prominently in responses to the Regulation 18 Local Plan consultation.
- vii. Updated Local Plan policies relating to larger HMOs had recently been considered at scrutiny.
- viii. Officers had spent the past year gathering evidence to support consideration of an Article 4 Direction, with a report expected to be presented to Cabinet in the autumn.
- ix. The Council was committed to progressing work on Article 4 Directions, and engaging with residents on the issue.

Key points raised in the wider debate included:

- x. Several councillors welcomed the petition and expressed support for the introduction of Article 4 Directions as a way to improve oversight, enable better management of HMOs, and help ensure balanced communities.
- xi. Multiple speakers stressed that HMOs remained an important component of Cambridge's housing mix as they provided accommodation for students, young professionals, lower-income residents, NHS workers, care workers and people new to the city.
- xii. Councillors raised concerns about poor quality HMO accommodation, including overcrowding, inadequate communal space and poor property management.
- xiii. Councillors reported significant resident concerns with HMOs including concentration, pressure on parking and waste services, anti-social behaviour, loss of family housing stock, and changes to neighbourhood character.
- xiv. Residents' associations were recognised for their role in highlighting these issues and bringing them before the Council.
- xv. Some members argued that the growth in HMOs reflected wider housing shortages and an insufficient supply of social and affordable housing.
- xvi. Some concerns were raised about the effectiveness of a fixed 10% threshold, with suggestions that improving housing standards and increasing affordable housing provision may be more effective in addressing underlying issues.
- xvii. The Council's forthcoming Article 4 report and emerging Local Plan policies were identified as important next steps.

## **26/65/CNL To deal with oral questions**

### **1. From Cllr Payne to the Cabinet Member for Communities**

Do they agree that anti-social behaviour in Cambridge is increasing and can they outline any steps the council are taking to support the police in addressing this?

The Cabinet Member responded with:

There had been a consistent theme of reports of antisocial behaviour into the public safety team, although the trend did fluctuate at times. Officers in the team tackling antisocial behavior worked very closely with the police, especially around hotspot areas in the city and bring cases to the multi-agency group. Cases can be very complex and take a long time to resolve.

I have attended the 'coffee with a cop' initiative, which is available to all our residents in the city. Meanwhile, 'Operation Alleviate' is a joint operation scheme to prevent young people ending up in the criminal justice system.

I also attend the Cambridge Community Safety Partnership. This brings together several agencies and organisations concerned with tackling and reducing crime and antisocial behaviour in Cambridge. Once again, the police were a key partner.

For reference, the three priorities that the Cambridge Community Safety Partnership recently set were: preventing violence and exploitation, a neighbourhood approach, and tackling acquisitive crime.

### **2. From Cllr Grimwood to the Cabinet Member for Nature, Open Space and City Services**

Last year, the Liberal Democrat Group submitted a council motion calling for a concerted rethink, involving the public and the many stakeholders, about the future of our city centre. The aim was to ensure that it maintains its meaning, diversity and vitality for all, including local residents, at a time of significant change on high streets across the country.

The motion attracted wide support and was passed. It called for a placemaking project, together with a scoping exercise and a report back by summer 2026. We were pleased that this was subsequently supported by a budget provision to take the work forward.

As it is now summer 2026 and nothing has so far been brought forward, could the Cabinet Member explain to the Council what this project will look like and what the timeline is for its delivery?

The Cabinet Member for Inclusive Economy and Skills responded with:

The council approved additional funding for 2026 and 2027 and for the period 2027-2028 to support this work alongside the wider visitor economy programme.

That funding was being used to recruit a new city centre and visitor economy partnership manager and to develop a city centre performance dashboard, which would give a much stronger evidence base for understanding how the city centre is performing economically, socially, and environmentally. The new post would be advertised shortly while work on the dashboard was already underway.

The aim was to develop a shared evidence-led vision together with a practical action plan, with the involvement of residents, businesses, stakeholders, and elected members throughout the process. Over the summer there would be engagement with all political groups to agree the detailed scope of the work.

The project will be delivered in three phases: the first phase focuses on gathering and reviewing the available evidence, the second phase will focus on developing the vision and action plan including public stakeholder engagement, and the final phase will focus on securing the necessary approvals and then adoption through the Council's normal governance processes.

### **3. From Cllr Davison to the Cabinet Member for Communities**

Following the council's commitment to responding to the (draft) EHRC code of practice, for residents in the meantime who are vulnerable, afraid, and have learned to expect persecution from certain political fringes, will the council make clear, now, on record, that in whatever form and at whatever time this code of practice comes to pass, and within whatever legal requirements are placed on this council, that we will seek to do as much as

we can to protect vulnerable residents, and in this instance particularly trans residents?

