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**South
Cambridgeshire**
District Council

28 September 2023

To: The Leader – Councillor
Deputy Leader (Statutory) – Councillor Brian Milnes
Members of the Cabinet – Councillors Bridget Smith, Henry Batchelor,
John Batchelor, Bill Handley, Dr. Tumi Hawkins, Peter McDonald and
John Williams

Quorum: Three, including the Leader or Deputy Leader

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend the next meeting of **Cabinet**, which will be held in the **Council Chamber - South Cambs Hall** at South Cambridgeshire Hall on **Thursday, 28 September 2023 at 10.00 a.m.**

Yours faithfully
Liz Watts
Chief Executive

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Agenda		Pages
1.	Apologies for Absence To receive Apologies for Absence from Cabinet members.	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
3.	Minutes of Previous Meeting To authorise the Leader to sign the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 27 June 2023 as a correct record.	5 - 10
4.	Announcements	
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6.	Update from Scrutiny and Overview Committee	11 - 12
7.	Young People in South Cambridgeshire	13 - 30
8.	Modern Slavery Statement 2023-24	31 - 44

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10.	Response to Consultation on Plan-making reforms Implementation	99 - 130
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12.	2023/2024 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring (Quarter 1)	215 - 238
13.	Local Heritage List	239 - 246
14.	2023-24 Quarter One Performance Report	247 - 288
15.	Strategic Risk Report	289 - 302
16.	Homes for Ukraine – Landlord Incentive Scheme	303 - 314
17.	Northstowe - Acquisition of Western Park Sports Pitches, governance arrangements for the Western Park facility and procurement of an external operator	315 - 346
18.	Exclusion of Press and Public The press and public are likely to be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(a)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A (as amended) of the Act). Paragraph 3 relates to information about the financial or business affairs of any person, including the Authority holding that information.	
19.	Northstowe Enterprise Zone - Option Agreement on Parcel 5	347 - 430
20.	Affordable Housing Acquisition – 33no. New Homes, Fulbourn	431 - 436
21.	Affordable Housing Acquisition – 43no. New Homes, Northstowe	437 - 442

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Agenda Item 3

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet held on
Tuesday, 27 June 2023 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Bridget Smith (Leader of Council)

Councillors:	Henry Batchelor	Lead Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Licensing
	Bill Handley	Lead Cabinet Member for Communities
	Tumi Hawkins	Lead Cabinet Member for Planning
	Peter McDonald	Lead Cabinet Member for Economic Development
	John Williams	Lead Cabinet Member for Resources

Officers in attendance for all or part of the meeting:

Peter Maddock	Head of Finance
Liz Watts	Chief Executive
Jonathan Dixon	Planning Policy Manager
John Murphy	Monitoring Officer

Officers in attendance remotely for all or part of the meeting:

Anne Ainsworth	Chief Operating Officer
Jeff Mambery	Head of Transformation, HR and Corporate Services
Peter Campbell	Head of Housing
Stuart Morris	Principal Policy Planner
Charlotte Morgan-Shelbourne	Policy Planner

Councillors Anna Bradnam and Heather Williams were in attendance, by invitation.

Councillors Brian Milnes and Lisa Redrup were in attendance remotely.

1. **Apologies for Absence**

There were apologies from Councillor John Batchelor and Brian Milnes (attended virtually).

2. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Cabinet authorised the Leader to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 15 May 2023.

4. **Announcements**

There were no announcements.

5. Public Questions

There were no public questions.

6. Issues arising from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Cabinet noted the Scrutiny and Overview report summarising the meeting held on Thursday, 8 June 2023. Councillor Anna Bradnam was in attendance on behalf of the Committee, and advised that she would feed back at each of the following agenda items:

- South Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership - Operational Plan 2023/24
- 2022-23 Quarter Four Performance Report
- Draft Annual Equality Scheme Review

7. Response to the Huntingdonshire District Council Issues Engagement Paper

Councillor Dr Tumi Hawkins, Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, introduced the report.

It was noted, the consultation paper had identified key issues but did not propose specific responses, instead it sought feedback from local residents, communities, businesses and organisations on what the priorities for improving the district of Huntingdonshire should be.

It was explained there was a duty to cooperate with neighbouring councils and the document presented proposed the response of the consultation which would be jointly with Cambridge City Council.

Water supply, travelling to and from work, and transport issues were identified as key cross boundary issues which affected Greater Cambridge.

Cabinet:

- a. Agreed the proposed joint response to the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Issues Engagement Paper (Regulation 18) Consultation
- b. Agreed that any subsequent material amendments be made by the Lead Member for Planning
- c. Agreed that any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes that do not materially affect the content be delegated to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning.

8. Adopted Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire Local Plans 2018: Five year review of Strategic Policies

Councillor Dr Tumi Hawkins, Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, introduced the report.

It was explained, the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan was adopted in September 2018 and as it was coming up to being five years old a review had been carried out. As the process to replace the plan was already underway the main purpose had been to review if policies remained consistent with national planning guidance. The review had identified that there were a small number of policies that were generally consistent with national policy but did not fully reflect more recent changes to national planning policy or legislation since the adoption of the Local Plans.

It was noted, most policies remained consistent with national policy, noting, three RAG ratings of amber (S3, S12, H10).

Councillor Heather Williams, Opposition Group Leader asked when the council was aware of the environment agencies concerns, regarding the five-year housing land supply that was in amber, reminding members of the application put in, in 2018 which went to committee in 2021, still waiting a decision. It was questioned whether it was included in calculations and what the impact would be.

Councillor Bridget Smith, Leader of Council emphasised the council had worked closely with the environment agency for a long time and continued to do so.

The Planning Policy Manager stated, the issues mentioned were considered in the housing trajectory published in April 2023 which summarised the impact moving to standard method and showed a five year land supply would still be in place. Stress testing of housing and supply had taken place in relation to applications delayed by the water issues, and applications affected were anticipated to deliver late or beyond the five-year period.

Councillor Heather Williams emphasised, full council and planning committee members would likely appreciate a briefing ahead of committee to understand what was going on and to understand repercussions.

Councillor Bridget Smith stated the water supply was the biggest limiting factor in delivering growth in the area and stated there had been numerous discussions and letters written to government that there was a problem which needed escalating. It was stated, they had worked closely with number of agencies regarding challenges with supply over a long period of time.

Dr Tumi Hawkins clarified the total number of homes on each site was the total number of homes on each site not development within the five year period.

Councillor Bridget Smith thanked the Planning Policy Manager and their team for the work put in.

Cabinet:

a) **Agreed** the Local Plan Five Year Review Covering Report and appendix regarding the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018

b) **Agreed** that any subsequent material amendments be made by the Lead Member for Planning.

c) **Agreed** that any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes that do not materially affect the content be delegated to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning.

9. **South Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership**

Councillor Bill Handley introduced the report.

It was explained, the South Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership was a statutory partnership made up of representatives from Police, Health, Probation, South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC), Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Authority, Cambridgeshire County Council and the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector. It was noted, as the accountable body for the CSP, the council must have oversight of, and agree with, the Plan.

Councillor Anna Bradnam, Scrutiny and Overview Committee member stated the CSP was an extremely useful gathering forum in which views from all parties were brought together.

It was requested that the incorporation into the Operational Plan of relevant lessons learned from previous new communities such as Northstowe was created, a glossary to clarify terms and an assurance from the Lead Cabinet Member for Resources that the existing allocated sum of £15,000 in South Cambridgeshire District Council's budget would continue to be available for community safety and asked that Cabinet formally confirmed that said sum would be inflation proofed.

It was noted that various questions were asked, and overall, Scrutiny and Overview were pleased with the work that was done.

Councillor Bridget Smith thanked officers for their work.

Cabinet:

a) Agreed the content of the Operational Plan for 2023-24, considering the lead role the Council takes in its delivery and the resources committed to it.

10. **Quarter Four Performance Report**

Councillor John Williams introduced the report and thanked Scrutiny and Overview for the input and were looking at ways to improve the chart to reflect results.

It was explained, the report covered the view of the three-month trial of the four-day week. It was noted that performance had improved in several areas.

Councillor Bridget Smith, Leader of Council recommended repeating the Mystery Shopper exercise in future.

Councillor Anna Bradnam stressed a lot of questions were asked and satisfactory answers were received. In regard to the Mystery Shopper exercise, questions were asked whether staff knew it was taking place, if there was customer access in the evening and if calls were answered late at night.

A range of questions were asked including, benchmarking, costs, recycling bins, waste service, council tax, concentration on staff and provision for those unable to use online services as well as questions regarding assistance to Parish Councils when applying for grants, and around the Electric vehicles charging scheme.

Jeff Membery, Head of Transformation clarified the cost of the Mystery Shopper exercise was £8,800

Councillor Heather Williams stated although the results were good, believed the contact centre were singled out and other departments could have been part of the exercise.

Councillor Bridget Smith clarified that KPI's monitor performance in other departments.

Councillor John Williams reminded the committee that members had asked for the Mystery Shopper exercise due to criticism on way calls had been handled to understand whether complaints were justified, it was emphasised it would have been done regardless of the four-day week trial and it was worthwhile to make it an annual occurrence.

Jeff Membery stated that there was recognition for the positive feedback and was celebrated with the staff.

Cabinet:

a) Reviewed the KPI results and comments, the overview of results from the Contact Centre's recent mystery shopper exercise, and the progress against Business Plan actions.

b) Recommend, where appropriate, any actions required to address issues identified within appendices.

11. Annual Equality Scheme Review

Councillor Dr Tumi Hawkins introduced the report and thanked Scrutiny and Overview for their input.

It was emphasised that South Cambridgeshire District Council was a modern and caring council, therefore it was important to ensure that it had an Equality Scheme that provided a current and effective framework for the ongoing completion of activities to progress Equality, Diversity and Inclusion with the organisation and the wider district.

Councillor Anna Bradnam stated they were reassured that procedures were in place to avoid unconscious bias and arrangements for disabled access during work at the council were in place.

Councillor Bridget Smith thanked officers for their work.

Cabinet:

- a) Reviewed and approved the Equality Scheme revision for 2023-24.
- b) Reviewed the 2022-23 Equality Scheme action plan progress report.

12. Exclusion of Press and Public

13. Affordable Housing Acquisition - 10no. New Homes - Cottenham

Cabinet:

Approved the property acquisition as specified in paragraphs 6-7 of the exempt report.

14. Affordable Housing Acquisition - 13no. New Homes - Barrington

Cabinet:

Approved the property acquisition as specified in paragraphs 6-7 of the exempt report.

**The Meeting ended at
10.50 a.m.**



Report to: Cabinet

28 September 2023

Lead Cabinet Members: All

From: Councillor Graham Cone, Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee
Councillor Stephen Drew, Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Update from Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Purpose

1. This report informs Cabinet about the outcome of discussion among members of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee at the meeting on 7 September 2023.

Mutual Exchange Policy

2. Having considered the officer's report and statement submitted by the tenant representatives on the Housing Engagement Board and having heard from officers and the Leader of the Council in the absence of the Lead Cabinet Member for Housing, the Scrutiny and Overview Committee supported by affirmation the recommendations to be considered by Cabinet.
3. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee specifically supported officer recommendation 3 (staffing) by saying it was satisfied that there were insufficient mutual exchanges in an average year to justify the employment of an officer dedicated to this one area of work. The Committee agreed that the Council's established housing area officers were far better placed to understand the circumstances involved in each case but noted that the matter would be monitored and reconsidered should there be a sharp increase in the number of mutual exchange applications. The Committee acknowledged that the use of generic area officers would avoid the potential problems of having a single point of failure.
4. Several Committee members welcomed the proposed policy's flexibility and pragmatism and were satisfied that where officers exercised discretion records would be kept to ensure that any perception that discretion was being applied unfairly as between different individuals could be investigated.
5. The Committee welcomed the fact that tenant representatives had been involved in the review of the policy and that officers had considered their views.

2023-24 Quarter 1 Performance Report

6. Having considered the report on Key Performance Indicator (KPI) results and progress against Business Plan actions, and having heard from the Leader of the Council and Lead Cabinet Members for Resources, Heads of Service and the Deputy Director for Planning and Building Quality, the Scrutiny and Overview Committee supported by affirmation the report to be considered by Cabinet.
7. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee recognised that the Council's performance was currently under intense scrutiny by external individuals and organisations and welcomed an assurance from the Lead Cabinet Member for Resources that the position at the end of Quarter 1 gave him no cause for concern.
8. The Vice-Chair expressed delight at the 42% reduction in the number of days to re-let void properties (AH211) during the period April-June 2023.
9. The Committee supported the Leader of the Council in her determination that the Cabinet would work with Parish Councils and others in order to overcome the challenges faced in achieving the objective of biodiversity net gain.

Final report from the Young People Task and Finish Group

10. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee received and commented upon the findings of the Young People Task and Finish Group. The Committee's report (Young People in South Cambridgeshire) and recommendations appear elsewhere on the Cabinet agenda. The Committee was keen to see engagement with young people continue beyond the work undertaken by the Task & Finish Group during the past 12 months.

Report Author:

Ian Senior – Scrutiny and Governance Adviser
Telephone – 01954 713028



Report to:	Cabinet	28 September 2023
Lead Cabinet Member:	Councillor Bill Handley (Communities)	
From:	The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee	

Young People in South Cambridgeshire

Executive Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to summarise the work carried out and conclusions reached by the Young People Task & Finish Group and to present to Cabinet the recommendations approved by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee At its meeting on 7 September 2023.
2. The aim should be to seek opportunities to create or develop effective youth engagement. To this end, communication is key using methods and platforms with which young people are most comfortable and familiar.

Recommendations

3. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee recommends that Cabinet
 - (a) endorses this report; and
 - (b) recommends that Full Council
 - instructs officers to share the general feedback received from young people during the Task & Finish Group's work with local authorities and educational providers so they can take this into account when providing their services.
 - notes the successful youth engagement programme currently run by the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service and supports the provision of appropriate coaching to enable officers in other

priority areas such as housing and local business to find ways of similarly involving young people.

- Instructs officers to investigate the feasibility of holding, within the next 12 months, a scheduled meeting of the Climate and Environment Advisory Committee at a local educational establishment, to which students and other young people should be invited.
- Asks officers to write a letter to the Mayor of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority highlighting the feedback from young people on the limitations of public transport and urging him to take into account their views when developing proposals for bus franchising.
- invites young people, including from the groups approached as part of the Task & Finish exercise (**Appendix 1**), to contribute evidence to officers involved in developing a new Equality Policy embracing generational differences.
- encourages all Members of South Cambridgeshire District Council to commit to engaging with young people and representative organisations in their wards by establishing regular visits to local schools, colleges, youth clubs and other locations as appropriate. In the longer term, a more structured form of dialogue might be appropriate.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. The Young People Task & Finish Group was detailed by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee to undertake a wide ranging review of Council engagement with young people. Six of its recommendations are setout above. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee concluded that a seventh recommendation should be removed at this stage. Paragraph ... of this report refers to that recommendation.

Details

5. At its meeting in July 2022, Full Council unanimously approved the following Motion:

“South Cambs is a major growth area. We know that many of these new homes will attract young families and the number of young people in the district will rise. It is therefore hugely important that the voice of young people is heard in the development of the Council’s policies for the future of the District. This Council encourages youth engagement in local politics and supports the greater involvement of young people in decision-making at the Council and requests Cabinet to establish a cross-party Members’ Task & Finish Group to consider options for delivering this.”

6. The Leader of the Council asked the Scrutiny and Overview Committee to set up a Task & Finish Group, and that Committee appointed five Members to the Group on 6 September 2022, namely Councillors Graham Cone, Stephen Drew, Sue Ellington, Helene Leeming, and Richard Stobart.
7. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee approved Terms of Reference for the Task and Finish Group as attached at **Appendix 2** to this report.
8. The Task & Finish Group identified several factors that would be essential in guiding its work. These were:
 - a sense of place and inclusion
 - the importance of community involvement
 - influence
 - giving young people a voice
 - listening to what young people have to say so that they know that they have been heard
 - understanding that young people already engage but just differently, and accepting that if they are to be expected to engage in some other way, young people must truly believe that alternative to be worthwhile
9. From the beginning of January 2023, Task & Finish Group members met with young people aged between 11 and 25. These came from several different backgrounds: schools, colleges, university, youth groups and children in care. The Task & Finish Group held regular meetings at which Members and officers have been able to discuss key points and plans. It was originally hoped that this information gathering part of the exercise would be completed by the end of March but, in the event, circumstances necessitated extension of the timeline.
10. The diversity and small number of young people interviewed made it possible to identify only the broadest trends. Task & Finish Group members were able to draw upon several pieces of anecdotal evidence to give an idea of how young people see themselves in the context of the world around them to build on some of the ways in which South Cambridgeshire District Council already engages with

young people. As an example, feedback from a group of students aged between 14 and 18 at Impington Village College indicated the following:

- Such an age group is no more or less knowledgeable about local government structures than adults
- 14-18 year-olds understand how Council activity can affect them, such as planning
- most are aware of who empties black, blue, and green bins
- they tend not to engage with councils because they don't consider it to be necessary
- their preferred methods of communication are often not available
- they are aware that sometimes it is necessary to use the telephone
- they like the layout and usability of the South Cambridgeshire District Council website
- they know who their MPs are (Lucy Fraser MP often visits the College) but aren't so aware of their local Councillors
- there is an inclination not to vote

11. One challenge facing the Task & Finish Group was the age-range they wanted to look at – from 11 to 25. The two separate meetings with 'younger' and 'older' members of Waterbeach Action for Youth revealed that those two groups at least had vastly different aspirations.