The Cabinet Member responded with:

Officer teams across the council were working hard to develop a response to the draft Equality and Human Rights Commission's Code of Practice, and this would be coming through to scrutiny in the autumn.

There was also the first Inclusion and Equity Panel in October, and work was underway on developing an equity strategy, with the aim that to involve all councillors in this work.

In 2016, the council hosted the national showcase for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans history month, from which resulted the equity pledge. As the pledge stated: "We believe in the dignity of all people and their right to respect and equality of opportunity. We value the strength that comes with difference and the positive contribution that diversity bring to our community. Our aspiration is for Cambridge and the wider region to be safe, welcoming, and inclusive."

Our intention is for everyone to feel safe, welcome and included and this very much includes our trans residents.

#### **4. From Cllr Tong to The Cabinet Member for Climate Action and Environment**

I would like to thank council officers for their prompt outreach work to protect rough sleepers in the current heat wave. With the increased risk of extreme weather because of the climate emergency, will the leader commit to working cross party and cross council on a heat resilience plan and bring it back to full council by February 2027.

The Cabinet Member responded with:

Our street outreach teams and homelessness partners have been providing practical support, including access to cooling spaces, cold water, sunscreen, and other measures to help people stay safe. Where rough sleepers are identified as particularly vulnerable, overnight accommodation had also been offered.

As temperatures rise and extreme weather events become more frequent, we need to consider how we build greater resilience to the impacts of

climate change. The council already recognised climate adaptation as a core part of our response to the climate emergency; alongside the work we are doing to reduce emissions.

On your specific suggestion of a heat resilience plan, I would highlight work already underway through existing council strategies and plans. In 2024, we adopted a climate risk and vulnerability assessment and adaptation plan, which specifically considered risks associated with extreme heat, overheating, water shortages, and other climate impacts.

Our new climate change strategy embedded climate adaptation across all its objectives and included a wide range of actions being delivered across council services.

#### **5. From Cllr Sage to The Cabinet Member for Communities and/or Inclusive Economy and Skills**

The Museum of Cambridge is at risk of closure because the council has still not renewed its lease. Will the cabinet member explain why and say what she proposed to do about it?

The Cabinet Member for Communities responded with:

There are seven years remaining on the Museum of Cambridge's current lease and we have, at their request, initiated discussions about an early lease renegotiation. We have a variety of in-principle options that we want to discuss with them.

Before we can complete those negotiations, we need to gather information on the details and costs of repairs required to the structure they inhabit; this is to discharge our duty and secure best value in terms of public funds.

We recently instructed more detailed survey work and if there are significant cost implications, they will need to be discussed with cabinet and potentially be put through the budget process.

**26/66/CNL To consider the recommendations of Committees for adoption****26/67/CNL Civic Affairs & Audit Committee - Constitution Updates**

The Council considered a report from the Civic Affairs and Audit Committee recommending several amendments to the Council's Constitution.

Councillor Bick requested that it be recorded that he had formally asked officers not to make any change to his Group Leader's allowance as a consequence of the constitutional amendments and that any resulting saving should accrue to the Council.

On being put to the vote, the recommendation was approved by 35 votes to 0, with 3 abstentions. It was therefore **Resolved** to approve the constitutional amendments as recommended by the Civic Affairs and Audit Committee.

**26/68/CNL Reports to Note****9a Update report on the Development Corporation**

Members noted the update report on the proposed Development Corporation. Concerns were raised regarding the consultation findings, which showed a majority of respondents opposed its creation, and about the potential transfer of planning powers away from locally elected councillors.

The Leader of the Council advised that discussions with Government officials were ongoing and reiterated her commitment to protecting the Council's planning function, maintaining community engagement in planning decisions, and ensuring any Development Corporation would complement rather than replace existing local arrangements.

**9b Local Government Review**

Members discussed the Government's decision to defer a decision on local government reorganisation (LGR) in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough until October 2026. Concerns were expressed regarding the lack of clarity surrounding the delay and the uncertainty it creates for local authorities, residents and partner organisations.

**Resolved:** Following a vote, 12 members voted to note the report, 16 voted against noting the report and 8 abstained.

It was confirmed by the Monitoring Officer that as the report was presented for information, the outcome of the vote had no substantive effect on the recommendation but nevertheless reflected members' views on the matter.

**26/69/CNL To consider the following notices of motion, notice of which has been given by:**

**10a Councillor Hauk:Improving Accountability and Transparency on Unadopted Residential Developments**

The following amended motion was proposed by Councillor Hauk, Seconded by Councillor Payne.

The alteration included both the Labour and Green proposed amendments to the original Motion (additional text underlined and deleted text struck through).