12. The Task & Finish Group had the benefit of data from the 2021 Census (**Appendix 3**) and specially designed boards showing the responsibilities of Parish, District and County Councils (see **Appendix 4**). These boards were used to guide discussion but, even so, some concerns of the young people engaged related to areas not directly the responsibility of South Cambridgeshire District Council. The principal one of these was transport where this Council is a stakeholder but not a provider. There was however recognition of the part played by this Council in the provision of housing, both directly and through the planning process. A notable comment made at the meeting with the Children in Care Council was that houses should not be built if water resources were scarce or on 'nature reserves' (green space). A recurring theme seemed to be that there was a need for spaces for young people to 'hang out'. While young people were aware of the environment around them, and disappointed when they see litter, it is surprising perhaps that no specific reference was made to climate change.

13. The Task & Finish Group considered it important that all local Members should commit themselves to improving youth engagement in their respective areas. Parish and Town Councils also have a role to play.

14. The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service was recognised as having a high profile in terms of youth engagement. Task & Finish Group members considered that the methods employed there could be invaluable in developing youth engagement in other aspects of the Council's work. Members noted in passing the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) that sets out the kind of things that members of the public could expect from South Cambridgeshire District Council. Members were keen that a specific and easily understood statement of intent relating to young people should be incorporated into an updated SCI and this has now been actioned.

15. They also noted some of the measures adopted in engaging with young people as part of consultation about the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. These included events designed to identify things that had not been covered up to that stage. The Task & Finish Group recognised the importance of being aware of “not knowing what we don’t know” and making sure that processes are kept up-to-date and relevant.

Options

16. Cabinet can

- recommend to Full Council the recommendations set out in paragraph 3 either in full or in part; or
- amend some or all the recommendations, delete recommendations and add new ones before presenting them to Full Council; or
- reject the findings of the Young People Task & Finish Group and recommendations from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee, and decline to make any recommendations to Full Council.

Implications

17. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial

18. There will be cost implications, but these have not been assessed yet.

Legal

19. None

Staffing

20. There will be staffing implications, but these have not been assessed yet.

Risks/Opportunities

21. There will be opportunities, but these have not been assessed yet.

Equality and Diversity

22. There will be implications, but these have not been assessed yet.

Climate Change

23. None

Health & Wellbeing

24. There will be health and wellbeing implications, but these have not been assessed yet.

Consultation responses

25. Consultation took the form of meetings with several different groups of young people. It was not possible to speak with some groups either because of confidentiality or safeguarding reasons or because relevant young people could not be identified.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in

26. Affordability is a concern to those wishing to live and work in South Cambridgeshire.

Being green to our core

27. Young people value the environment in which they live.

A modern and caring Council

28. Young people represent the District's future, and it is important that they should be given an opportunity to shape that future while recognising the needs of other groups in the community.

Lessons learned

29. The Young People Task & Finish Group had trouble in engaging with some young people whose input would have been invaluable. Foremost among these were young employees and charities. The Task & Finish Group was also unsuccessful in engaging with young council house tenants.

29. Possible reasons for this include

- economic factors making it difficult for employers to give employees time to meet as a group with Members.
- a lack of understanding of why the Task & Finish Group had been established.
- a general reluctance to engage.
- the need to safeguard those deemed most vulnerable.

Backgro und Papers

- Notes of Young People Task & Finish Group meetings (October 2022 to July 2023)
- Notes of meetings with young people helping to inform this report
- Report from the Task & Finish Group to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee on 7 September 2023

Appendices

- Appendix 1: List of Groups interviewed.
- Appendix 2: Terms of Reference for the Young People Task & Finish Group
- Appendix 3: Young people in South Cambridgeshire (Source: 2021 Census)
- Appendix 4: Foamex boards

Report Author:

Ian Senior – Scrutiny and Governance Adviser
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Groups of young people interviewed

- Cambourne Village College
- Cambridge Regional College
- Children in Care Council
- Coulson
- Girton College
- Impington Village College
- Long Road Sixth Form College
- Sawston Village College
- Waterbeach Action for Youth

The Task & Finish Group also met with officers from the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service to discuss current examples of South Cambridgeshire District Council's youth engagement programmes.

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Young People in South Cambridgeshire Scrutiny Task and Finish Group

Terms of Reference

Purpose

1. The purpose of the group is to investigate and make recommendations to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee on ensuring that the voice of youth in South Cambridgeshire is sought and heard.

Scope

2. The Task and Finish Group will review and examine South Cambridgeshire District Council policy to understand:
 - how the Council interprets the term 'young people'.
 - approximately how many individuals fall within that definition and where they live, study or work within South Cambridgeshire.
 - how can SCDC ensure that young people can
 - readily access District Council services such as housing, homelessness, and welfare support.
 - Engage fully in the democratic process.
 - provide rich input into appropriate Council policies.

Group membership

3. The Group will consist of five members appointed by the Scrutiny and Overview Committee. A Chair of the group will be appointed by the Task and Finish Group. Other Scrutiny and Overview Committee members and non-executive Members may input as needed. Executive members may be invited to contribute in an advisory capacity. The Task and Finish Group may co-opt additional members from non-executive Councillors or from outside the Council.

Lead officer

4. This will be the Communications & Communities Service Manager.

Frequency of meetings

5. The Group will meet on a monthly basis or at such other frequency as is deemed practical.

Public access

6. Meetings shall not be open to the press and public. However, stakeholders shall be invited to attend and to contribute to the Group's work programmes, including co-option to the group, as appropriate.
7. Formal minutes will not be taken. However, action notes will be compiled by the allocated lead officer and reviewed from meeting to meeting. These will not be published but will usually be made available to the public on request after publication of the final report.

Reporting

8. The Task and Finish Group will report its findings to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee.

Young people in South Cambridgeshire (Source: 2021 Census)

The following table contains data in five-year age bands. It includes young people aged ten but not 25-year-olds. This is slightly different from the Task & Finish Group's definition of young people (11-25). There were 25,400 young people (ages 10 – 24) in South Cambs in 2021. (This is 15.83% of the population of South Cambridgeshire).

All persons, of ages:	2021 Census estimate	2021 Census count	2011 Census estimate	2011 Census count	ABPE v2 2020	ABPE v3 2020	Mid-year estimate 2020	Response rate
0-4	8,800	8,500	9,300	8,700	8,900	7,700	8,900	97%
5-9	10,400	10,400	9,100	8,500	10,200	10,100	10,600	100%
10-14	10,600	10,600	9,100	8,500	10,500	10,100	10,800	100%
15-19	8,700	8,600	8,700	8,100	8,900	8,200	9,000	99%
20-24	6,300	6,200	7,100	6,400	6,900	6,300	6,300	99%
25-29	8,300	8,200	8,100	7,500	9,100	8,300	7,300	99%
30-34	10,100	10,000	9,400	8,800	10,200	9,500	9,200	99%
35-39	11,100	11,000	10,800	10,200	11,300	10,500	10,600	99%
40-44	11,800	11,700	11,700	11,200	11,800	11,000	11,700	99%
45-49	11,900	11,800	11,800	11,300	12,200	11,300	12,200	99%
50-54	11,800	11,700	10,200	10,000	11,900	11,000	11,900	99%
55-59	11,200	11,100	8,900	8,800	11,200	10,200	11,200	99%
60-64	9,300	9,200	9,800	9,500	9,200	8,600	9,200	99%
65-69	8,100	8,000	7,500	7,400	8,000	8,000	8,100	100%
70-74	8,500	8,500	5,600	5,500	8,400	8,500	8,600	100%
75-79	6,400	6,400	4,600	4,500	6,100	6,200	6,200	100%
80-84	4,400	4,400	3,600	3,400	4,400	4,500	4,400	99%
85-89	2,700	2,700	2,200	2,100	2,700	2,800	2,800	98%
90	1,700	1,600	1,200	1,100	1,700	1,700	1,700	97%
All persons	162,000	160,600	148,800	141,500	163,600	154,400	160,900	99%

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District Council

Local services for South Cambridgeshire’s residents, businesses and visitors.



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council



Bin Collections

Collecting waste and helping people recycle more.



Benefits

Helping people claim what they are entitled to.



Business Support

Helping local companies set up, grow or diversify.



Climate and Environment

Monitoring air pollution, tree planting initiatives, grants for local green projects like electric vehicle charging points.



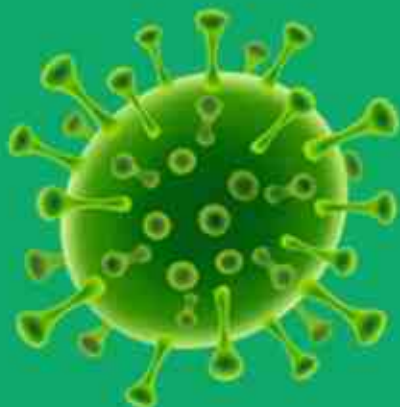
Collecting Council Tax

This money funds local council services and other public services like Police and Fire crew.



Communities

Supporting refugees, cost of living support, grants for local projects, helping people become active and ensuring facilities people need are planned for.



Environmental Health

Rating take-aways for hygiene, anti-social behaviour like loud dog barking, dumping rubbish and noise from loud parties.



Housing

We have 5,000 Council homes.



Licensing

Regulating things like late night events at pubs, taxi drivers, checking dog breeders are acting responsibly.



Planning

Permission for homes and planning the future of our communities eg should new estates, skate parks or nightclubs be allowed?

County Council

Services for the whole
county of Cambridgeshire



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council



Blue Badges
(disabled parking
permits)



**Foster care
for young
people**



**Household
recycling
centres**



Libraries



**Registering
births,
deaths and
marriages**



**Roads
and paths**
including sorting
potholes and signs



**Schools
and
learning**



**Social care
for young and
old people**
eg care homes



**Street
lighting**



**Trading
Standards**

Parish Councils and Town Councils

Localised services in villages and towns



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council



Allotments



Bus
Shelters



Location of
public bins



Looking after
community
buildings
Like village halls



Mowing
grass in
public
spaces



Open
spaces
Eg village
recreation
grounds



Play areas



Village
Events
Like Remembrance
Day and Christmas
lights switch-on

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Report to:	Cabinet	28 September 2023
Lead Cabinet Member:	Cllr Bridget Smith (Leader)	
Lead Officer:	Peter Campbell (Head of Housing and Safeguarding Lead)	

Modern Slavery Statement 2023-24

Executive Summary

1. This report presents Cabinet with the Modern Slavery Statement for the 2023-24 financial year. This sets out actions and steps the Council is taking to understand, prevent and act against modern slavery and human trafficking.

Key Decision

2. No

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - a) Review and approve the Modern Slavery Statement contained at **Appendix A**.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. To ensure that the Council meets its statutory duty to publish an annual statement detailing the actions being taken to tackle modern slavery, in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Details

5. Full details are provided within the Modern Slavery Statement, located at **Appendix A**.
6. A small number of additions have been made to the statement since last year, including reference to:
 - International resettlement schemes
 - The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System (C&PICS)
 - Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation, achieved in 2022-23
 - The Serious Violence Duty - a statutory duty across a range of organisations to work together to reduce and prevent serious violence in the area

- Additional data relating to taxi licensing, welfare checks and referral data for previous years

7. Updated statistics and examples have also been provided.

Implications

8. In the writing of this report, take any implications into account, such as financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues.

Legal – in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, we are required to produce a slavery and human trafficking statement each financial year.

Equality and Diversity – an Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken. This identifies groups of people who are more likely to be at risk of Modern Slavery and has informed the development of the statement itself.

Consultation responses

9. Consultation has taken place with relevant SCDC service areas including members of the Housing, Procurement, Communities, Licensing and Internal Audit teams.

Appendices

Appendix A: Modern Slavery Statement 2023-24

Report Author:

Kate Yerbury – Policy and Performance Officer

Kevin Ledger – Senior Policy and Performance Officer



South Cambridgeshire District Council Modern Slavery Statement 2023-24

Introduction

“Modern slavery is a serious crime that violates human rights. Victims are forced, threatened or deceived into situations of subjugation, degradation and control which undermine their personal identity and sense of self.”

– Home Office, 2021

Human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour are all types of modern slavery. Definitions of these terms can be found in the glossary at the back of this document.

Section 54 placed a requirement on businesses with a budget of £36 million or more to publish an annual statement providing an overview of what they have done to identify and address risks of modern slavery including all relevant due diligence activity.

This statement sets out the steps we have taken and are continuing to take to ensure there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in any part of our business, including our supply chains. We produce this statement each financial year, in line with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

If you are a **member of the public** and are concerned that slavery might be taking place:

- Call 999 if it is an emergency
- Call 101 for non-emergencies
- Call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111
- Call the Modern Slavery Helpline on 08000 121 700
- Report using the [Modern Slavery Helpline](#) website, or via the free Unseen app.

If you are a **staff member** and are concerned that slavery might be taking place:

- Call 999 if it is an emergency
- Follow the [Safeguarding Procedure](#) detailed on the SCDC staff Intranet
- A list of Safeguarding Officers can be found on the ‘people’ page our Intranet site. The Safeguarding Lead for the council is Peter Campbell (peter.campbell@scambs.gov.uk)

Our Role in Combatting Modern Slavery

The Local Government Association has outlined the following roles for local authorities in tackling modern slavery:

1. Identification and referral of victims

We have a duty to notify the Home Office of suspected cases of Modern Slavery under the Modern Slavery Act (2015)

2. Supporting victims

This can be through safeguarding children and adults with care and support needs and through housing and homelessness services

3. Community safety services and disruption activities

To use our powers of entry and inspection to disrupt the activities of traffickers and criminal networks or where there are modern day slavery concerns.

4. Ensuring that the supply chains councils procure from are free from modern slavery

To ensure there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in any part of our supply chains

How we Carry out the Four Roles

1. Identification and Referral of Victims

Communications

We run internal and external communications throughout the year to raise awareness of modern slavery, the signs to look out for and how to report suspected cases. This includes:

- Articles in our South Cambs Magazine (which is sent to all residents)
- Social media posts
- Staff intranet posts
- Distribution of a leaflet titled 'Community Eyes and Ears' to parish councils in the district, addressing a range of issues including modern day slavery.

Training and Resources

Training on spotting and reporting human trafficking, modern slavery and safeguarding is available to all staff via our MeLearning online e-learning package. In addition to this the council produces regular communication for staff and the public on identifying and reporting modern slavery, furthermore we have a dedicated 'Safeguarding and Modern Slavery' page on our staff intranet, where staff can find guidance and resources. This includes a quick view [Safeguarding Procedure](#).

We provide 'Concern Cards' for staff who work in the district, so that they can easily record details in cases where they believe residents or households may be at risk and raise this with a safeguarding officer.

All Licensed taxi drivers and operators must have completed our Safeguarding course (provided by an external body), which may include information about child exploitation, human trafficking, domestic abuse and hate crime. In the past financial year 976 drivers have completed the Safeguarding Course.

International Resettlement Schemes

463 Ukrainian households have arrived in South Cambs under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and we have undertaken 475 welfare visits. We have also undertaken 228 checks that take place 6 months after they have arrived to check all is well. All hosts are subject to DBS (Disclosure Barring Service) checks and property suitability checks.

If we have any concerns we undertake extra or more regular visits and we involve the Early Help teams from Cambridgeshire County Council if required.

We are also taking part in other UK Resettlement Schemes and have assisted a number of Syrian and Afghan families (welfare and support visits are undertaken by other partners in these cases).

Safeguarding Lead and Safeguarding Officers

We have a Safeguarding Lead Officer (Peter Campbell, peter.campbell@scambs.gov.uk) who has overall responsibility for safeguarding for the council.

We also have Departmental Safeguarding Officers, who are available to staff to assist with referrals. A list of Safeguarding Officers can be found on the 'people' page our Intranet site.

Corporate Safeguarding Group

This group is led by our Safeguarding Lead Officer and attended by representatives from teams who are most likely to come into contact with potential victims of modern slavery. The group meets on a quarterly basis to:

- Promote safeguarding
- Ensure that our policies and processes are up to date and based on good practice
- Ensure that we are providing appropriate training to staff.
- Monitor safeguarding concerns and outcomes
- Distribute information to and from District Safeguarding meetings.

Cambridgeshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub

We engage with the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub to work with partner agencies (including the Police, Cambridgeshire County Council, Fire Service and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System C&P ICS) to take a joined-up approach to safeguarding. This includes working with partners to develop and follow the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Child Exploitation Strategy.

2. Supporting victims

Safeguarding Policy

This policy sets out our approaches to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk of harm. The policy is aligned with Cambridgeshire County Council's Adult Safeguarding policy guidelines and procedures. This policy was approved December 2022 and published January 2023.

It also sets out responsibilities and details of how staff can make referrals, as detailed in the 'Assistance with Making Referrals' section above.

Provision of Housing and Welfare Support

We provide Housing Advice, Homelessness support and Welfare support to victims of Modern Slavery.

We have achieved Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation (December 2022) to support victims of Domestic Abuse, which has potential for overlap with Modern Slavery.