**Council notes:**

That many residents move into new developments expecting to become part of established communities yet can spend many years living with unresolved issues such as roads awaiting new markings or safety features, waiting for adequate street lighting, lack of facilities and upkeep of open spaces, play areas, drainage, signage and other community infrastructure such as health provision, community spaces and libraries.

That responsibility for such infrastructure is often divided between developers, management companies, Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and other public bodies. As a result, residents can face considerable difficulty in identifying who owns or maintains particular assets, who is responsible for resolving issues, whether infrastructure is intended for adoption, and what barriers remain to adoption.

Council recognises that adoption of highways, open spaces and other infrastructure can only occur where the relevant standards have been met and the responsible authority is satisfied that legal and technical requirements have been fulfilled.

That lengthy periods of uncertainty and unclear accountability can delay the resolution of problems, reduce confidence in the stewardship of developments and undermine trust in the planning and delivery of new communities.

That Cambridge City Council already works with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council and local ward councillors to help resolve issues where appropriate, recognising that statutory responsibilities

remain with the relevant landowner, developer, management company or adopting authority.

That not all infrastructure is intended to be adopted by a public authority and, in some developments, the long-term management of open spaces and communal infrastructure by management companies or trusts is an intended outcome secured through the planning process. In such cases, transparency over ownership, maintenance responsibilities and resident engagement is particularly important.

Council believes:

That residents should be able to understand who is responsible for the places in which they live, how issues can be reported, and what progress is being made towards long-term management and adoption arrangements.

That improving transparency, accountability and communication on existing developments will help build public confidence in the delivery and stewardship of future developments and demonstrate that growth is accompanied by clear responsibilities and effective community engagement.

That the City Council's powers in relation to privately managed developments are limited and many responsibilities rest with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council, statutory undertakers and other public bodies. The Council's role is therefore to influence, coordinate and advocate where appropriate rather than to direct or assume responsibility for infrastructure owned or managed by others.

That residents living on existing developments should benefit from improved transparency and communication now, using the powers, partnerships and information already available to the City Council and its partner organisations, rather than waiting for future governance arrangements to be established.

That Cambridge is a growing city that will continue to see significant housing and infrastructure development in the coming years, and in future that this is proposed to be the responsibility of a Development Corporation.

Council therefore requests that the Leader works with relevant officers to make clear and timely representations to the Cambridge Growth Company Development Corporation on behalf of the council, as the Dev Co establishes itself and its role in larger developments, to request that any proposals include:

1. Working with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council, and the Cambridge City Council Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service to improve, for residents, transparency, accountability and coordination between the relevant responsible organisations.
2. Exploring the establishment of a code of engagement for developers and management companies operating occupied developments within the city;
3. Considering mechanisms to ensure residents have access to clear and publicly accessible information on:
  - ownership and maintenance responsibilities for community infrastructure;
  - adoption intentions and adoption status;
  - clear signposting to routes for addressing issues;
  - barriers preventing adoption or transfer to public or private bodies;
  - expected timescales for resolution where known, and
  - Property Management Company governance models which make estate management providers directly accountable to residents for performance against specified services, standards and agreed budgets.
4. Exploring mechanisms to improve visibility of progress on issues, including response and progress monitoring, making use of existing reporting systems wherever possible.
5. Exploring the creation of a publicly accessible source of information for occupied major developments within the city, bringing together, where available, information on ownership, maintenance responsibilities, adoption status, reporting routes and the organisations responsible for resolving issues.
6. Considering how successful elements of any code could be incorporated into future planning policy, planning conditions, management arrangements or future Local Plan policies for major developments.

In addition, in the near term, Council requests that the Leader works with planning officers, and with relevant cross-party ward and planning members to:

1. Identify opportunities working with relevant partners to reduce unnecessary delays in the current adoption of infrastructure by the relevant public and private bodies and to highlight any barriers that may require further action by local government, developers or management companies;
2. To remind developers and management companies of their responsibilities to maintain positive engagement throughout the development of new sites and once these are established;
3. To consider whether existing planning guidance, supplementary planning guidance and conditions could be strengthened to bring this forward;
4. Within existing resources and in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, developers and management companies, explore the establishment of a publicly accessible information resource for occupied major developments within the city, bringing together, where available from the relevant responsible organisations listing:
  - who is responsible for maintaining key infrastructure;
  - whether roads, open spaces and drainage are intended for adoption;
  - the current stage of any adoption process;
  - how residents can report issues; and
  - the organisation responsible for responding.

Consider how the stewardship of open spaces, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems can be strengthened during the period between occupation of developments and formal adoption or transfer, including:

- ensuring public open spaces are maintained to an appropriate environmental standard before transfer;
- protecting biodiversity features and ecological enhancements during the period before adoption; and
- ensuring sustainable drainage systems and green infrastructure are properly maintained and monitored throughout the transition from developer responsibility to the adopting body.

5. To report back to the relevant scrutiny committee Council within six months with an update on progress on all of the above.

On being put to the vote, it was approved unanimously, and it was therefore **RESOLVED** to adopt the following motion:

Council notes:

That many residents move into new developments expecting to become part of established communities yet can spend many years living with unresolved issues such as roads awaiting new markings or safety features, waiting for adequate street lighting, lack of facilities and upkeep of open spaces, play areas, drainage, signage and other community infrastructure such as health provision, community spaces and libraries.

That responsibility for such infrastructure is often divided between developers, management companies, Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire County Council and other public bodies. As a result, residents can face considerable difficulty in identifying who owns or maintains particular assets, who is responsible for resolving issues, whether infrastructure is intended for adoption, and what barriers remain to adoption.

Council recognises that adoption of highways, open spaces and other infrastructure can only occur where the relevant standards have been met and the responsible authority is satisfied that legal and technical requirements have been fulfilled.

That lengthy periods of uncertainty and unclear accountability can delay the resolution of problems, reduce confidence in the stewardship of developments and undermine trust in the planning and delivery of new communities.

That Cambridge City Council already works with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council and local ward councillors to help resolve issues where appropriate, recognising that statutory responsibilities remain with the relevant landowner, developer, management company or adopting authority.

That not all infrastructure is intended to be adopted by a public authority and, in some developments, the long-term management of open spaces and communal infrastructure by management companies or trusts is an intended outcome secured through the planning process. In such cases, transparency over ownership, maintenance responsibilities and resident engagement is particularly important.

Council believes:

That residents should be able to understand who is responsible for the places in which they live, how issues can be reported, and what progress is being made towards long-term management and adoption arrangements.

That improving transparency, accountability and communication on existing developments will help build public confidence in the delivery and stewardship of future developments and demonstrate that growth is accompanied by clear responsibilities and effective community engagement.

That the City Council's powers in relation to privately managed developments are limited and many responsibilities rest with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council, statutory undertakers and other public bodies. The Council's role is therefore to influence, coordinate and advocate where appropriate rather than to direct or assume responsibility for infrastructure owned or managed by others.

That residents living on existing developments should benefit from improved transparency and communication now, using the powers, partnerships and information already available to the City Council and its partner organisations, rather than waiting for future governance arrangements to be established.

That Cambridge is a growing city that will continue to see significant housing and infrastructure development in the coming years, and in future that this is proposed to be the responsibility of a Development Corporation.

Council therefore requests that the Leader works with relevant officers to make clear and timely representations to the Cambridge Growth Company on behalf of the council, to request that any proposals include:

1. Working with developers, management companies, Cambridgeshire County Council, and Cambridge City Council to improve, for residents, transparency, accountability and coordination between the relevant responsible organisations.
2. Exploring the establishment of a code of engagement for developers and management companies operating occupied developments within the city;
3. Considering mechanisms to ensure residents have access to clear and publicly accessible information on:
  - ownership and maintenance responsibilities for community infrastructure;

- adoption intentions and adoption status;
  - clear signposting to routes for addressing issues;
  - barriers preventing adoption or transfer to public or private bodies;
  - expected timescales for resolution where known,
  - Property Management Company governance models which make estate management providers directly accountable to residents for performance against specified services, standards and agreed budgets.
4. Exploring mechanisms to improve visibility of progress on issues, including response and progress monitoring, making use of existing reporting systems wherever possible.
  5. Exploring the creation of a publicly accessible source of information for occupied major developments within the city, bringing together, where available, information on ownership, maintenance responsibilities, adoption status, reporting routes and the organisations responsible for resolving issues.
  6. Considering how successful elements of any code could be incorporated into future planning policy, planning conditions, management arrangements or future Local Plan policies for major developments.

In addition, in the near term, Council requests that the Leader works with officers, and with relevant cross party members to:

1. Identify opportunities working with relevant partners to reduce unnecessary delays in the current adoption of infrastructure by the relevant public and private bodies and to highlight any barriers that may require further action by local government, developers or management companies;
2. To remind developers and management companies of their responsibilities to maintain positive engagement throughout the development of new sites and once these are established;
3. To consider whether existing planning guidance, supplementary planning guidance and conditions could be strengthened to bring this forward;

4. Within existing resources and in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council, developers and management companies, explore the establishment of a publicly accessible information resource for occupied major developments within the city, bringing together, where available from the relevant responsible organisations listing:

- who is responsible for maintaining key infrastructure;
- whether roads, open spaces and drainage are intended for adoption;
- the current stage of any adoption process;
- how residents can report issues; and
- the organisation responsible for responding.