Further support for victims and survivors of modern slavery can be found at:

- [Modern Slavery Helpline](#) - 08000 121 700
- [The Salvation Army Supporting Survivors Helpline](#) - 0800 808 3733
- [Modern Slavery Awareness booklet \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
- [Citizens Advice National Adviceline](#) - 0800 144 8848

3. Community Safety Services and Disruption Activities

South Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership

We work to promote community safety as a member of the South Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership. This involves working with Police and Fire Services, Housing Associations, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System (C&P ICS), and other councils to protect vulnerable people living in the district, including those who may be exposed to modern slavery and trafficking.

Disruption

Some of our teams, including environmental health, planning enforcement, and housing inspection, have powers of entry and inspection that can be used to disrupt the activities of traffickers and criminal networks.

We work with partner agencies, such as Cambridgeshire Constabulary, to respond cases of Modern Slavery. For example, in 2019 we responded to a case where five vulnerable workers were living in unacceptable conditions on an agricultural nursery site in the district¹.

[Statement continues on following page]

¹ [Modern slavery operation finds five men at Cambridgeshire nursery - BBC News](#)

4. Ensuring that Supply Chains are Free From Modern Slavery

We take a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery within our supply chains. This is communicated at the outset of all business relationships and reinforced thereafter.

Our approach to keeping our supply chains free from modern slavery includes:

- Providing procurement training to all staff involved in procurement processes. This includes awareness of modern slavery and actions that we take to prevent this from occurring within our supply chain.
- Ensuring contractors and suppliers have their own policies relating to modern slavery prevention and safeguarding (including training). We request that our suppliers ensure the same of their own supply chains.
- For key contractors and suppliers, we request that regular safeguarding and modern slavery reviews take place, with core findings reported to us.
- Following World Trade Organisation (WTO) tender processes, which require suppliers to confirm that they comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- Ensuring all contractors and suppliers adhere to our Modern Slavery Statement and other related policies.
- Undertaking detailed review of supply chains in areas that are at higher risk of modern slavery and trafficking.
- Examining, as appropriate, suppliers' past records in respect of their treatment of staff and conduct in relation to modern day slavery and human trafficking.
- Investigating and taking appropriate action where supplier conduct is brought into question in relation to Modern Slavery.

Other Relevant Policies and Practices

Serious violence Duty

The Serious Violence Duty commenced on 31st January 2023. The Duty places a statutory duty across a range of organisations (including but not limited to local government, youth offending teams, schools, local health boards, and police) to work together to reduce and prevent serious violence in the area.

Whistleblowing Policy

This policy provides guidance to allow our staff, contractors and Councillors to safely highlight concerns about any aspect of the Council's work, including safeguarding and modern slavery.

Equality Scheme

We update our equality scheme each year, setting out how we will promote equality of opportunity through our work. Actions identified in this document can help us to carry out our role in combatting modern slavery. For example, providing easy access to translation and interpretation services.

Code of Conduct

All of our employees are expected to work to our code of conduct, including fair and equitable treatment of all staff, customers, and residents.

Pay Policy

We are committed to ensuring that our pay strategy is fair, affordable and easily understood. We use the National Joint Council (NJC) Job Evaluation Scheme to evaluate our staff salaries. This is based on joint ownership, openness, transparency and equality.

Recruitment

We recruit staff in a fair and consistent way that supports equality of opportunity. We check that interview attendees are eligible to work in the UK and request applicant references. Interview panel members receive interview training to ensure a consistent and fair process.

Agency Workers

We only use specified, reputable employment agencies to source labour and always verify the practices of new agencies.

Appendix A - Facts and Figures

National Referral Mechanism Referrals (NRM) from Cambridgeshire-based First Responder Organisations

- In 2022 79 National Referral Mechanism referrals were made by Cambridgeshire-based first responder organisations. This is an increase from 2021 (55), but less than 2020 (90).
- Of these 79 referrals, 43 cases related to adults. This is an increase from the number of cases involving adults in 2021 (35) and 2020 (also 35)
- The number referrals relating to children was 34. This is an increase from 2021 (19), but less than 2020 (44).

Types of Exploitation

- Of the 69 referrals made by Cambridgeshire Constabulary, 63% (44) were categories as 'criminal', 16% (11) 'Labour and Criminal', 12% (8) 'Labour' and 6% (4) as either 'sexual', 'sexual and criminal' or 'sexual and labour'.

National Referral Mechanism Referrals (NRM) that Cambridgeshire Constabulary are Responsible for Investigating

- 133 referrals were made in 2022 that Cambridgeshire Constabulary are responsible for investigating (including those from non-Cambridgeshire-based first responder organisations). This is higher than is the case in both 2021 (108) and 2020 (124).
- 70 of these referrals related to adults. This is an increase from 2021 (54) and 2020 (50)
- 54 of these referrals related to children. A marginal increase from 2021 (52) and a decrease from 2020 (59).
 - The majority of referrals were for 18+ males engaging in criminal activity (23/69)
 - The majority of referrals were for UK nationals (30/69)²

² modern-slavery-national-referral-mechanism-and-duty-to-notify-statistics-uk-end-of-year-summary-2022

Examples of cases of modern slavery in the news

- ['Despicable' modern slavers in Cambridgeshire forced their victim to give up her newborn baby | ITV News Anglia](#)
- [Peterborough car wash owner given slavery court order following concerns over welfare of staff - Cambridgeshire Live \(cambridge-news.co.uk\)](#)
- [Modern slavery is on the up and experts warn anyone can fall victim | UK News | Metro News](#)

Data Tables Taken from [National Referral Mechanism statistics - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Number of NRM by Cambridgeshire-based first responder organisation

2022:

Referral body	Child (17 and under)	Adult (over 18)	Unknown age	Total
Cambridgeshire County Council	9	0	0	9
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority	1	0	0	1
Cambridgeshire Constabulary	24	43	2	69
Total	34	43	2	79

2021:

Referral body	Child (17 and under)	Adult (over 18)	Unknown age	Total
Cambridgeshire County Council	4	3	0	7
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority	0	0	0	0
Cambridgeshire Constabulary	15	32	1	48
Total	19	35	1	55

2020:

Referral body	Child (17 and under)	Adult (over 18)	Unknown age	Total
Cambridgeshire County Council	9	0	1	10
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority	0	0	0	0

Cambridgeshire Constabulary	35	35	10	80
Total	44	35	11	90

Number of NRM referrals made that Cambridgeshire Constabulary are responsible for investigating

Year	Child (17 and under)	Adult (over 18)	Unknown age	Total
2022	54	70	9	133
2021	52	54	2	108
2020	59	50	15	124
Total	165	174	26	365

*Note that these figures are higher than the totals in the previous set of tables as some cases will not have been referred by Cambridgeshire-based first-responder organisations (for example UK Visas and Immigration and other UK police forces).

Appendix B - Glossary

County lines - a term used to describe drug gangs in large cities expanding their reach to small towns. More information is available on the [National Crime Agency website](#).

Human Trafficking - the coercion or deception of an individual into a situation where they are exploited. It involves three basic components: 1) the action of recruiting, transporting, transferring or receiving an individual; 2) the threat or use of coercion or deception; 3) exploitation or intent to exploit.

This exploitation can include sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and removal of organs.³

Slavery – ‘the status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised’⁴

Servitude – ‘an obligation to provide a service that is imposed by the use of coercion’⁵

Forced or Compulsory Labour relates to ‘all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered themselves voluntarily’⁶

³ Modern slavery: statutory guidance for England and Wales (under S49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015)

⁴ The 1926 Slavery Convention

⁵ Modern slavery: statutory guidance for England and Wales (under S49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015)

⁶ Modern slavery: statutory guidance for England and Wales (under S49 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015)

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Report to:	Cabinet 28 September 2023
Lead Cabinet Member:	Councillor John Batchelor, Lead Cabinet Member for Housing
Lead Officer:	Peter Campbell, Head of Housing

Mutual Exchange Policy

Executive Summary

1. The tenant representatives of the Housing Engagement Board (HEB) requested that the Mutual Exchange Policy be reviewed.
2. Whilst the policy was in the process of being reviewed, the Council has since received an Ombudsman determination¹ which requires the Council to publish a revised mutual exchange policy by the end of September 2023. The revised policy should permit under occupation in some circumstances and provide details of those circumstances.
3. In reviewing the policy, officers have looked at good practice and listened to the views of the tenant representatives of the HEB. Whilst officers have been able to accommodate many of the recommendations raised, it has not been possible to reach an overall agreement with the tenant representatives on the revised policy.
4. The role of the HEB is to scrutinise and make recommendations for improvement. It does not have any decision-making powers and therefore Cabinet is asked to consider the options being put forward by both officers and the tenant representatives of the HEB, prior to the policy being approved.
5. The main areas of difference relate to under-occupation and overcrowding of a property by way of a mutual exchange.

¹ Complaint relates to a tenants' dissatisfaction regarding how a mutual exchange application was handled and subsequent request for disabled adaptations. The request for a mutual exchange was during the beginning of the pandemic where services were adapting to change. The Ombudsman found that the Council was six days late in providing its decision on the mutual exchange and did not correctly inform the tenant as to which ground within the Housing Act 1985 and the Localism Act 2011 that their mutual exchange application was refused. The Ombudsman also found that the existing mutual exchange policy did not provide clear guidance as to its evidential requirements when considering "special circumstances" for an additional bedroom [note: under the Officer recommendations within the revised Mutual Exchange Policy, one additional bedroom above the tenants' assessed requirement would be permitted without the need for "special circumstances"]

Key Decision

6. Yes. This is a key decision as it is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority.

The Key Decision was first published in May 2023 Forward Plan.

Recommendations

7. It is recommended that Cabinet considers this report and approves the officer recommendations listed below:

	Issue	Current Policy	Officer Recommendation	Tenant Proposal
1	Under-occupation	There is no under-occupation permitted from an exchange	That under-occupation is permitted, but this is limited to one bedroom.	Mutual Exchanges should be permitted where the under-occupancy rate is not worsened in SCDC properties overall (including like for like swaps)
2	Overcrowding	No overcrowding is permitted.	That overcrowding is only permitted in very specific cases linked to the lack of larger accommodation (i.e. where a tenant has a 4 bedroom requirement and wishes to swap to a 3 bedroom property where that property has an additional room that can be used as a bedroom)	Overcrowding by 1 bedroom should be permitted across all property sizes
3	Staffing	Mutual exchanges are dealt with by generic housing officers (note: this is practice not policy)	Mutual exchanges are dealt with by generic housing officers (but the situation is monitored)	That an additional officer is appointed for mutual exchanges (full time or part time)
4	Incentives to downsize	Incentives are offered to transfer tenants who are in receipt of housing benefit and are subject to the 'bedroom tax'.	Incentives are offered to all people who downsize through mutual exchange. This will be linked to the number of bedrooms freed up as an incentive to downsize fully.	Agreed with Officer Recommendation. Any incentive should also cover removal costs.

5	Mutual Exchange Service	Applicants have access to mutual exchange service (Exchange Locata) free of charge to find suitable matches	Subscription to additional mutual exchange service (HomeSwapper) to provide improved access to greater number of potential matches free of cost to tenants.	Agreed with Officer Recommendation
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8. It is recommended that following a decision on the above recommendations, that Cabinet approve the final version of the mutual exchange policy at Appendix A (subject to any amendments relating to point 7 above). And that the Lead Member for Housing is given delegated authority to make minor amendments and any subsequent changes relating to the value of the financial incentive.

Reasons for Recommendations

9. To provide direction on the mutual exchange policy. The policy will demonstrate that the Council has a robust and transparent process in place that meets legislative requirements and has taken into account tenants' views.

Details

Mutual Exchange

10. The Housing Act 1985 and Localism Act 2011 allow social housing tenants on qualifying tenancies to exchange homes. Mutual Exchange is a tenant-led process. It provides a range of benefits including social mobility, improved wellbeing and the opportunity to move closer to work, services and family. It also provides a quicker route for transfer tenants on the housing register to find alternative accommodation to solve their own housing pressures. In addition, moves through Mutual Exchange help make financial savings on void costs and reduce pressure on the Housing Register.

Mutual Exchange Policy Review

11. As part of the review officers looked at the top performing councils, as well as sending out questionnaires to housing associations and tenants who had completed a mutual exchange since January 2020.
12. The tenant representatives of HEB have been actively involved in helping to shape and influence the revised policy.

Options

12. Whilst officers and the tenant representatives of the HEB are broadly in agreement with the proposed policy changes recommended in the review, the key differences of opinion are focussed on the following:
- (a) the level of **under-occupancy** that should be permitted under Mutual Exchange, and

- (b) the level of **overcrowding** that should be permitted under Mutual Exchange
- (c) staffing resources to implement the revised policy.

Under-Occupancy

- 13. Grounds for refusal of a mutual exchange are set out in legislation. In terms of size of property, landlords can withhold consent if:

The accommodation afforded by the dwelling-house is substantially more extensive than is reasonably required by the proposed assignee. (Ground 3 of Schedule 3 Housing Act 1985 and Ground 7 of Schedule 14 Localism Act 2012)

- 14. There is no statutory guidance on what constitutes *substantially more extensive than is reasonably required*. It is up to the landlord as to how this is interpreted. The Council's current policy does not allow any mutual exchange if it means that a tenant would be under-occupying a property they are swapping to.
- 15. Under revised proposals, officers are recommending that tenants can mutually exchange to a property with one more bedroom than their bedroom entitlement. This is felt to fit in with reasonableness whilst having regard to overall housing pressures and the need for the Council to make best use of its stock. This recommendation is in line with the review findings which identified that the majority of landlords permit under-occupation through mutual exchange by one bedroom.
- 16. The tenant representatives have asked that the policy be more flexible in this respect and have asked that tenants should be able to swap 'like for like' regardless of how many bedrooms were under-occupied, so long as there was no overall increase in under-occupation. They felt that as nobody gains and nobody loses that this should be considered reasonable and that the proposal put forward by officers was too restrictive.
- 17. Through officer research, one local authority was identified as having such a flexible policy on under-occupation. Tenant representatives have asked that the Council be '*leaders of the way, rather than followers of other councils*'.

Overcrowding

- 18. The Council's current policy is not to allow any overcrowding through mutual exchange.
- 19. Officers have a responsibility to avoid overcrowding where possible and should not be seen to actively encourage this. However, officers have conceded that in the following circumstances a mutual exchange should be permitted.
- 20. Where a tenant wishes to mutual exchange and has a four-bedroom requirement, they will be able to swap to a three-bedroom property where that

property has an additional room (such as an old-style parlour house) that can be used as a bedroom. Given the availability of four-bedroom properties in the District (which make up only 2% of the Council's stock), officers felt this was a reasonable compromise.

21. The tenant representatives felt that this recommendation did not go far enough and wanted the flexibility to allow tenants mutually exchanging to over-occupy by one bedroom across all property sizes.

Staffing resources to implement the revised policy

22. The tenant representatives requested that an additional officer should be appointed to oversee the mutual exchange process and suggested that a full-time post could be considered to also support the work of the housing officers. Unfortunately officers were unable to agree to this request due to budget constraints and other pressures that would take priority. However, it was agreed to monitor the situation.

Implications

23. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial

24. The mutual exchange policy can be administered within existing budgets.
25. It is anticipated that the revised mutual exchange policy will attract more tenants to mutually exchange rather than waiting for a transfer. One of the benefits for the Council is that there are no void works undertaken for a mutual exchange.
26. Whilst there are some financial implications to the subscription to a national online service and financial incentives to downsize through mutual exchange, these can be off-set by any financial savings made through reduced void costs.

Equality and Diversity

24. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out. Any issues with access to online Mutual Exchange Services provided by the Council and/or applicants unable to manage the mutual exchange process independently will be provided with reasonable support.

Consultation responses

25. The tenant representatives of the HEB were consulted on their views to improving the policy and have been involved in the review process. Tenants

who completed a mutual exchange since January 2020 were also invited to complete a questionnaire regarding their experiences.

26. Attached at Appendix B are the minutes of the Housing Engagement Board Special Meeting to discuss the mutual exchange policy held on 2nd May 2023.
27. The mutual exchange policy was also considered by the Scrutiny & Review Committee on 7 September 2023. A statement by the tenant representatives of the Housing Engagement Board was included with the report papers and a summary was read out by the Chair. The Committee welcomed that tenant representatives had been involved in the review of the policy and that officers had given careful consideration to their views. The Committee were satisfied that there were insufficient mutual exchanges in an average year to justify the employment of an officer dedicated to this one area of work but noted that the matter would be monitored and reconsidered should there be a sharp increase in the number of mutual exchange applications. The Committee welcomed the policy's flexibility and pragmatism and were satisfied that where officers exercised discretion records would be kept to ensure that any perception that discretion was being applied unfairly could be investigated.
28. The Scrutiny & Review Committee supported by affirmation the officer recommendations to be considered by Cabinet.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in

29. Mutual Exchange enables mobility and help tenants move closer to work, family and support networks, services and amenities. This also improves health and well-being.

Appendices

Appendix A: Draft Mutual Exchange Policy

Appendix B: Minutes of the Housing Engagement Board Special Meeting – 2nd May 2023

Report Author:

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South Cambridgeshire District Council

Mutual Exchange Policy

Version	2.0
Ownership	Geoff Clark, Service Manager - Housing Neighbourhood
Approved by	xx
Policy Contact	Julie Fletcher – Service Manager – Housing Strategy
Approval date	[insert date/month] 2023
Publication date	[insert date/month] 2023
Date of next review	[insert month] 2025



Version Control

Date	Version	Details of Review
January 2020	1.0	New Policy
Sept 2023	2.0	<p>Full policy review and update to reflect government consultation on revised directions to the Social Housing Regulator on Mutual Exchange.</p> <p>Update in line with the Council's decision to end use of Fixed-Term Tenancies.</p> <p>New provisions due to policy review including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Definition of grounds of refusals 3 & 7 and 7 & 11 under Housing Act 1985 Schedule 3 and Localism Act 2011 Schedule 14 respectively.- Incentives for downsizing- Requirement to give 7 working day notice for sign-up. <p>Details and clarifications on roles and responsibilities and other aspects of Mutual Exchange.</p>



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The process by which social housing tenants can swap their homes is called Mutual Exchange. More than two households can be involved in a chain of swaps. The exchange can only take place with the written permission from their respective landlords.
- 1.2 Exchange partners transfer tenancies and move into each other's properties 'as seen' and take on all the rights and responsibilities set out in the tenancy agreement for the property they move into.
- 1.3 South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) recognises that Mutual Exchange provides a host of benefits for tenants and the Council alike. The process helps tenants to meet their housing needs, move closer to work, family members and/or specific services. For many tenants, Mutual Exchange provides the only realistic opportunity for them to move from their current home. It also provides a quicker way of finding alternative accommodation especially for housing applicants who are on low priority or in need of accommodation for which there is high demand.
- 1.4 This policy outlines SCDC's approach to Mutual Exchange and applies to:
 - SCDC tenants applying for Mutual Exchange;
 - External social housing tenants seeking to exchange with SCDC tenants;
 - Transfer Applicants on the SCDC Housing Register;
 - Members of SCDC staff; and
 - Internal and external partners such as Housing Associations, Tenancy Support services, Health and Community Care services.



2. Policy Aim and Objectives

- 2.1 The aim of this Policy is to deliver the Council's Mutual Exchange scheme in line with government legislations and the relevant guidelines, and to apply the conditions for Mutual Exchange fairly and consistently across the board.

The SCDC Mutual Exchange Policy has the following objectives:

- 2.2 To inform SCDC staff, residents and partners on how the scheme will operate, the eligibility criteria and grounds for refusal;
- 2.3 To promote Mutual Exchange as an effective housing option for meeting housing needs;
- 2.4 To improve mobility for social housing tenants in the district;
- 2.5 To contribute to the Greater Cambridge Housing Strategy priority for *Promoting Health and Wellbeing through housing*; and
- 2.6 To ensure effective use of the Council's housing stock by enabling tenants to move to accommodation suitable for their needs. This will help:
- ▶ Address over-crowding and under-occupation in the Council's existing stock;
 - ▶ Address needs for adaptations and help release adapted homes;
 - ▶ Relieve pressure on the Council's Housing Register; and
 - ▶ Relieve pressure on health and care services.



3. Legal Framework

3.1 The Housing Act 1985 and Localism Act 2011 outline the framework within which Mutual Exchange schemes must operate.

3.2 Section 92 of the Housing Act 1985:

- I. Grants tenants with lifetime (secure and assured) tenancies the right to exchange their social homes with other tenants. In order to carry out an exchange, tenants must transfer their tenancies by Assignment.
- II. Requires Landlords to provide a written decision within 42-days of receiving completed applications from all exchange partners;
- III. Sets out the grounds (Schedule 3 of the Act) based on which, landlords can refuse applications for Mutual Exchange; and
- IV. Allows landlords to give consent to a Mutual Exchange to go ahead subject to certain conditions being met such as, payment of rent arrears.

3.3 Sections 158 of the Localism Act 2011 sets out additional provisions including:

- I. Protection of security of tenure for lifetime tenancies that predate 1 April 2012. This allows tenants to keep similar security of tenure when exchanging with tenants who are on flexible or fixed term tenancies. Tenancies can be transferred by way of Surrender and Re-grant;
- II. Grounds on which landlords may refuse an application for Mutual Exchange where Section 158 applies;
- III. Tenants' right to enforce decisions via County Court injunction if landlords fail to provide written decisions within 42-days of receiving applications for Mutual Exchange (S.159); and



- IV. Landlords may not use the grounds for refusal of a Mutual Exchange application if they fail to provide a written decision within 42-days of receiving such an application. (S.159)

3.4 SCDC will also rely on the following legislations for definitions and interpretations of terms set out in the Housing Acts mentioned above:

- ▶ Housing and Planning Act 1986
- ▶ Housing Act 1988
- ▶ Housing Act 1996
- ▶ Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- ▶ Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003
- ▶ Housing and Regeneration Act 2008

Tenancy Standard, Regulator of Social Housing

3.5 SCDC will endeavour to meet the standards set out in the Tenancy Standard by -

- I. Offering a Mutual Exchange service which allows tenants to easily access details of all (or the greatest practicable number of) available matches without payment of a fee,
- II. Taking steps to publicise the availability of the Mutual Exchange service(s) the Council offers to tenants, and
- III. Providing support for accessing Mutual Exchange service(s) to tenants who may otherwise be unable to use them.



4. Right to Exchange

- 4.1 SCDC tenants who are on Secure or Fixed Term Flexible Tenancy are eligible for Mutual Exchange.
- 4.2 External tenants seeking to exchange with SCDC tenants must be on lifetime tenancy (secure or assured) or Fixed Term/Flexible Tenancy.
- 4.3 Applicants can exchange with tenants of any private registered providers of social housing anywhere in the country, including:
- ▶ Other Local Authorities;
 - ▶ Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMO);
 - ▶ Housing Associations; and
 - ▶ Housing Trust which is a charity.
- 4.4 Tenants on Introductory Tenancies will not be considered for Mutual Exchange until such time that they have successfully completed the probation period.

Planning Agreements

- 4.5 Social housing properties which are subject to S106 planning agreements have restrictions on how they are let based on factors such as local connection. However, SCDC will not withhold consent for mutual exchange if an incoming tenant lacks a local connection. This is because the Housing Act 1985 does not specify this as a reason to refuse an exchange. The Housing Act is a primary legislation and therefore overrides restrictions set out in a planning agreement.



5. Types of Exchange

- 5.1 Tenants can only exchange properties with written consents from their landlords. The exchange can be carried out by transferring tenancies using either of the 2 methods described below. Please refer to [Appendix 01: Methods of Exchange](#) for the type of tenancy applicants can expect to receive due to Mutual Exchange.

Assignment

- 5.2 This applies when exchange partners hold tenancies with similar security of tenure. They will be asked to sign a 'Deed of Assignment' which will allow the incoming tenant to take on the rights and responsibilities of the outgoing tenant, with whom they have exchanged their property. In effect, exchange partners step into each other's tenancies.

Surrender & Re-grant

- 5.3 Surrender and re-grant is where tenants surrender their current tenancy and are issued a new tenancy with similar level of security of tenure as their current tenancy. This is applicable when tenants on lifetime/secure tenancies that predate 1 April 2012, who have their security of tenure protected by law, seek to exchange with tenants on flexible or fixed-term tenancies.
- 5.4 For the protection to apply, the following criteria must be met:
- I. One must be a lifetime/secure tenancy that predates 1 April 2012 and the other must be a flexible or assured shorthold tenancy with a fixed term of at least two years;
 - II. Rent payable under the fixed term tenancy must be at social rent; and



- III. The exchange does not fall within the list of grounds in Schedule 14 of the Localism Act 2011 based on which, a landlord may refuse an application for Mutual Exchange.

Flexible Tenancies

- 5.5 SCDC no longer issues Flexible Fixed Term Tenancies for Council housing tenants.
- 5.6 For the purpose of Mutual Exchange, the transfer of tenancies will be carried out as described in **paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3**. However, SCDC tenants who are currently on a flexible fixed term tenancy will be offered a secure tenancy prior to exchange being completed provided that, there are no tenancy breaches by the tenant. The incoming tenant will then be assigned to the secure tenancy.

Please refer to [Appendix 01: Methods of Exchange](#) for guidance.

6. Information, Guidance and Support

Information, Advice and Guidance

- 6.1 This policy provides detailed information about the procedures and processes for assessing applications for Mutual Exchange.
- 6.2 Information about the scheme will also be made available via appropriate SCDC communication channels including SCDC website [here](#).
- 6.3 Tenants may also contact their Housing Service Officers for more information and guidance.



Support for most vulnerable tenants

- 6.4 Mutual Exchange schemes are tenant-led. Those seeking to exchange are responsible for finding their potential exchange partners, carry out checks to the property they would like to move to and make the arrangements for the actual move.
- 6.5 SCDC will provide reasonable support to tenants who do not have access to the internet.
- 6.6 SCDC will also provide additional and reasonable support to tenants who are unable to manage independently with using any Mutual Exchange service the Council provides. Support will be based on individual need and on a case-by-case basis. This may include:
- ▶ Access to a computer
 - ▶ Explaining how the mutual exchange service works
 - ▶ Assistance to navigate the online mutual exchange service
 - ▶ Registering and searching for matches on behalf of a tenant

Support with downsizing

- 6.7 To incentivise tenants to downsize through Mutual Exchange, SCDC will provide financial incentives based on the number of bedrooms released. For every bedroom released, £1,000 will be payable upon successful exchange. Where those in receipt of the financial incentive to downsize, then go on to move again within a year, the financial incentive will be repayable.



- 6.8 The incentive is aimed to help with any removal costs and any associated costs for moving.

Financial Assessments

- 6.9 Tenants who are seeking to exchange into properties that will lead to under-occupation will be offered a financial assessment. This is to help them establish if the potential move is affordable and if there are any financial implications such as reductions in their housing benefit entitlement or the housing element of their Universal Credit and/or access to Discretionary Hardship Payment (DHP). Tenants will also be informed regarding the implications of not keeping a clear rent account.
- 6.10 Mutual Exchange Applicants will also be required to sign a disclaimer stating that they fully understand any financial implications of exchanging into a property that will result in under-occupation.

7. How to find a Mutual Exchange Partner

- 7.1 SCDC subscribes to a nationwide mutual exchange service which Council tenants may use free of charge. Tenants will be required to register on the website to advertise their property and to find potential mutual exchange partners, both locally and nationally.
- 7.2 Tenants may also use other avenues to find Mutual Exchange partners, such as advertise in local shops, newspapers and on social media. They may also use other Mutual Exchange websites which may require a fee.



8. Before applying

8.1 Before applying for a Mutual Exchange, tenants must ensure that they are satisfied with the property they wish to move into. Applicants are encouraged to read - [Appendix 02: List of items tenants should consider before deciding to move](#), including:

- ▶ Potential changes in tenancy terms;
- ▶ Costs and affordability; and
- ▶ Repairs, property condition and the living environment

8.2 Please refer to [Appendix 03: Mutual Exchange Process and Timeframe](#) which briefly outlines the process for Mutual Exchange.

9. How to Apply

9.1 Although Mutual Exchanges usually involve 2-way swaps, SCDC will accept applications for multiple swaps involving 3 or more parties.

9.2 All mutual exchange partners **must** complete and submit SCDC Mutual Exchange Application forms separately. To apply online, applicants must register with the SCDC website. They will be able to follow the progress of their applications and provide additional information required.

9.3 Tenants who are unable to access application forms online can request one from the Housing Service or download the form from the SCDC website.

9.4 Tenants must provide all the necessary information and documents requested on the form and by the Housing Services Officer to help assess their application.



- 9.5 All named tenants on a joint tenancy must sign the Mutual Exchange application form. If for any reason, this is not possible, tenants must contact their Housing Services Officer for advice.

10. Assessment

- 10.1 Applications for Mutual Exchange will not be assessed unless all parties involved have submitted fully completed application forms separately.
- 10.2 The date for receipt of application will be counted from the day the latest fully completed application for Mutual Exchange has been received.
- 10.3 The assessment process will be based on the following:
- ▶ Property inspections;
 - ▶ Breaches of tenancy, if any;
 - ▶ Landlord references if an external tenant is involved; and
 - ▶ Rent arrears; if any.

Property Inspections

- 10.4 All mutual exchanges will be subject to property inspections by a Housing Services Officer (HSO) and Property Surveyor to ensure that the property is in a good condition for exchange.
- 10.5 During the visit officers will:
- ▶ notify the tenant of any items including repairs that need to be addressed before the exchange can take place,
 - ▶ make a note of the decorative state of the property,



- ▶ make a list of items being gifted by the outgoing tenant to the incoming tenant,
 - ▶ take photographs of any (outstanding) repairs, damage and unauthorised improvements, and
 - ▶ Note any other breaches of tenancy present at the time of the inspection.
- 10.6 Both exchange partners will be provided with copies of the property inspection report including any lists of gifted items and works (including photos) that are of the tenants' responsibility.
- 10.7 Repairs that are the responsibility of SCDC must be reported in the usual way. Repairs will be carried out within the SCDC contractor standard timescales.
- 10.8 Repairs that are the responsibility of the tenant, will need to be carried out prior to the date of exchange, or the incoming tenant will need to agree to take the property 'as seen'.
- 10.9 Depending on the circumstances the HSO may invite the incoming tenant to attend a property inspection at the new property with them. However, the date for inspections will be agreed between the HSO and the outgoing tenants as the Council has a statutory duty to provide a written decision within 42-days of receiving applications for mutual exchange.
- 10.10 In the following circumstances applications will not be considered and tenants may re-apply once essential and/or remedial work have been completed:
- i. Items have been identified and deemed as 'major repairs' and/or as health and safety hazards caused by tenant's misuse or neglect,
 - ii. Unauthorised improvements made to the property by the tenant which is unsafe and/or the improvements would not have been permitted by SCDC.



Subject to the nature of unauthorised improvements and/or any health and safety risks, SCDC may:

- ▶ require tenant(s) to make safe and/or reinstate the property to its original form; and/or
- ▶ undertake the work and recharge the tenant; and/or
- ▶ consider serving a Notice of Seeking Possession (NoSP) for a breach of tenancy for unauthorised alterations.

10.11 If a tenant has carried out improvements with permission from SCDC, they may qualify for compensation. For further details, please see *Compensation for improvements* [here](#).

Tenancy breaches

10.12 As part of the assessment process, the HSO will also check to see if there have been any other breaches of tenancy conditions including any notices that have been served on the tenant or any court order pending.

References

10.13 Where the exchange is between an SCDC tenant and a non-SCDC tenant, all landlords involved will provide and request references on outgoing and incoming tenants respectively. In providing the reference, SCDC will share any breaches in tenancy by the outgoing tenant including:

- ▶ any tenancy management issues;
- ▶ all complaints of ASB and tenancy breaches;
- ▶ all known criminal activity related to the property or neighbourhood;
- ▶ any known child protection issues; and



- ▶ If any succession has already taken place.

11. Decision

- 11.1 SCDC is required by law to provide a written decision within 42-days of receiving completed applications for Mutual Exchange.
- 11.2 Tenants have the right to enforce a decision by applying for an injunction in the County Court, should SCDC fail to provide a decision within the statutory 42-days. In this situation, the Council will no longer be able to refuse an application based on the grounds for refusals set out in law. However, any failure to meet the statutory target by SCDC must not be treated as consent to exchange.
- 11.3 SCDC will not unreasonably withhold consent for a Mutual Exchange and will rely on grounds for refusals set out in **Schedule 3 of the Housing Act 1985**.
- 11.4 Where Section 158 applies (please see paragraphs 3.3, 5.3 and 5.4), SCDC will rely on grounds set out in **Schedule 14 of Localism Act 2011**, which is closely based on those set out in the Housing Act 1985, in addition to the following:
- ▶ the tenant is in rent arrears, and
 - ▶ the tenant is otherwise in breach of a term of the tenancy agreement.
- 11.5 SCDC will also refuse applications if any grounds in the **Housing Act 2004 (chapter 6, part 1)** apply. List of grounds for refusal can be found in [Appendix 04: Grounds for refusal](#).
- 11.6 Written decisions from SCDC will state any of the following outcomes based on the HSO's assessment:



- ▶ Approval;
- ▶ Approval with condition(s); or
- ▶ Refusal.

Approval

11.7 An application for Mutual Exchange will be approved where, the applicants are compliant of all grounds for refusal and/or there are no conditions to be met.

Approval with conditions

11.8 Approval is subject to condition(s) that tenants must meet prior to the exchange taking place. This is applied when the tenant is in rent arrears and/or in breach of tenancy. Examples of conditions include -

- ▶ Clearing any rent arrears;
- ▶ Completing repairs that are tenants' responsibility;
- ▶ Remedying any unauthorised home improvements;
- ▶ Reinstating the property back to a reasonable standard;
- ▶ Performing an obligation of the tenancy agreement e.g. removal and disposal of rubbish from the garden; and
- ▶ Making payments for any rechargeable repairs.

Refusal

11.9 SCDC may refuse applications for Mutual Exchange on grounds set out in Schedule 3 of Housing Act 1985, Schedule 14 of Localism Act 2011 and Housing Act 2004 (chapter 6, part 1). Please refer to [Appendix 04: Grounds for refusal](#) for a list of grounds based on which applications for mutual exchange may be refused. The grounds focus on court proceedings, the accommodation, landlord, rent arrears and breach of tenancy agreement.