Consider how the stewardship of open spaces, green infrastructure and sustainable drainage systems can be strengthened during the period between occupation of developments and formal adoption or transfer, including:

- ensuring public open spaces are maintained to an appropriate environmental standard before transfer;
- protecting biodiversity features and ecological enhancements during the period before adoption; and
- ensuring sustainable drainage systems and green infrastructure are properly maintained and monitored throughout the transition from developer responsibility to the adopting body.

5. To report back to the relevant scrutiny committee within six months with an update on progress on all of the above.

**10b Councillor Toye Scott: Rights of the River Cam 2026**

The following amended motion was proposed by Councillor Toye-Scott and seconded by Councillor Nicmanis.

The alteration included both the Labour and Liberal Democrat proposed amendments to the original Motion (additional text underlined and deleted text struck through).

**1.Declaration of the Rights of the River Cam**

This council declares that the River Cam and its tributaries should have the following rights arising from their existence in nature:

- The right to flow and be free from over-abstraction

- The right to perform essential functions of flooding, moving sediment, recharging groundwater and sustaining biodiversity
- The right to be free from pollution
- The right to feed and be fed by sustainable aquifers
- The right to native biodiversity
- The right to restoration
- The right to maintain connections with other streams and rivers

~~This council undertakes to assess the impact of all its decisions on the health of the river and ensure that all its decisions support these rights.~~

~~This Council calls on all residents and organisations to act as guardians of the River Cam and engage with the river in a relationship of respect and stewardship.~~

This Council recognises the River Cam and its tributaries as vital environmental, ecological, recreational and cultural assets and so will continue to have regard to the impact of its decisions on the health of the river, consistent with its statutory duties, powers and responsibilities.

Cambridge City Council is a significant riverbank landowner and undertakes riverbank management, biodiversity enhancement, sustainable drainage, flood resilience, public access management, river infrastructure projects and partnership working to improve the River Cam.

## **2 Responsibility**

~~This Council notes that the responsible bodies are:~~ responsibility for the health of the River Cam is shared between:

- the Environment Agency – general oversight, including preventing environmental damage to water and associated biodiversity
- Cambridge Water – ensuring adequate water supply
- Anglian Water – management and treatment of sewage
- the Conservators of the River Cam - the statutory navigation authority for the river, responsible for the locks, weirs and sluices that hold up the water level of the Cam
- Natural England
- the University of Cambridge and its Colleges
- riverbank landowners including the City Council
- and local communities.

The Council proposes to write to all three of these bodies to share its concerns over the state of the river and call upon them for their assistance.

~~The Council further notes that there are other bodies and institutions whose actions have significant impacts on the health of the river, and particularly highlights the importance of:-~~

~~· The University of Cambridge and its associated colleges, through the maintenance of their assets and the management of their activities-~~

~~The Cambridge Development Corporation—~~

~~The Council proposes to write to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge and the Chief Executive and Chair of the Cambridge Development Corporation to share its concerns over the state of the river and call upon them for their assistance.~~

~~The Council further notes that the Cambridge Development Corporation – through its influence over the scale, location and water efficiency of new development, there are other bodies and institutions whose actions will have significant impacts on the health of the river, and particularly highlights the importance of:-~~

~~· The University of Cambridge and its associated colleges, through the maintenance of their assets and the management of their activities-~~

~~The Cambridge Development Corporation—~~

~~So the Council proposes to write to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge and the Chief Executive and Chair of the Cambridge Development Corporation to share its concerns over the state of the river and call upon them for their assistance.~~

### **3. Interaction with the Council's own actions and the growth of the city**

~~The Council proposes to set up a small cross-party group to draw up a plan for the actions that it can specifically undertake to contribute to protection of the river. This will include:-~~

~~· considering the impact of future growth in buildings and infrastructure in the city on the depleted state of our river-~~

~~· recognising the limits that may be necessary to respect the rights of the river-~~

~~· reporting back to full Council preferably prior to updating the Local Plan.~~

requests an officer report to be presented to one of the council's overview and scrutiny committees to review current Council activity, partnership arrangements, opportunities for improvement and alignment with the Biodiversity Strategy, Climate Change Strategy, Urban Forest Strategy and Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

~~The group Officers will consult with the various environmental organisations currently actively involved in working for the improved health of the river. For the avoidance of doubt, it is intended that this group will supplement rather than displace the work of existing scrutiny committees.~~

Council notes the extensive evidence prepared to support the Greater Cambridge Local Plan on water scarcity, abstraction reduction and sustainable growth. These matters have been considered throughout the Local Plan process and will be reported to scrutiny committee and to Full Council as part of the Submission Local Plan. All future development should continue to be informed by evidence demonstrating sustainable water supplies, reduced abstraction, water efficiency and environmental capacity.