Grounds for Refusals – Considerations

11.10 SCDC will establish bedroom entitlement in accordance with its Lettings Policy.

A property will be considered to be *substantially more extensive than is reasonably required* if under-occupation occurs in an SCDC property by more than 1-bedroom.

11.11 Where under-occupation is likely to occur, applicants will be offered financial assessment to help make an informed decision. Applicants will be required to sign declaration(s) that they fully understand any financial implications of under-occupying the new home.

11.12 Overcrowding will only be permitted in very specific cases linked to the lack of larger accommodation. This is where a tenant has been assessed as having a 4 bedroom requirement and wishes to swap to a 3 bedroom property where that property has an additional room that can be used as a bedroom.

11.13 SCDC will consider *the property has been substantially adapted* as major adaptations, in line with its Aids and Adaptations Policy.

Discretions

11.14 There may be reasonable grounds for SCDC to refuse a Mutual Exchange application however, the Council may choose to exercise discretion in certain circumstances. SCDC cannot legally refuse a Mutual Exchange for rent arrears unless Schedule 14 grounds apply. Rent arrears will usually be made a condition for approval.



11.15 This may apply, if a tenant is in rent arrears and/or are affected by changes to housing benefit/universal credit and the Mutual Exchange may help the tenant to reduce rental outgoings (e.g. if they are downsizing). This will help prevent further debt and enable the tenant to begin reducing their rent arrears. HSOs should always discuss with their line manager for advice and approval to grant discretion (where applicable).

11.16 The Services Manager – Tenancy & Estates may approve a Mutual Exchange where the household does not meet the criteria set out in the mutual exchange policy. This will only be considered where there are extenuating circumstances and it is considered that the exchange would benefit the health and wellbeing of the tenant or a member of their household. To consider such requests, the HSO must provide a written report covering the reasons for referral to the Service Manager. Any request must include supporting evidence: this evidence can be provided by the applicant, by the HSO or sourced from a third party. A record will be kept on the number of referrals and decisions taken for audit purposes. There is no further right to appeal. However, if the applicant remain unsatisfied with the decision, they will need to follow the Council's complaints process. Please refer to [Section 23](#).

12. **Right to review and the appeals procedures**

12.1 If a Mutual Exchange application is not approved, the tenant(s) will be advised of the decision and the grounds for refusal in writing.

12.2 Tenants can request a review of a decision if they find the reasons for refusal unsatisfactory. To request a review, they must write to the Service Manager - Tenancy and Estates **at duty.housing@scambs.gov.uk within 14 days** of receiving their decision letter. Tenants will be advised of the outcome of the review in writing **within 28 days**.



- 12.3 If the refusal is upheld following the review and the tenant remains dissatisfied with the decision and its reasoning, they can write to the Head of Housing Services for an appeal **within 14 days** of receiving their decision letter. Tenants will be advised of the outcome of the appeal in writing **within 28 days**. The outcome of the appeal will be the final decision on the application. If the tenant still feels that their application has not followed due process, they will need to follow the Council's complaints process. Please refer to [Section 23](#).
- 12.4 Where an external landlord is involved and rejects the application for an exchange, it is the responsibility of their tenant to appeal the decision.

13. Gas and Electrical Safety Checks

Gas Safety

- 13.1 Under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 (GSR), SCDC has a statutory duty to ensure that any SCDC owned gas appliances are safe to use before the incoming tenant moves in and that, the removal of any tenant owned appliances do not create unsafe conditions. SCDC will therefore undertake the following actions which primarily deals with the visual aspects of gas safety to minimise and manage potential risks:
- 13.2 SCDC will ensure that all Council properties involved in an exchange have valid gas certificates, known as Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR).
- 13.3 On the day of the exchange the contractor will visit the relevant properties twice to **Cap & Reinstall** any gas supply. Any tenant's own gas fire or cooking appliance present at the time of contractor cap off visit, will be disconnected from the supply bayonet removed and capped for safety. **Exceptions will be made if both exchanging tenants have gas cookers compliant with current standards and have mutually agreed to leave these in the properties.**



- 13.4 During the first visit in the morning the contractor will:
- ▶ Disc off the meter inlet,
 - ▶ Disconnect any gas appliances that do not belong to SCDC,
 - ▶ Seal any disconnection points with an appropriate fitting,
 - ▶ Remove bayonet and cap off if there is a gas cooker
 - ▶ Cut back pipework to prevent fire being connected if tenant has own gas fire
- 13.5 The contractor will agree a time slot with both tenants for a second visit later on the same day to commission the gas installations at their new property. Upon the re-visit later in the day the contractor will:
- ▶ Remove the disc from meter inlet; and
 - ▶ Carry out a tightness test of the installation.
- 13.6 Where tenants agree to exchange over a weekend in winter months, gas will be capped on a Friday and reinstated on a Monday as usual. Temporary electric heater(s) will be provided at the time of the cap off and will be collected upon reinstate of gas supply.
- 13.7 It is the responsibility of the incoming tenant to instruct and pay for a Gas Safe Registered engineer to connect, test and certify any gas for both new or used cooker installation (including any necessary pipework alterations). Or make arrangements to have a qualified electrician to connect an electric cooking appliance.
- 13.8 If there is no live gas cooker point or connection present, it is the responsibility of the incoming tenant to appoint a Gas Safe Registered engineer to supply and fit any necessary pipework and appropriate fittings to facilitate the safe



cooker installation and provide certificate upon completion. The tenant will be responsible for paying the costs.

13.9 Where tenant has a gas appliance connected they must provide the Council with a copy of an Installation certificate generated by a Gas Safe Registered engineer.

13.10 Please refer to [Appendix 05: Gas Safety Check Process](#) which briefly outlines the process for gas safety.

Electrical Testing

13.11 The property must have a full electrical safety inspection carried out by SCDC's repairs contractor before the exchange takes place. Any Category 1 or Category 2 defects found during the inspection must also be corrected prior to the exchange.

13.12 Any items that are the responsibility of the council and require attention must be attended to by the repairs contractor prior to the exchange taking place and should be completed as soon as practically possible.



14. Responsibilities of SCDC

- 14.1 SCDC will subscribe to an internet based Mutual Exchange service to help tenants find suitable properties for exchange.
- 14.2 SCDC will provide written decisions within 42-days of receiving completed applications from all exchange partners.
- 14.3 SCDC will ensure that the Council properties have valid gas safety certificates and for safety purposes will cap and re-instate any gas supply to a property during the exchange.
- 14.4 SCDC will carry out full electrical safety inspection of Council properties.
- 14.5 SCDC will carry out inspections of Council properties and list any repairs, damage and/or alterations that are the responsibility of the tenant to make good.
- 14.6 SCDC will carry out repairs that are of the Council's responsibility within the standard repair timescales, when reported by tenants.
- 14.7 SCDC may recharge the outgoing tenant for undertaking works that are of the tenant's responsibility. This may include works due to damage, neglect, unauthorised alterations and health and safety hazards.



15. Responsibilities of Mutual Exchange Applicants

Application process

- 15.1 Applicants should read the Mutual Exchange Policies and processes published by all landlords involved.
- 15.2 Ensure all exchange partners have submitted completed application forms and have signed relevant declarations.
- 15.3 Provide any additional information and clarifications requested by HSOs.
- 15.4 Allow access to SCDC officers and contractors to undertake necessary property inspections and safety checks.
- 15.5 Undertake financial assessment to ensure the exchange is financially sustainable and consider any potential implications of exchange in terms of changes in tenancy, cost and living conditions. Please refer to [Appendix 02: List of items tenants should consider before deciding to move.](#)

Property Condition and Repairs

- 15.6 Tenants will be agreeing to move into properties 'as seen'. It is important that all exchange partners do the necessary inspections and checks. It is recommended that exchange partners visit each other's' properties at least twice.
- 15.7 It is up to the incoming tenant to respond to any invitation from the HSO to attend property inspection(s) at the new property with them. The date for inspection(s) will be agreed between the HSO and the outgoing tenant.



- 15.8 Agree with their exchange partner regarding the condition they will be leaving the property in and who will be responsible for any outstanding repairs or rubbish removal.
- 15.9 Any repairs identified as the Council's responsibility should be reported in the usual way before the move. The contractor will carry out the repairs in line with standard timescales for completing repairs.
- 15.10 If the current tenant has installed their own bathroom, kitchen, conservatory or other fixture or fitting, this must be discussed with the incoming tenant to ensure they are happy to take over responsibility for the maintenance of the item(s). If any guarantees exist for new installations, these will need to be assigned to the incoming tenant.
- 15.11 It is the responsibility of the outgoing tenant to ensure that the property has basic electrical fittings as was provided when the property was let to them, should they wish to remove any electrical items installed by them such as decorative light fittings, Chrome or otherwise switches and sockets and outside lights. Replacement of any electrical fittings must meet SCDC approved specifications for electrical work. Tenants should contact their HSOs for information.
- 15.12 It is the responsibility of the outgoing tenant to reinstate property into its former state if the tenant has made unauthorised alterations. **Please see paragraph 10.10 for more details.**

Gas and Electrical Safety

- 15.13 Tenants must privately commission a Gas Safe engineer (can be found [here](#)) and/or a qualified electrician registered under the [Competent Person Scheme](#)



for (dis)connections and reconnections of gas and electrical appliances, and provide HSOs with copies of certificates upon completion.

Moving Home

- 15.14 Agree and inform the HSO of the dates for Sign-up and move-in giving them at least 7 working day notice to make necessary arrangements for Sign-up.
- 15.15 Agree a list of items that will be gifted and/or removed from the property.
- 15.16 Tenants must leave their property in good condition. All rubbish and belongings from the property, garden and outbuildings must be removed prior to the exchange.
- 15.17 Tenants to handover the keys to incoming tenants. SCDC will not provide any spare keys for the property.
- 15.18 Tenants to take pictures of meter readings on leaving and arriving at exchanged properties and contact the utility suppliers with current meter readings as soon as possible after moving.
- 15.19 Incoming tenants needing adaptations, must not set a date for exchange until the required assessment, approval and funding has been obtained first.

16. After the move

- 16.1 HSO will visit tenants at their new SCDC properties 6-weeks after the move:
- ▶ to find out how tenants are settling into their new property;
 - ▶ to discuss and answer any questions re their tenancy;



- ▶ to discuss any problems experienced by tenants such as debt, anti-social behaviour or other housing management issues;
- ▶ to check if the property is being kept in good condition; and
- ▶ to check if they have set up accounts with gas and electricity supplier.

- 16.2 SCDC will not adjudicate on any dispute between exchange partners. The Council will expect tenants to resolve any disputes amongst themselves.
- 16.3 The incoming tenant will maintain any improvements/alterations made by the outgoing tenant.
- 16.4 The incoming tenant will be responsible for any outstanding repairs including clearing the garden and any rubbish removal.
- 16.5 The incoming tenant will carry out any internal decorating and re-connection of appliances at their own expense.
- 16.6 Request for any fixtures or fittings that are the responsibility of the Council, will be replaced with standard items SCDC uses for its housing stock.
- 16.7 There are no restrictions on the number of times tenants can apply for Mutual Exchange. New tenants can also apply to be on the SCDC Housing Register and their application will be assessed in accordance with the Council's Lettings Policy. The Council's website contains information on various housing options available to residents.

17. Recharge

- 17.1 SCDC may recharge outgoing tenant(s), if the Council inevitably undertakes any outstanding repairs, rectifies damages and removes rubbish that would have been the responsibility of the outgoing tenant.



18. Succession

- 18.1 SCDC tenancies granted after 1st April 2012 will only grant succession rights to spouses or civil partners therefore allowing only one succession. Succession rights stay with the person and not with the tenancy. Therefore, a Mutual Exchange applicant who is currently a successor, will remain a successor in their new property. No new succession rights are created through mutual exchange.
- 18.2 If an external tenant has not succeeded to their tenancy, they will retain their succession rights when they move into an SCDC property through mutual exchange. Where an external landlord is involved, SCDC will request and share information on whether successions have taken place.

19. Pets

- 19.1 SCDC allows one domestic pet in Council properties and requires tenants to seek permission if they wish to have additional pets. Permission to keep pets may be restricted to property type. Details on conditions for keeping pets can be found [here](#).

20. Safeguarding

- 20.1 SCDC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. Child protection involves taking steps to safeguard children and young people at risk or suffering from physical, emotional or sexual abuse. Safeguarding adults involve, as explained by the Care Act 2014 as "protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect."



- 20.2 Where applicable, SCDC will use relevant grounds to refuse applications for Mutual Exchange if there are any safeguarding concerns including any risks to residents in the area and SCDC staff.

21. Unauthorised Mutual Exchanges and Unlawful Inducements

- 21.1 Both, mutual exchanges without written permission from landlords and receiving or offering any payment or other premium as an inducement to carry out an exchange are against the law. In such circumstances SCDC will take necessary actions such as requiring tenants to return to their properties and serve notice to seek possession.

22. Monitoring and Review

- 22.1 Regular monitoring of the Mutual Exchange scheme will be undertaken to ensure the policy and its processes are effectively delivering the policy aim and objectives.
- 22.2 This policy and its procedures will be reviewed 2 years after the effective date, and thereafter once every five years. However, any changes in operations, legislation, regulations and guidelines may require reviews ahead of schedule.

23. Complaints

- 23.1 SCDC Complaints Policy can be found [here](#). Any complaints can be reported via My South Cambs [online](#), or by using any of the following methods:

- ▶ Email at feedback@scambs.gov.uk;



- ▶ Letter to South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne, Cambridge, CB23 6EA; and
- ▶ Over the telephone - Contact Centre on 01954 713 000

24. Data Protection

- 24.1 Personal information collected as part of Mutual Exchange application will be used and stored in line with SCDC Customer Privacy Notice, which can be found [here](#).



Appendix 01: Methods of Exchange

Scenario	Tenancy before Mutual Exchange		Mutual Exchange by	Tenancy after Mutual Exchange	
	Tenant 1 (outgoing tenant)	Tenant 2 (incoming tenant)		Tenant 1 (outgoing tenant)	Tenant 2 (incoming tenant)
1	Secure	Secure	Assignment	Secure	Secure
2	Secure	Assured	Assignment	Assured	Secure
3	Secure Tenancy predates 1 April 2012 S.158 applies	Flexible/Fixed on Social Rent	Surrender & Re-grant By Assignment, if Tenant 2 is an SCDC tenant and changes to Secure Tenancy prior exchange	Secure/Assured Loses s158 protection if seeks mutual exchange in the future with tenants on flexible tenancies.	Flexible/Fixed as per Localism Act 2011 However, the Tenant will be granted Secure Tenancy as soon as practicable. This is subject to no breaches of tenancy.
4	Secure Tenancy predates 1 April 2012 S.158 does not apply	Flexible/Fixed on Affordable Rent	Assignment	Flexible/Fixed as per Localism Act 2011	
5	Secure Tenancy started after 1 April 2012 S.158 does not apply	Flexible/Fixed	Assignment	However, the Tenant will be offered Secure Tenancy as soon as practicable if seeking an exchange with an SCDC tenant. This is subject to no breaches of tenancy.	
6	Flexible Will be offered Secure tenancy prior exchange	Flexible/Fixed	Assignment		



Appendix 02: List of items tenants should consider before deciding to move

The list below is not exhaustive. It should be used as a guide by tenants wishing to exchange their homes to ensure that they have considered and are satisfied with various aspects associated with the move.

1. Changes in Tenancy Agreement

Tenants should check if the exchange will lead to any changes in terms and conditions of their existing tenancy agreement. Such as –

- ▶ Tenants with secure tenancy that started on or after 1 April 2012 who want to exchange with a tenant with flexible tenancy could lose their lifetime tenancy.
- ▶ Tenants who had their security of tenure protected by S158 Localism Act will be issued with a new tenancy and date after 1 April 2012. If they wish to exchange again in the future, they could lose their secure tenancy.
- ▶ If secure tenant, check whether will be able to retain the right to buy or gain right to acquire if moving to a Housing Association property.
- ▶ No of years left on tenancy agreement, if transferring to flexible or fixed term tenancy.
- ▶ If on flexible tenancy and under-occupying new home, may be required to downsize by landlord during tenancy review.
- ▶ Succession rights for family members except spouse or partner.
- ▶ Tenancies in new developments may not allow applications for residents parking permits.
- ▶ Terms regarding keeping pets may vary.



2. Potential financial implications associated with the move

One-off costs

- ▶ Certificates to prove any gas and electric appliances have been dis/connected by Registered Gas Safe Engineer (can be found [here](#)) and/or an electrician registered under the [Competent Person Scheme](#).
- ▶ Removal
- ▶ Mail redirection
- ▶ New school uniform, if have children
- ▶ Outstanding repairs that are of tenants' responsibility
- ▶ Decorations
- ▶ Replacement of fittings and fixtures installed by outgoing tenant should they wish to remove them
- ▶ Copy of / replacement keys
- ▶ Garden clearance
- ▶ Recharge by SCDC for undertaking any works that are the responsibility of outgoing tenants
- ▶ Cost to outgoing tenant to bring any unauthorised alterations to lettable standard

On-going Costs

Potential increase in:

- ▶ Rent and/or service charge including any financial implication of the spare room subsidy. Tenants under-occupying new property will not be eligible for SCDC Housing Discretionary Payments
- ▶ Utilities and Council Tax
- ▶ Travel



3. Property Condition, maintenance, and local services

- ▶ Condition of fittings and fixtures
- ▶ Decorative state of the property
- ▶ Any outstanding repairs or damage that will become responsibility of the incoming tenant
- ▶ Responsibility for the maintenance of any improvements/alterations made by outgoing tenant
- ▶ Immediate environment, neighbourhood, schools and services in the area



APPENDIX 03 – Mutual Exchange Process and Timeframe

Application Assessment Decision Appeal Move

	Applicants / SCDC / Contractor	Activity	Timeframe
1	All Mutual Exchange Partners (applicants)	Submit completed application forms separately	Not applicable
2	Housing Services Officer (HSO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Contact applicants and explain Mutual Exchange Process. Request/provide additional information▶ Advise applicants of the implications and requirements if seeking to under-occupy new property. Send self-financial assessment form and declaration for applicant to complete, sign and return.	42 Days Within 42 days of receiving completed applications from all parties involved. 42-days will start from the day the latest application received from exchange partners involved in a swap
3	Applicants	Provide any additional information requested by HSO	
4	HSO	Arrange appointments for Property Inspections and Electrical Safety Checks. May invite incoming tenant to property inspections however, the dates will be agreed between HSO and outgoing tenant to ensure statutory target is met.	



Steps	Tenants/SCDC/Contractor	Activity	Timeframe
5	HSO and Property Surveyor	<p>Property Inspection</p> <p>Note: Application for mutual exchange may be cancelled if major repairs and/or health and safety hazards identified in the property of outgoing tenant which, need to be completed prior to any exchange taking place.</p> <p>In such circumstances, tenants will be advised to re-apply once conditions are satisfactory</p>	<p>42 Days</p> <p>Within 42 days of receiving completed applications from all parties involved.</p> <p>42-days will start from the day the latest application received from exchange partners involved in a swap</p>
6	SCDC Contractor	Electrical Safety Check	
7	HSO	Request/provide landlord reference if applicable	
8	HSO	Written decision to all parties involved	
9	SCDC Applicant	If find HSO's decision unsatisfactory, request Neighbourhood Services Manager for a review of the decision.	Within 14 days of written decision received
10	Neighbourhood Services Manager	Review decision and conclusion	Within 28 days of receiving a request for review
11	SCDC Applicant	Appeal to Head of Housing if decision remains unsatisfactory	Within 14 days of receiving a request for an Appeal
12	Head of Housing Services	Review and make a final decision on the application.	Within 28 days of receiving a request for an Appeal



Steps	Tenants/SCDC/Contractor	Activity	Timeframe
13	SCDC Applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Agree dates for move in and sign-up and inform HSO▶ Give HSO minimum 7 working day notice for Sign-up	
15	HSO	Prepare legal documents for Sign-up	
16		Arrange Gas Safety Check appointment. Give at least 5-day notice to Gas Safety Check team	Minimum 5-days' notice
	Applicants/HSO	Attend Sign-up meeting to legally transfer tenancies	
17	Gas Engineer	Cap and reinstate gas supply	On the day of the move. If exchange takes place during the weekend, cap gas supply on Friday & re-instate on Monday.
18	Applicants move into SCDC property	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Privately commission Gas Safe Registered Engineer to gas dis/(re)connect any personally owned gas fire or cooking appliances and provide HSO with a copy of certificate.▶ Privately commission registered electricians to dis/(re)connect electrical appliances and provide HSO with a copy of certificate.▶ Links to help find traders:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Gas Safe Registered Engineers- Registered Electricians	
19	HSO	6-week visit	6-week after move-in date



APPENDIX 04: Grounds for Refusals

Schedule 3 of the Housing Act 1985	Schedule 14 of the Localism Act 2011	Grounds for refusing consent to the exchange
-	Ground 1	When any rent lawfully due from a tenant under one of the existing tenancies has not been paid
-	Ground 2	When an obligation under one of the existing tenancies has been broken or not performed.
Ground 1	Ground 3	A court order for possession or a suspended possession order has been made for either property.
Ground 2	Grounds 4 & 5	The landlord has served a notice of seeking possession and the notice is still in force, or possession proceedings have commenced.
Ground 3	Ground 7	The property is substantially more extensive than is reasonably required by the proposed assignee.
Ground 4	Ground 8	The property is not reasonably suitable to the needs of the proposed assignee and their household.
Ground 5	Ground 9	The property is part of or close to a building that is held for non-housing purposes, or it is situated in a cemetery and was let in connection with employment with the landlord or with a local authority, a new town corporation, housing action trust, an urban development corporation, or the governors of a grant-aided school.
Ground 6	Ground 10	The landlord is a charity and the proposed assignee's occupation of the property would conflict with the objects of the charity.
Ground 7	Ground 11	The property has been substantially adapted for occupation by a physically disabled person, and if the assignment went ahead a physically disabled person would not be living there.



Schedule 3 of the Housing Act 1985	Schedule 14 of the Localism Act 2011	Grounds for refusing consent to the exchange
Ground 8	Ground 12	The landlord lets properties to people in difficult circumstances (other than merely financial circumstances) and the proposed assignee would not fulfil these criteria.
Ground 9	Ground 13	The property is let to people with special needs and there is a social service or special facility nearby to the properties to assist people with those special needs, and if the assignment was to go ahead no person with those special needs would be living there.
Ground 10	Ground 14	The dwelling is the subject of a management agreement where the manager is a housing association of which at least half the members are tenants subject to the agreement and at least half of the tenants of the dwellings are members of the association, and also that the proposed assignee is not such a member nor is willing to become one
Additional Ground (Housing Act 2004)	Ground 6	<p>Any of the following are in force, or an application is pending either against the tenant, the proposed assignee or a person who resides with either of them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ an injunction order under section 153 of the Housing Act 1996▶ an anti-social behaviour order▶ a Demotion Order or▶ a possession order under Ground 2 for secure tenancies or Ground 14 for assured tenancies

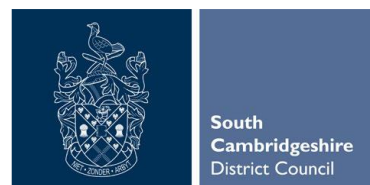


APPENDIX 05: Gas Safety Check Process

Ref	Item	Responsibility of	Action Detail
1	LGSR	HSO	Request contractor for certificates to include in tenant sign-up packs
2		Contractor Admin	Check to ascertain if properties have a valid LGSR and e-mail current copy to the HSO If no current landlord gas safety record form is available, generate a manual LGSR to leave with the tenant at recommission. Send an electronic version to SCDC Contracts Administrator once safety check is completed.
3	a. Gas Safety Check Appointment	HSO	Request the contractor to undertake a mutual exchange cap off and reinstate visit by giving 5 days-notice . Request to be made via email at: HeatingServices.Contract@mearsgroup.co.uk with copy to Asset&Compliance@scams.gov.uk The email must state the date of the exchange and the properties involved.
	b. Request Electric Heater		If an exchange taking place over a weekend during winter months, advise contractor to provide tenants with electric heaters during the 1st call on the day of move.



Ref	Item	Responsibility of	Action Detail
4	Cap & Reinstate Visit	Contractor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ If a request has been made to raise a manual LGSR, a full service and safety check of SCDC appliances must be undertaken, including a visual check of any tenant owned appliances, and a hard copy landlord gas safety record form must be completed and left with the tenant▶ If there is no request to raise a manual LGSR, a safety check of SCDC appliances must be undertaken, including a visual check of tenant owned appliances.▶ Instruct the tenant on the correct use of the appliances and give advice on efficient energy use in the property.▶ Post electronic copy of the landlord gas safety record form to the tenant within 10 working days of completing Gas Safety checks
5	Record Keeping	Contractor Admin	Scan hard copies of manually raised LGSR's and send to SCDC Contracts Administrator within 5 working days of completed Gas Safety Check.
6		SCDC Contracts Administrator	Electronically file up to date/new LGSR against the property on Orchard Asset data base.



Housing Engagement Board Special Meeting to discuss the Mutual Exchange Policy

Held on Tuesday, 2nd May 2023 at 12.00 pm via Zoom

Attendees: Cllr John Batchelor – Chair
Dave Kelleway – Vice Chair
Les Rolfe
Margaret Wilson
Peter Tye
Peter Campbell (SCDC – Head of Housing)
Julie Fletcher (SCDC – Service Manager – Housing Strategy)
Geoff Clark (SCDC – Service Manager – Tenancy & Estates)
Dave Armitage (SCDC – Resident Involvement Team Leader)
Abida Ruma (SCDC – Interim Housing Policy Officer)

Apologies: Jim Watson

[Note: Councillors Jose Hales and Mark Howell were not invited to this special meeting as they had not been party to previous discussions relating to the mutual exchange policy]

1. Introduction

As part of the review of the mutual exchange policy, this meeting was arranged to discuss key points of the policy where there was a difference of opinion between the tenant reps and officers.

2. Ability to mutual exchange with 'like for like'

Abida Ruma, Interim Policy Officer, referred the meeting to her research in producing the draft policy where she has looked at the authorities who offered most mutual exchanges. From this research all authorities that allowed under-occupation, overwhelmingly permitted under-occupation by one bedroom only, the exception to this was Sheffield who allowed 'like for like' exchanges for existing tenants only.

Julie Fletcher explained that the existing mutual exchange policy did not allow for any under-occupation of properties being exchanged. Officer's recommendation in the revised policy was to allow under-occupation by one bedroom.

Peter Tye felt that this was reasonable.

Dave Kelleway felt that tenants should be able to swap 'like for like' regardless of how many bedrooms were under-occupied, so long as there was no overall increase in under-occupation. He felt this was reasonable as nobody gains and nobody loses. He felt that the proposed policy as it stands was too restrictive and prevented tenants from moving.

Peter Campbell explained that we were not saying people can't move but we had to consider the policy within the context of the legislation and had a responsibility to make best use of the housing stock.

The legislation states that landlords can withhold consent if the property is substantially more extensive than is reasonably required. Dave Kelleway pointed out that the legislation was worded in such a way that it was not a requirement to refuse on these grounds but an option and that the Council should be leaders of the way rather than followers of other councils and should be taking a more flexible position.

Margaret Wilson agreed with Dave Kelleway and felt that there should be discretion to allow under-occupation by more than one bedroom on a case by case basis.

Julie Fletcher stated that the policy had to be fair and transparent in the decision process and applying discretion on a case by case basis did not lend itself to a

consistent approach. However, Margaret Wilson felt that the process should be recorded and that dealing with it on a case by case basis would not prevent consistency but being 'consistently fair' better describes how discretion can have different outcomes for different cases. Margaret felt that inflexible rules have unforeseen consequences. It was also stated that allowing under-occupation could result in housing benefit not covering the rent if a tenant's circumstances changed.

Margaret Wilson felt this was an unfair statement as it assumed that all tenants were likely to be on housing benefit. Les Rolfe agreed with Margaret and felt that when discussing financial stability as part of the mutual exchange process, tenants should be allowed to consider the financial risks themselves and that the Council should not make the assumption that all tenants may at some stage claim housing benefit.

Les Rolfe was also in support of the comments made by Dave Kelleway.

Cllr Batchelor clarified that a report would be taken to Cabinet to make the final decision, where both views would be presented for Cabinet to make the final decision.

Tenant Rep Recommendation: Any proposed mutual exchange where the under-occupancy rate is not worsened in SCDC properties overall (including like for like swaps) will be allowed.

3. Ability to allow households to mutual exchange where there would still be overcrowding

The current policy position is that no-one can mutually exchange if they are still considered to be overcrowded. Officer's recommendation is to allow overcrowding in a three bedroom property where there is a four bedroom need but very unlikely that a four bedroom house will become available. This will only be considered if the property being exchanged has an additional room (such as an old style parlour house) that could be used as a bedroom.

For the same reasons as for under-occupancy, Dave Kelleway felt that people should be allowed to over-occupy by way of mutual exchange as a tenants' choice.

Peter Campbell explained that the Council has a statutory obligation not to allow overcrowding wherever possible.

Julie Fletcher stated that the rationale for this proposal was that there was more availability of 2-3 bedroom properties within the Council's housing stock, as opposed to 4 bedroom properties which make up only 2% of the stock. Where families are overcrowded, they would be entitled to additional priority on the housing register to help find a more suitable property. Housing Officer experience highlights an increase in housing management issues where families are living in overcrowded homes.

Peter Tye said he was supportive of allowing an additional room to be considered as a bedroom, as proposed.

Margaret Wilson stated that she felt that the inflexibility for over and under-occupation was social engineering and that tenants should have the choice to over/under-occupy by way of mutual exchange if they wished.

Les Rolfe also supported the majority view of the tenant reps.

Abida Ruma made reference to her research. She found a very small no (3 to 4) landlords allowed Mutual Exchanges which resulted in overcrowding. However, this is restricted to moves to 3-beds by tenants in 4-bed need only.

Tenant Rep Recommendation: Over occupation by one bedroom should be permitted across all bedroom sizes for mutual exchange.

4. Dedicated Officer to oversee the mutual exchange process

Within the current policy, Housing Officers were all responsible for overseeing the mutual exchange process. The proposal was not to change this but ensure that

all officers were fully trained with the new mutual exchange system and updated on the mutual exchange policy. This would ensure that all officers are giving consistent advice. Officers felt that even if the number of mutual exchanges increased, this would be insufficient to justify a dedicated person for mutual exchange purposes.

The tenant reps all felt that additional resources should be put into mutual exchange with one person overseeing the process.

Peter Tye argued the case for an additional person, perhaps to support housing officers as well as taking on responsibility for mutual exchange.

Peter Campbell explained there was no real evidence for the need for an additional person to support the process and that a dedicated person could not be justified given competing priorities within the Housing Service. However, it was suggested that a questionnaire could be introduced for those enquiring about mutual exchanges to evidence additional resources, etc. as part of the process. This would then be reviewed once sufficient data had been collected. Tenant reps would be invited to help draft the questionnaire.

Tenant Reps Recommendation: Agreed to review, although still felt that an additional person to support housing officers would be appropriate.

5. Financial Incentives to downsize through mutual exchange

The current policy position is that only transfer tenants impacted by the benefit changes based on number of bedrooms may qualify for a financial incentive. The tenant reps felt that the Council should be offering an incentive to anyone downsizing by way of a mutual exchange. In considering these views, Officers are recommending that a financial incentive would be made available to those wishing to mutual exchange to help cover the costs of removal based on the number of bedrooms they are downsizing from.

Tenant Reps Recommendation: Agreed

6. Next steps

A report would go to Cabinet on 27th June putting forward both the Officer and Tenant Rep recommendations. It would be up to Cabinet Members to make the final decision.

Dave Kelleway felt that the Housing Engagement Board should vote on the recommendations put forward by the tenant reps. However, as Councillor Batchelor would be part of the Cabinet decision, it was not considered appropriate. The recommendations put forward by the tenant reps would be considered formally as part of Cabinet's decision process.

Dave Kelleway asked that the decision-making process and the role of HEB be explored further as part of the Resident Involvement Framework review.

7. Any other Business

Margaret Wilson asked Officers to review the wording on page 16 of the draft mutual exchange policy from 'may invite' to 'will invite'. Abida Ruma confirmed that it was not always appropriate that the incoming person mutually exchanging should be invited to the property inspection as there may be tenancy matters and sensitive issues that need to be discussed with the outgoing tenant. As part of the process incoming and outgoing tenants can arrange to visit each other's property. Invite to property inspections may be considered where it is beneficial for both exchange partners.

Agenda Item 10



**South
Cambridgeshire**
District Council

Report to:	Cabinet	28 September 2023
Lead Cabinet Member:	Lead Cabinet Member for Planning	
Lead Officer:	Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development	

Response to The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' Consultation on Plan-making reforms: Implementation.

Executive Summary

1. This report seeks to agree a joint response from both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire councils to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities' Consultation on Plan-making reforms: Implementation. This is related to wider changes to the planning system coming through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. The consultation proposes changes to how local plans are prepared, including the contents of plans, how they would be consulted on, and the process that needs to be undertaken.
2. The proposed response is supportive of many elements of the consultation, as changes are needed to help Councils get plans in place. Making best use of digital tools, templates and ways to make plans accessible reflect what the Council are trying to achieve with the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. Whilst the new system seeks to frontload engagement, more could be done to engage on specific draft plan proposals earlier in the process. Completion of plan making within 30 months may still remain challenging. The draft consultation response also highlights uncertainties and areas which need more clarification.

Key Decision

3. No.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - a. Agrees the joint response to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities' Consultation on Plan-making reforms: Implementation included in Appendix 1 of this report.

- b. Agree that any subsequent material amendments be delegated to the Lead Cabinet Member for Planning in consultation with the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development.
- c. Agree that any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes that do not materially affect the content be delegated to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. The proposed joint response with Cambridge City Council reflects the plan making experience of the two authorities and consideration of how the new plan making system could impact on future plan making in Greater Cambridge.