~~The Council proposes to initiate a publicity campaign to create wide awareness of the current water crisis and the urgent need to address both the increasing over-abstraction of water and the decreasing quality of water.~~ supports continued collaboration through the Cambridge Water Scarcity Group, Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project, Water Resources East, the Environment Agency, Cambridge Water, Anglian Water and the Conservators of the River Cam and will work to promote all communication campaigns regarding water quality and scarcity using the council's media channels and press releases.

The Council will actively publicise the Environment Agency's recommendations to take early action (e.g, water companies to reduce leakage as a priority, and initiate actions required under their drought plans), and encourage the public to do all it can to use water wisely.

#### **4 What the River Cam needs**

This Council believes that the aspirations set out in Section 1 must be matched by action.

##### **4.1 Water in the river**

This Council notes that Cambridge Water introduced a temporary hosepipe ban on 9 July 2026, enforceable from 17 July - the first in over thirty years; that the Environment Agency declared the Cam and Ely Ouse catchment to be in prolonged dry weather on 22 June 2026; and that new supply for the Cambridge area is not expected from the Grafham Water transfer until 2032, or from the Fens Reservoir until the mid-2030s.

This Council further notes that the emerging Local Plan phases new development against the arrival of that infrastructure, but that no equivalent plan exists to improve water efficiency in the years before it arrives. This Council therefore resolves to:

- request a report to the relevant committee on water efficiency within the Council's own estate and its council housing retrofit programme, so that homes retrofitted for carbon are also retrofitted for water;
- support Cambridge Water's programme to reduce leakage and demand, and press for the Grafham Water transfer to be brought forward wherever possible;
- work with Cambridgeshire County Council on over-abstraction and on the restoration of the chalk streams of the Cam catchment.

#### **4.2 Sewage out of the river**

This Council notes that consent for the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant was granted in April 2025 but the funding for the escalation costs for it was withdrawn in August 2025, with no funded alternative brought forward by the government since; and that the emerging Local Plan, and the scrutiny committees of both councils, identify wastewater treatment capacity as the principal unresolved risk to the health of the river. No local plan, however carefully prepared, can build a treatment works with a withdrawn cheque. This Council therefore resolves to:

- call on Anglian Water to resolve the uncertainty it has created, and to fund a treatment solution for Greater Cambridge;
- press Anglian Water for a published timetable for the upgrade of the Haslingfield Water Recycling Centre, and for the reduction of storm overflow discharges into the Cam and its tributaries;
- use the water quality data from the Designated Bathing Area at Sheep's Green to demand action.

#### **4.3 Locks that work**

This Council notes that Baits Bite Lock and Jesus Green Lock were closed in June 2024 because of the risk of structural failure; that Baits Bite has since been stabilised following a £500,000 grant led by the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, which met around one third of the cost, with the Conservators meeting the rest from their own reserves; that Jesus Green Lock remains at risk and full reconstruction is estimated at over £5 million per lock; and that the Conservators, funded principally through navigation charges, have stated that they do not have the money. Comparable navigations elsewhere in England receive government funding for their infrastructure. The River Cam receives none. This Council therefore resolves to:

- write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs seeking a sustainable, long-term funding settlement for the Conservators of the River Cam, and asking the Government to set out how navigation

infrastructure of national significance is to be funded where it sits outside the Environment Agency and Canal & River Trust estates;

- write to the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to welcome the funding secured for Baits Bite Lock and to seek his support in securing the future of Jesus Green Lock;
- request a report on this Council's powers under the legislation governing the Conservators to contribute to their funding, and on the liability arrangements preventing the recruitment of new Conservators;

On being put to the vote, it was approved unanimously, and it was therefore **RESOLVED** to adopt the following motion:

### **1 Declaration of the Rights of the River Cam**

This council declares that the River Cam and its tributaries should have the following rights arising from their existence in nature:

- The right to flow and be free from over-abstraction
- The right to perform essential functions of flooding, moving sediment, recharging groundwater and sustaining biodiversity
- The right to be free from pollution
- The right to feed and be fed by sustainable aquifers
- The right to native biodiversity
- The right to restoration
- The right to maintain connections with other streams and rivers

This Council recognises the River Cam and its tributaries as vital environmental, ecological, recreational and cultural assets and so will continue to have regard to the impact of its decisions on the health of the river, consistent with its statutory duties, powers and responsibilities.

Cambridge City Council is a significant riverbank landowner and undertakes riverbank management, biodiversity enhancement, sustainable drainage, flood resilience, public access management, river infrastructure projects and partnership working to improve the River Cam.