Details

The Consultation

6. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, expected to receive royal ascent this year, will result significant reforms to the planning system. In February 2023 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC) carried out a wide ranging consultation on revisions to national planning policy. Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District council submitted a joint response. This latest consultation builds on the previous one, and focuses on implementation of changes to the approach to preparation of Local Plans.
7. The proposals seek to streamline plan making, so that the formal stages of a plan review can be completed within three years. Prior to the start of the three year period, Local Planning Authorities would consult and engage with stakeholders to establish what issues the plan needs to consider and the vision for the area. Once they have given notice that they have formally started plan production, the process involves two public consultations, the first to test the emerging plan and the second on the draft plan itself, and three Gateway reviews designed to allow independent review of an authority's plan making process to reduce risk further down the line. In summary the plan making steps would be as follow:
 - The first Gateway review considers in the process has been started correctly, and an effective Project Initiation Document is in place.
 - The first public consultation seeks feedback on the vision and the strategic options to meet that vision.
 - The second Gateway review considers plan making progress and the preparation of evidence.
 - The second consultation consults on the draft plan itself.
 - The third Gateway review, undertaken by independent planning inspectors, would review the soundness of the process and whether it has met legal requirements.

8. After completing all these stages the plan would be submitted to examination by independent planning inspectors. Examinations under the current planning system can be lengthy. Under these proposals examinations would be restricted to six months, with potential for three months add on for modifications. There is potential for a single six month pause within the examination to rectify issues, such as an evidence gap, if justified.
9. Other significant proposed changes include:
 - Replacing Local Development Schemes with a simpler process of publishing a live plan making timetable;
 - Replacing Statements of Community Involvement with a Local Plan Project Initiation Document;
 - Use of digital planning, standard templates and other tools to speed up processes;
 - Local Plans structured around a vision for the area, with local policies supplementing national development management policies needing to demonstrate how they will help deliver that vision;
 - Streamlined monitoring, with a reduced list of annual indicators, and a more comprehensive output only every five years;
 - Streamlined approach to plan evidence, linked directly to soundness;
 - 5 year land housing supply protected for 5 years after adoption of a new plan.
10. Supplementary Planning Documents will no longer be part of the new system. The consultation proposes that current ones remain live until Councils adopt their first plan under the new system. It will be possible to prepare Supplementary Plans, but these will be reserved largely for providing guidance for specific sites should the need for guidance to be prepared arise, or for adopting District Design Codes. These would form part of the development plan and follow a similar process to neighbourhood plans.
11. The consultation envisages that the first plans under the new system will start in autumn 2024. Plans seeking to be adopted under the current system will need to be submitted by 30 June 2025 and adopted by 31 December 2026.
12. The consultation includes 43 questions seeking views and ideas on the proposals and how they would be implemented.

Response to the consultation

13. A draft response to the consultation questions can be found at Appendix 1 to this report. It is proposed that the response is joint with Cambridge City Council.
14. There are many positive proposals within the consultation. Plan making is currently complex and resource intensive. Exploring opportunities to simplify the process, allowing more councils to get plans in place has benefits for meeting development needs and enabling communities to engage in the future of their area.

15. The use of digital plans, standard templates, and use of new technologies to assist plan making all reflect measures the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service has been seeking to explore through the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The draft response highlights the learning that we could share with DLUHC.
16. Introduction of formal gateways is a useful step with potential to reduce risk of plans being found unsound at later stages. Most Councils seek to do these sorts of interim stocktake reviews on their plan making journey, but the formalised approach could make them more effective.
17. Consultation in this new system would be front loaded, with an emphasis on engagement and participation prior to the three year plan period. However, the draft plan itself is proposed to be only subject to consultation at the second and final formal consultation stage. We suggest that building more detail into the first formal plan consultation stage could allow more engagement on actual proposed sites and proposals prior to drafting the plan itself, similar to preferred options consultations which we use now.
18. Completion of plan making within 30 months may still remain challenging. The series of steps to standardise processes, make evidence base requirements proportionate, and limiting the length of examinations have the potential to speed up plan making, but the true impact won't be known until the system is implemented. The biggest challenges to plan making timetables often come from external factors, as we have experienced with our own plans.
19. The draft consultation response highlights uncertainties and areas which need more clarification. If the system is not absolutely clear and robust it could result in legal challenges and that clarity being provided by case law. It is vital that regulations and guidance can be interpreted clearly.

Options

20. The options available to members are:
 - a. Agree to submit the response in Appendix 1,
 - b. Agree an alternative response.
 - c. Submit no response, although that is not recommended given the importance of issues raised.

Implications

21. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial

22. There are no financial implications arising from the report as it is to approve a consultation response. However the final approach to system of plan making could have implications for budgets. If proposals are successful then they could reduce the cost of making plans, but this is not possible to confirm until the changes are finalised, and the full local implications understood. Greater Cambridge will remain a complex area with which to prepare plans.

Legal

23. There are no legal implications arising from the report.

Staffing

24. There are no staffing implications arising from the report.

Risks/Opportunities

25. Whilst there are no risks and opportunities directly associated with responding to the consultation questions, the changes to the planning system provide opportunities to speed up plan making. There may be opportunities to work with DLUHC given our shared interest in many of the issues they are addressing. With major system changes there are always going to be an element of risk as new methods are introduced, but we are in a strong position to adapt to change given our proactive approach to plan making.

Equality and Diversity

26. There are no equalities issues associated with this report to approve a consultation response. One of the consultation questions seeks views on equalities implications, and the proposed response highlights issues including the need for systems to avoid digital exclusion.

Climate Change

27. There are no direct implications. However, the outcome of the consultation and changes to the planning system could have environmental and other implications. The consultation highlights that responding to climate change remains a key role for local plans.

Health & Wellbeing

28. There are no direct health & wellbeing implications arising from the report. However, the outcome of the consultation and changes to the planning system could have implications for how health and wellbeing can be addressed in local plans.

Consultation responses

29. None.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

Growing local businesses and economies, Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in, Being green to our core

30. Plan making can contribute to the achievement of a range of Council objectives. Consultation proposals have the potential to change the way we produce our development plans, and are seeking to speed up and simplify the process.

A Modern and Caring Council

31. Consultation proposals have the potential to change the way we produce our development plans, and are seeking to speed up and simplify the process. They also change the way we would consult on plans.

Background Papers

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

The consultation webpage: [Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: consultation on implementation of plan-making reforms - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-consultation-on-implementation-of-plan-making-reforms)

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft response to Consultation on Plan-making reforms: implementation

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APPENDIX 1 Draft Response to consultation on plan-making implementation

[Plan-making reforms: consultation on implementation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/plan-making-reforms-consultation-on-implementation)

Chapter 1: Plan content

Question 1: Do you agree with the core principles for plan content? Do you think there are other principles that could be included?

The principles and goals set out regarding the approach to new style local plans look appropriate, and would provide a clear structure focusing on where plans can add value.

One of the principles referred to is that plans will need to “set out a detailed approach to monitoring”. We agree the need for effective monitoring; we would stress the need for the approach to monitoring to be proportionate including making best use of automated data approaches, enabling effective evaluation of policies whilst minimising the burden of collecting monitoring data.

Question 2: Do you agree that plans should contain a vision, and with our proposed principles preparing the vision? Do you think there are other principles that could be included?

Plans should include a vision. Our adopted and emerging local plans seek to provide a vision and objectives that the plan is seeking to achieve, shaped by engagement with communities. It is agreed that such visions should form a golden thread through the local plan.

There are specific aspects of the vision which are not clear. It refers to more specific visions than currently and setting measurable outcomes underpinned by the

evidence base. Does that include quantum of development and strategy, and potentially strategic sites? There is reference to a key diagram that sets out the vision spatially for the area - at what point in the process is that anticipated?

It is agreed that the local plan should link with other plans and strategies operating in an area, but it would not be practicable for it to be seen as the 'parent' document.

Local development management policies

Question 3: Do you agree with the proposed framework for local development management policies?

The principle of local development management policies having appropriate justification, and where possible linked to implementation of the vision, is entirely appropriate. It will be important that evidence requirements are robust but proportionate to speed up plan making. The scope of national development management policies has yet to be published. It remains important that local authorities have flexibility to plan for the needs, opportunities and particular characteristics of their areas.

Templating and digital efficiencies

Question 4: Would templates make it easier for local planning authorities to prepare local plans? Which parts of the local plan would benefit from consistency?

We would support the principle of using templates to prepare local plans, although there still needs to be flexibility to reflect local circumstances and promote innovation. The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service have been exploring digital innovation through preparation of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. This includes looking into policy templates compatible with digital data standards and that

link effectively with digital mapping. This includes creating templates for local development management policies and for site allocation policies. We are also looking at representation templates through our DLUHC Digital Innovation project. We would be pleased to work with DLUHC to share our experience.

Question 5: Do you think templates for new style minerals and waste plans would need to differ from local plans? If so, how?

Minerals and Water plans have to deal with different issues, so template variations are likely to be necessary.

Chapter 2: The new 30-month plan timeframe

Question 6: Do you agree with the proposal to set out in policy that planning authorities should adopt their plan, at the latest, 30 months after the plan preparation process begins?

In our response to the previous consultation we highlighted that a 30 month programme may be possible in many areas, but in complex areas with a large range of complex and often competing issues, where there is a strong desire to achieve high quality consultation and engagement, deadlines should not be imposed in a way which undermine the quality of plan making or penalise those areas where LPAs are committed to plan making but have to address these challenges.

The consultation proposes a number of steps which have the potential to speed up plan making. A 30 month period for the formal plan stages may be possible, but it will depend on how successfully they are implemented. It also depends on issues like having sufficient skilled staff available, a problem which has been acknowledged by government. There are going to be factors which influence when key milestones can happen, such as pre-election periods, which could reduce flexibility to perfectly meet the timeline. Some of the periods set out are optimistic, such as one month from end of examination to adoption.

The system will need to acknowledge variables occurring or issues arising which are beyond the ability of the plan making authority to control. For example where development relies on external infrastructure provision outside the council's control. There are likely to be situations where despite the best efforts of all parties it is not practicable.

The proposed approach is that evidence gathering takes place once the 30 month period has started and following the visioning stage. However, some evidence may be necessary to help inform the development of the vision and much of the evidence base takes time to prepare and could usefully start earlier in the process. Allowing flexibility for some evidence preparation in the earlier stages would be helpful.

The scoping and early participation stage

Question 7: Do you agree that a Project Initiation Document will help define the scope of the plan and be a useful tool throughout the plan making process?

Having a Project Initiation Document (PID) is good practice in project planning, so would be a helpful addition to the process. Most authorities would already produce this kind of information, either as part of issue and options reports or consultation statements at the early stages of plan making, but there is merit in creating a standard approach to where it can be found.

The PID would have an important role, setting out the approach to consultation for the plan, in effect taking on the role of statements of community involvement which provide a baseline for the approach and the Statement of Consultation which documents plan specific issues and the on-going process. We note that requirements to produce a Statement of Community Involvement is to be removed. Having a single place where a planning authority sets out its approach to public consultation still has merit.

At paragraph 50 the consultation document states, ‘Planning authorities will need to “notify” and “invite” views on what the plan should contain and feedback on key issues that should be addressed.’ Most authorities have interpreted the current similar regulations by carrying out an issues and options consultation, which can be an extensive exercise focused around potential policy areas, considering alternatives, taking a year or more to draft, consult, and consider results. Guidance needs to be much clearer about how this stage should be undertaken if many of the goals set out are to be achieved.

Chapter 3: Digital plans

Question 8: What information produced during plan-making do you think would most benefit from data standardisation, and/or being openly published?

The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service are seeking to be a front runner in digital planning. We are currently part of the DLUHC Proptech Round 3, carrying out a project exploring efficiencies in consultation and processing feedback, using the opportunities provided by the Greater Cambridge Local Plan project.

We are already developing standardised policy templates to enable a digital plan approach linked to GIS data. Through our Proptech project we are exploring proformas and data standards for receiving representations. We already publish in full all comments and material received through consultations, but there are opportunities to make this more efficient and effective to speed up plan making.

There are opportunities for data standard approaches to some evidence, and for monitoring outcomes. Examples include Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessments, where most authorities uses templates to receive and collate site based information. The Environmental Outcomes Report process also provides an opportunity for standard templates.

Some of the references to 'digital' approaches in the document are not very clearly defined. Wide use of the word without being specific could lead to little change. It needs to be clearer how the proposals relate to accessibility standards that guide how webpages must be presented. On mapping, more could be done on the relationship between proposals maps and OS data and licencing to make it easier for councils to publish and share mapping data. Further opportunities to support user self service, where the councils publish data in a data format, should be explored.

Listening, understanding and removing barriers

Question 9: Do you recognise and agree that these are some of the challenges faced as part of plan preparation which could benefit from digitalisation? Are there any others you would like to add and tell us about?

Greater Cambridge has a very active plan making programme and we do recognise many of the challenges and problems listed in the consultation. Our last local plan examinations took four years to complete. Digitalisation can play an important role in speeding up the process.

One challenge not listed is the volume and variety of formats of information received through consultations. Whilst we provide online portals for submissions, we still receive thousands of emails and attachments in a variety of formats. The majority of this comes from planning agents. Processing this volume adds a huge amount of time and cost to the plan making process. Validation requirements reduce this variation in the area of planning applications. Standard formats that can be efficiently processed should be a requirement, whilst also providing appropriate measures to avoid digital exclusion and engage with under-represented groups. If standard templates are to be established, DLUHC will also need to consider how authorities respond if they have not been followed. There is nothing in current regulations where we can turn back comments provided in unsuitable formats. Clarity/guidance on what representations should contain at each consultation stage would assist in reducing overproduction of evidence or repetition of submissions, which would benefit both authorities and representors.

In relation to digital mapping the complexity of OS licence agreements can hinder the sharing of information in digital formats, and it should be improved.

We support the move towards digital plans and the flexibility they give to users of the plan to navigate quickly and easily. However, the intention behind the comment that “plans are static and PDF-based meaning they go out of date quickly” (paragraph 71) is not clear. A Local Plan is the version adopted following examination and can't change until the next formal review.

Learning and building on best practice, innovations and investment

Question 10: Do you agree with the opportunities identified? Can you tell us about other examples of digital innovation or best practice that should also be considered?

We agree with the opportunities identified, and are seeking to apply them to preparation of plans in Greater Cambridge. There should also be more done to enable accessible and free access to data from other public bodies, such as Defra, Environment Agency, Natural England and others.

There are other examples that could be listed: Webinars, how to videos, FAQ's, audio points to guide any element (better inclusion).

It also needs to be clear who will update and maintain these many digital products. The availability of hardware and software, high quality networks, and IT support will vary around the country. This variation will need to be considered when designing systems. Training for local authorities will also need to be provided.

Question 11: What innovations or changes would you like to see prioritised to deliver efficiencies in how plans are prepared and used, both now and in the future?

Many of the options suggested have the potential to assist and to speed up the plan making process. New system toolkits and other advice would be a helpful early publication.

More could be done to support authorities and simplify the process of publishing open data, for example in GIS formats, where there are still complex OS licencing issues to address.

It's not clear whether consideration has been given to how this relates to neighbourhood plans. There may be opportunities to provide further digital tools to support plan making. This could also mean neighbourhood plans are more digitally available and can be integrated more effectively with the wider development plan.

Chapter 4: The local plan timetable

Question 12: Do you agree with our proposals on the milestones to be reported on in the local plan timetable and minerals and waste timetable, and our proposals surrounding when timetables must be updated?

Publishing and keeping up to date a plan making timetable is an important role for plan makers. The current requirements around a Local Development Scheme do add a degree of complexity which can make providing simple information a complex process. Changes to add flexibility and simplify the process could therefore be helpful. A timetable template would also be a useful addition. Clarity on when the timetable should first be published would be helpful.

Question 13: Are there any key milestones that you think should automatically trigger a review of the local plan timetable and/or minerals and waste plan timetable?

A review and potentially an update after each milestone reached would be a sensible approach.

Chapter 5: Evidence and the tests of soundness

Question 14: Do you think this direction of travel for national policy and guidance set out in this chapter would provide more clarity on what evidence is expected? Are there other changes you would like to see?

In our response to the consultation on national planning policy changes in spring 2023, we highlighted that the Greater Cambridge area is under significant development pressure, and its plans are heavily scrutinised including by promoters of high value sites. The volume and complexity of evidence needed for plan making is therefore very high, creating significant costs for the authorities and extending the plan making period. More should be done to make the plan making process proportionate and to help authorities deliver plans. There still also needs to be flexibility to prepare evidence based on local circumstances, and this may need to start prior to the 30 month period especially if relevant to development of the vision.

We welcome efforts to make the plan making process more proportionate. The success will depend on many factors, including how the new process plays out in high pressure areas like Greater Cambridge. The direction of travel in para 89 contains some useful approaches, subject to seeing the full intention when the NPPF review is consulted on.

Details of the approach to Environmental Outcomes Reports is required alongside these proposals to understand in full the proposed evidence burden for plan-making.

Standardisation of key evidence and data

Question 15: Do you support the standardisation of evidence requirements for certain topics? What evidence topics do you think would be particularly important or beneficial to standardise and/or have more readily available baseline data?

Technical processes like Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessments would benefit from guidance and a proportionate methodology. Carbon Impact Assessment was referenced in the Spring consultation, and if this is a requirement a clear and implementable methodology will be essential.

There are parts of plan-making, particularly in relation to built form and creating a vision for an area which are unique to local conditions and should not be standardised. There is a danger if standardisation is taken too far it will undermine the delivery of plans based around a local vision. During preparation of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan we have explored the unique characteristics of the Cambridge economy, which has necessitated a bespoke approach to evidence, including on housing need associated with forecast economic growth. If standardisation is taken too far it could undermine the ability to reflect local circumstances.

Freezing of data or evidence

Question 16: Do you support the freezing of data or evidence at certain points of the process? If so which approach(es) do you favour?