### **2 Responsibility**

This Council notes that the responsibility for the health of the River Cam is shared between:

- the Environment Agency – general oversight, including preventing environmental damage to water and associated biodiversity

- Cambridge Water – ensuring adequate water supply
- Anglian Water – management and treatment of sewage
- the Conservators of the River Cam - the statutory navigation authority for the river, responsible for the locks, weirs and sluices that hold up the water level of the Cam
- Natural England
- the University of Cambridge and its Colleges
- riverbank landowners including the City Council
- and local communities.

The Council proposes to write to all three of these bodies to share its concerns over the state of the river and call upon them for their assistance.

The Council further notes that the Cambridge Development Corporation – through its influence over the scale, location and water efficiency of new development, will have significant impacts on the health of the river, So the Council proposes to write to Chief Executive and Chair of the Cambridge Development Corporation to share its concerns over the state of the river and call upon them for their assistance.

### **3. Interaction with the Council's own actions and the growth of the city**

The Council requests an officer report to be presented to one of the council's overview and scrutiny committees to review current Council activity, partnership arrangements, opportunities for improvement and alignment with the Biodiversity Strategy, Climate Change Strategy, Urban Forest Strategy and Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

Officers will consult with the various environmental organisations currently actively involved in working for the improved health of the river.

Council notes the extensive evidence prepared to support the Greater Cambridge Local Plan on water scarcity, abstraction reduction and sustainable growth. These matters have been considered throughout the Local Plan process and will be reported to scrutiny committee and to Full Council as part of the Submission Local Plan. All future development should continue to be informed by evidence demonstrating sustainable water supplies, reduced abstraction, water efficiency and environmental capacity.

The Council supports continued collaboration through the Cambridge Water Scarcity Group, Greater Cambridge Chalk Stream Project, Water Resources East, the Environment Agency, Cambridge Water, Anglian Water and the Conservators of the River Cam and will work to promote all communication

campaigns regarding water quality and scarcity using the council's media channels and press releases.

The Council will actively publicise the Environment Agency's recommendations to take early action (e.g, water companies to reduce leakage as a priority, and initiate actions required under their drought plans), and encourage the public to do all it can to use water wisely.

#### **4 What the River Cam needs**

This Council believes that the aspirations set out in Section 1 must be matched by action.

##### **4.1 Water in the river**

This Council notes that Cambridge Water introduced a temporary hosepipe ban on 9 July 2026, enforceable from 17 July - the first in over thirty years; that the Environment Agency declared the Cam and Ely Ouse catchment to be in prolonged dry weather on 22 June 2026; and that new supply for the Cambridge area is not expected from the Grafham Water transfer until 2032, or from the Fens Reservoir until the mid-2030s.

This Council further notes that the emerging Local Plan phases new development against the arrival of that infrastructure, but that no equivalent plan exists to improve water efficiency in the years before it arrives. This Council therefore resolves to:

- request a report to the relevant committee on water efficiency within the Council's own estate and its council housing retrofit programme;
- support Cambridge Water's programme to reduce leakage and demand, and press for the Grafham Water transfer to be brought forward wherever possible;
- work with Cambridgeshire County Council on over-abstraction and on the restoration of the chalk streams of the Cam catchment.

##### **4.2 Sewage out of the river**

This Council notes that consent for the relocation of the Cambridge Waste Water Treatment Plant was granted in April 2025 but the funding for the escalation costs for it was withdrawn in August 2025, with no funded alternative brought forward since; and that the emerging Local Plan, and the scrutiny committees of both councils, identify wastewater treatment capacity as the principal unresolved risk to the health of the river. This Council therefore resolves to:

- call on Anglian Water to resolve the uncertainty, and to fund a treatment solution for Greater Cambridge;

- press Anglian Water for a published timetable for the upgrade of the Haslingfield Water Recycling Centre, and for the reduction of storm overflow discharges into the Cam and its tributaries;
- use the water quality data from the Designated Bathing Area at Sheep's Green to demand action.

#### **4.3 Locks that work**

This Council notes that Baits Bite Lock and Jesus Green Lock were closed in June 2024 because of the risk of structural failure; that Baits Bite has since been stabilised following a £500,000 grant led by the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, which met around one third of the cost, with the Conservators meeting the rest from their own reserves; that Jesus Green Lock remains at risk and full reconstruction is estimated at over £5 million per lock; and that the Conservators, funded principally through navigation charges, have stated that they do not have the money. Comparable navigations elsewhere in England receive government funding for their infrastructure. The River Cam receives none. This Council therefore resolves to:

- write to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs seeking a sustainable, long-term funding settlement for the Conservators of the River Cam, and asking the Government to set out how navigation infrastructure of national significance is to be funded where it sits outside the Environment Agency and Canal & River Trust estates;
- write to the Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to welcome the funding secured for Baits Bite Lock and to seek his support in securing the future of Jesus Green Lock;
- request a report on this Council's powers under the legislation governing the Conservators to contribute to their funding, and on the liability arrangements preventing the recruitment of new Conservators;

#### **10c Councillor Ashton: Darwin Nurseries and Farm Shop**

Resolved (unanimous) to approve the Darwin Nurseries and Farm Shop Motion.

#### **10d Councillor Baigent: Planning Arrangements**

The following amended motion was proposed by Councillor Baigent seconded by Councillor Thornburrow.

The alteration included the Labour amendments to the original Motion (additional text underlined and deleted text struck through).

This Council commits ~~resolves that in line with its aspirations to keep building more council homes to achieve~~ the highest quality and affordability ~~most affordable homes in Cambridge, in order to help tackle the housing crisis in Cambridge and to reduce the number of families living in temporary accommodation or on the housing register.~~ From the date of this resolution being agreed that no residential development in which the Council has an ownership interest, financial interest or development role shall proceed unless it achieves the following standards

- ~~on across~~ all sites, as per the Portfolio Strategy of 10 or more dwellings ~~that~~ at least 40% 50% of the homes shall be affordable homes, with rents set as follows:
  - 10% at social rent: 40% - 45% of the median market rent
  - 65% at affordable rent: 60% of the median market rent
  - 25% at intermediate rent: 80% of the median market rent

This Council notes that the Labour government has now prioritised funding for social rents, so for schemes being built with grant funding from Homes England - this tenure mix will be changed to 60% of council homes for social rent (45% of market rent) and 40% at intermediate rent (80% of market rent).

Furthermore, this Council resolves that on any development that this council has an ownership interest, financial interest or development role:

1. All homes shall be developed to the ~~highest recognised sustainability standard at the time that they are built.~~ Council's Sustainable Housing Design Guide which targets CamStandard for council homes being built now and to net zero standard from 2030.
2. ~~No single aspect homes shall be built.~~ Layouts must prioritise providing dual aspect homes and avoid single aspect where possible, whilst also ensuring for a maximum number of council homes to be built
3. As per current planning policy all sites shall have disabled parking, by right.
4. Subject to the provision of disabled parking, all developments shall be designed following the Cambridge sustainable housing design guide with a target of 0.5 car parking spaces per home. ~~as car free by default.~~ Where possible, ~~car parking is considered necessary,~~ it shall be provided in a separate stand-alone car park (so that in due course this can gradually be used for building more homes).

5. ~~Any~~ No council land, or property, shall be that is due to be sold without the approval of the full Council will be done so, as per the Council's constitution.

On being put to the vote, it was approved unanimously, and it was therefore **RESOLVED** to adopt the following motion:

This Council commits to keep building more council homes to the highest quality and affordability, in order to help tackle the housing crisis in Cambridge and to reduce the number of families living in temporary accommodation or on the housing register. From the date of this resolution being agreed that no residential development in which the Council has an ownership interest, financial interest or development role shall proceed unless it achieves the following standards

- across all sites, as per the Portfolio Strategy at least 50% of the homes shall be affordable homes, with rents set as follows:
  - 10% at social rent: 40% - 45% of the median market rent
  - 65% at affordable rent: 60% of the median market rent
  - 25% at intermediate rent: 80% of the median market rent

This Council notes that the Labour government has now prioritised funding for social rents, so for schemes being built with grant funding from Homes England - this tenure mix will be changed to 60% of council homes for social rent (45% of market rent) and 40% at intermediate rent (80% of market rent).

Furthermore, this Council resolves that on any development that this council has an ownership interest, financial interest or development role:

1. All homes shall be developed to the Council's Sustainable Housing Design Guide which targets CamStandard for council homes being built now and to net zero standard from 2030.
2. Layouts must prioritise providing dual aspect homes and avoid single aspect where possible, whilst also ensuring for a maximum number of council homes to be built
3. As per current planning policy all sites shall have disabled parking, by right.
4. Subject to the provision of disabled parking, all developments shall be designed following the Cambridge sustainable housing design guide with a target of 0.5 car parking spaces per home. Where possible, car parking shall

be provided in a separate stand-alone car park (so that in due course this can gradually be used for building more homes).

5. Any council land, or property, that is due to be sold will be done so, as per the Council's constitution.

### **26/70/CNL Written questions**

Members noted the response to the written questions.

### **26/71/CNL Information pack 2**

The meeting ended at 10.12 pm

**CHAIR**