A challenge of plan making is that new evidence and sites are submitted to each consultation, including at the submission stage. We also often receive requests to consider new information between consultations. A clear approach providing a window for evidence to be submitted would provide clarity and certainty for all involved.

An evidence freeze at an appropriate point would also be helpful. For example, a call for sites process is a useful stage of plan making, allowing interested parties to highlight sites for consideration. Submissions take a significant time to process and assess, but this can be compounded with changes, and additional sites being submitted very late in the process.

It will also be necessary to freeze the evidence regarding need for jobs and homes at an appropriate point.

Regulations

Question 17: Do you support this proposal to require local planning authorities to submit only supporting documents that are related to the soundness of the plan?

Our experience in Greater Cambridge is that only submitting documents linked to demonstrating soundness is already normal practice. The list can still be extensive and wide ranging. For example a topic paper may reference several external sources of evidence to justify a policy. There should also be flexibility to respond to local circumstances.

Chapter 6: Gateway

Question 18: Do you agree that these should be the overarching purposes of gateway assessments? Are there other purposes we should consider alongside those set out above?

The principle of gateways is a useful addition to the process. They offer an early check regarding compliance of the plan with requirements, potentially giving greater certainty that the plan is capable of successfully passing examination, and potentially reducing the risk to local authorities of carrying out abortive work.

The overarching purposes (ensuring the plan sets off in the right direction, ensuring compliance with legal and procedural requirements and (wherever possible) supporting early resolution of potential soundness issues, and monitoring and track progress) are all appropriate goals.

The goals do not include seeking to offer advice to improve a process of support to a local planning authority in its plan making. It would be hoped that the process may be productive in a way that if an issue is identified causing concern or preventing progress, constructive advice is provided to assist the LPA to overcome it.

Key expectations

Question 19: Do you agree with these proposals around the frequency and timing of gateways and who is responsible?

Having a proportionate review at each stage would seem appropriate, although their true impact on timetabling, resource needs, and effectiveness is likely to come out of the pilot testing process. It's also going to be key that organisations required to carry out the reviews are resourced appropriately, or there is a risk that plans are delayed.

Having the third gateway undertaken by the Planning Inspectorate would be appropriate, effectively checking legal compliance prior to the start of an examination could avoid examinations needing to be paused shortly after they had commenced which has happened in some areas. It is agreed that other organisations, such as the Planning Advisory service, could have a significant role in the earlier gateways, as long as their advice is fully consistent with the expectations of planning inspectors. On complex issues there may still need to be input from the inspectorate at the earlier review stages.

Process and scope

Gateway 1, 2 and 3

Question 20: Do you agree with our proposals for the gateway assessment process, and the scope of the key topics? Are there any other topics we should consider?

The scope of Gateway 1 is extremely broad. Many of the issues referenced will be choices of the Local Planning Authority, for example around scope for local development management policies. Care will need to be taken to avoid reports stepping into decisions that should be made locally, and stay focused on whether a process is sound and won't lead to issues at later stages. It refers to including a headline position on delivering new homes based on the standard method and recent Housing Delivery Test (HDT) results and, where possible, describing the high-level options available to deliver development needs in the area. In Greater Cambridge our evidence concludes that in order to support the particularly strong economic growth, housing need is higher than the standard method. Where there are local circumstances that suggest housing need that departs from the standard method, it is important that there is early engagement given the implications for vision and spatial strategy.

Gateway 2 refers to compliance with Neighbourhood Priorities Statements, but doesn't mention Neighbourhood Plans. If a community chooses to do a full Neighbourhood Plan instead of Priority Statement they should also be taken into account.

Gateway 3 is effectively a legal and procedural soundness check prior to examination, and the consultation proposes a logical scope. We assume this would be after the council had considered representations and agreed the plan it wished to submit, such that a council decision may be to submit the plan subject to the successful outcome of the gateway 3 process.

Funding

Question 21: Do you agree with our proposal to charge planning authorities for gateway assessments?

The context for this question is government providing funding to support addressing planning backlogs, skills gaps, and additional burdens related to biodiversity net gain. Any additional costs have potential to impact on Local Planning Authorities ability to fund plan making and delivery. If not funded directly by government, costs would need to be proportionate.

Reflecting our response to the previous question, the Gateway 1 and 2 reviews need to be proportionate if it is not to be overly costly. There should still be scope for a planning authority to ask for additional support beyond the core elements if they choose to do so.

Chapter 7: Plan examination

Speeding up examinations

Question 22: Do you agree with our proposals to speed up plan examinations? Are there additional changes that we should be considering to enable faster examinations?

Taking steps to rationalise the examination process is important. Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Council's adopted local plans involved a four year examination. This had significant impacts in terms of resources, delayed site delivery and led to issues regarding five year housing land supply.

Reviewing the Matters, Issues and Questions process is appropriate. Parties currently submit significant amounts of additional evidence during the examination accompanying their matter statements which could have been submitted as part of representations on the submission plan.

Related to this point, the proposal to provide the opportunity for third parties to submit a short statement in writing which can be considered by the Inspector, where they do not wish to attend a hearing, will need to be carefully controlled if it is not to be an opportunity to submit further evidence that was capable of being submitted in original representations. Consideration will need to be given to how the right appear will be managed within a six month programme in areas where there is a lot of interest.

Modification consultations are proposed to be reduced to three weeks. This would create challenges for Local Planning Authorities if issues were significant enough to warrant consideration of a response through a committee process. From our experience other parties like Parish Councils need time to take decisions though meetings, and in some cases have found six week periods challenging. If the period were to be set at three weeks inspectors should seek to give sufficient warning when this is coming up so Councils can give notice to interest parties.

Measures which are to be implemented will need to be very clear in legislation and guidance to avoid the risk of legal challenge.

Examination pause

Question 23: Do you agree that six months is an adequate time for the pause period, and with the government's expectations around how this would operate?

It would depend on the nature of the pause and the scale and nature of the work needed in that period. For example, if the requirements to address an issue was to identify additional sites, it would require those sites to be selected and agreed by members. Public consultation may also be appropriate, but it's not clear if that would be part of the 6 month period, or addressed by the modifications process which itself has the potential to add additional time. Clear agreement of what work is needed

and clear understanding of all parties would be vital, and therefore the suggestion of a hearing before the pause to establish this would be a useful step, allowing dialogue on the matter.

There may also be circumstances where a partial inspectors report should be issued, where it could resolve issues related to housing supply for example.

Chapter 8: Community engagement and consultation

Planning and monitoring the engagement approach

Question 24: Do you agree with our proposal that planning authorities should set out their overall approach to engagement as part of their Project Initiation Document? What should this contain?

Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council have sought to deliver high quality and engaging public consultations, drawing on opportunities provided by digital media, but also a range of other methods to avoid digital exclusion.

Our digital engagement has often been quoted as good practice, and our learning through recent consultations may be helpful to DLUHC when development new tools.

The consultation document proposes to replace the role of Statements of Community Involvement (SCI) with a section within the Project Initiation Document. We have taken this sort of approach in our Local Plan Statement of Consultation, which elaborates on how we will meet our commitments in the SCI and provides specific details for each plan making stage. It is then used to document the outcome of each consultation, and success of the measures which were taken in terms of their reach.

The problems with SCI's the consultation highlights are fair, but its role in providing a one stop document setting out how Council's will undertake planning consultation

and what communities should expect should not be ignored. It is not clear how the other parts of an SCI are to be dealt with if they are to be no longer required, in particular the approach to planning applications.

A focus on early participation

Question 25: Do you support our proposal to require planning authorities to notify relevant persons and/or bodies and invite participation, prior to commencement of the 30 month process?

The start of our plan making processes has always involved consultation with communities on the issues that the plan needs to address, and we think this should continue.

Greater clarity is needed on what 'baseline information' is anticipated by paragraph 144.

There is some inconsistency in terms used in this section of the consultation. The question refers to consulting 'relevant persons and/or bodies'. This might include 'communities', and 'statutory bodies'. There is also reference to mirroring the current regulation 18 requirement of inviting participation from 'residents and businesses within the local authority area'. Meeting this broader requirement does not seem consistent with the potential options suggested in paragraphs 145 and 146 of the consultation, which imply a more focused approach and potentially a more limited list of stakeholders. The purpose and scope needs to be clear if it is to provide clarity.

The main roles of this stage are described as inviting views on the issues the plan needs to address, in order to help shape the plan's vision before it is drafted, as well as testing how the community wish to be engaged. The scale and resources needed to run such a consultation should not be underestimated. Paragraph 145 implies it may be possible to launch a consultation four months before the first gateway to meet the notification requirement, and that it would be possible to run a consultation,

processing the results, and using them to prepare the gateway one report, all within that period. This would not be practicable. The reality is likely to be that running a comprehensive consultation, processing the results, and using it to shape the PID could take 6 months to a year.

Question 26: Should early participation inform the Project Initiation Document? What sorts of approaches might help to facilitate positive early participation in plan-preparation?

Early participation can help inform the Project Initiation Document. We have tried a range of measures in Greater Cambridge, from social media, webinars, youth engagement, and a Big Debate attended by around 300 people. Local Planning Authorities should be able to shape the consultation process to reflect their local area and vision for the plan.

A more standardised approach to consultation

Question 27: Do you agree with our proposal to define more clearly what the role and purpose of the two mandatory consultation windows should be?

Defining more clearly has the potential to provide clarity for all parties, but the consultation proposals do not yet achieve that goal.

The consultation describes the purpose of the first formal consultation as ‘To ensure that communities can meaningfully influence the plan, we expect that questions asked at this consultation will focus on validating the vision for the area and test the broad options for the plan, including the key spatial choices.’ This remains open to interpretation. What does it mean by the broad options? Does it include establishing the development needs and what should be planned for? Is this focusing on key strategy choices? How does it relate to current requirements to test ‘reasonable alternatives’? Will this be informed by the requirements of the Environmental Outcomes Report regulations?

Currently many Local Planning Authorities will publish preferred options and / or draft plans at the regulation 18 stage, in order to shape the detail of the plan prior to the proposed submission stage where making changes is more difficult. We consider that the plan making approach should include more detail in the first formal consultation regarding the council's emerging choices around development needs, development strategy, sites and policies, otherwise they would only be available at the final consultation stage. This is particularly relevant to location of development, whether there could be exceptional circumstances justifying Green Belt release, and key strategic sites, as well as smaller sites where it is also important for local communities to have the opportunity to influence the plan before it gets to the proposed submission stage.

The second stage of the consultation is referred to as enabling comment on the draft plan. Given it is a consultation on the plan itself, more information is needed on why the consultation describes that, 'key to its success will be ensuring that questions are well-structured and targeted'. Is it envisaging a set of questions accompanying the draft plan rather than a form asking for support or object, and changes which are sought? Given these representations will form the basis of the examination this sort of clarity will be needed, and reference to a model template would seem more appropriate.

Question 28: Do you agree with our proposal to use templates to guide the form in which representations are submitted?

Yes. The Greater Cambridge Planning Service secured funding through the DLUHC Proptech Round 3 to explore opportunities to make carrying out consultation and processing feedback more efficient and effective, building on our experience gained through the production of the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. We are exploring issues including templates and processing of digital evidence submissions. We would be happy to work with DLUHC on this specific issue.

Chapter 9: Requirement to assist with certain plan-making

Table 2 Proposed prescribed public bodies

Question 29: Do you have any comments on the proposed list of prescribed public bodies?

National Highways should be specifically listed.

At the moment authorities have to maintain databases of contacts. There are opportunities for efficiency improvements here, for example a single consultation portal where an authority could highlight it is consulting and notification is automatically given to all of these bodies.

Proposed approach

Question 30: Do you agree with the proposed approach? If not, please comment on whether the alternative approach or another approach is preferable and why.

If a 30 month plan making process is going to be practicable for a Local Planning Authority then the timely and sufficiently resourced engagement of all the organisations listed in the consultation will be required. It's not entirely clear what formally notifying will do if that doesn't happen. It should also be clarified that as they are required to assist they will not be charging local authorities. It would be helpful to clarify if this could be combined with the notification of the start of plan making as required at least 4 months ahead of the start of the formal process, which in areas where there are complex issues could be much earlier.

Chapter 10: Monitoring of plans

Table 3 Monitoring of plans

Question 31: Do you agree with the proposed requirements for monitoring?

The adopted plans in Greater Cambridge have a large number of detailed indicators, which were added during the examination as required by the planning inspector. Monitoring indicators related to SEA outcomes also adds to the list. This takes place alongside production of detailed housing trajectory evidence to defend a five year housing supply. Producing Authority Monitoring Reports annually is a useful exercise but it needs to be proportionate. Identification of a number of key standard indicators would be helpful, which would be supplemented by a selection of key local indicators related specifically to delivery of the local vision.

The proposals need further thought around their practicalities. Paragraph 171 says that the minimum requirements (i.e. the yearly monitoring of the standard metrics) should take place annually and be published on the anniversary of plan adoption. This suggests that each local authority will be reporting at a different time in the year, depending on when the plan is adopted. Therefore how will you be able to compare nationally? The monitoring of completions is done on a set yearly basis, and authorities are used to returning their housing completions figures for April-March years every September in the Housing Flows Reconciliation Form. It would make more sense to have everyone reporting on the same monitoring years at the same time. Otherwise each time an authority adopts a new plan, it would have to change its monitoring year.

Paragraph 172 says that the vision set out by each authority will be underpinned by evidence and based on measurable outcomes that authorities can monitor and report against. This raises questions about what will be in a vision that can be so specific and measurable, as such issues would normally be addressed in policy.

Question 32: Do you agree with the proposed metrics? Do you think there are any other metrics which planning authorities should be required to report on?

The core metrics referenced seem a reasonable set that could be supplemented locally as necessary. Some of the references in the consultation lack clarity, and will need to be clearly defined if they are to be collected on a comparable basis nationally.

For example, only some of the indicators are clear whether they relate to permissions or completions, and there appears to be a mix of both e.g. you have net additional dwellings completed and net affordable dwellings completed, but then homes permitted on brownfield land - why is this not also completions? And then for Gypsy and Traveller site provision and employment floorspace it doesn't say either permitted or completed.

Chapter 11: Supplementary plans

Preparation procedure

Question 33: Do you agree with the suggested factors which could be taken into consideration when assessing whether two or more sites are 'nearby' to each other? Are there any other factors that would indicate whether two or more sites are 'nearby' to each other?

The criteria for assessing whether sites are near seem reasonable, and need a degree of flexibility to reflect local circumstances.

Supplementary Planning Documents will no longer be prepared in the new system. Clarity regarding how the sorts of issues that were routinely dealt with by these would be helpful. The consultation in Figure 6 provides two options for existing SPDs that the content could either be fully or partially absorbed into a new local plan, or it could remain as 'local guidance' in full or partially. There have been many court

cases on the weight that can be given to local guidance in light of the legislation requirements around supplementary planning documents. It should be made clear whether the reference to 'local guidance' relates only to adopted SPDs or whether it is intended that new local guidance could be prepared alongside local plans under the new system. If so, Government guidance will need to be clear how local guidance should be approached and any weight that it can be given in decisions and ensure that it would not run the risk of challenge that it should have been prepared as a supplementary plan, as has happened with informal guidance that the courts have concluded should be prepared as SPDs.

Question 34: What preparation procedures would be helpful, or unhelpful, to prescribe for supplementary plans? e.g. Design: design review and engagement event; large sites: masterplan engagement, etc.

The procedures need not be overly prescriptive, as it should be for the local planning authority to determine the level of engagement reflecting the proposals and local circumstances.

Consultation

Question 35: Do you agree that a single formal stage of consultation is considered sufficient for a supplementary plan? If not, in what circumstances would more formal consultation stages be required?

A single formal consultation stage is appropriate. This of course does not prevent an authority carrying out informal consultation and engagement leading up to this if they consider it appropriate to the proposals being developed.

Examination

Question 36: Should government set thresholds to guide the decision that authorities make about the choice of supplementary plan examination routes? If so, what thresholds would be most helpful? For example, minimum size of development planned for, which could be quantitative both in terms of land use and spatial coverage; level of interaction of proposal with sensitive designations, such as environmental or heritage.

A clear threshold would have the benefit of providing clarity to all parties, particularly for large, complex regeneration sites. This could depend on the relationship with the requirements for Environmental Outcomes Reports which are yet to be known.

Question 37: Do you agree that the approach set out above provides a proportionate basis for the independent examination of supplementary plans? If not, what policy or regulatory measures would ensure this?

It does provide a proportionate basis, but clarity and examples will be needed, otherwise the interpretation will be clarified through the courts. This includes how being in broad conformity with the local plan will be considered.

Chapter 12: Minerals and waste plans

Question 38: Are there any unique challenges facing the preparation of minerals and waste plans which we should consider in developing the approach to implement the new plan-making system?

No comment, as we are not a minerals and waste planning authority.

Chapter 13: Community Land Auctions

How will Community Land Auction arrangements align with other systems of developer contributions?

Question 39: Do you have any views on how we envisage the Community Land Auctions process would operate?

No comment.

Question 40: To what extent should financial considerations be taken into account by local planning authorities in Community Land Auction pilots, when deciding to allocate sites in the local plan, and how should this be balanced against other factors?

Financial considerations could be a consideration in the sense that they will enable delivery of infrastructure, but it is crucial that they do not undermine delivery of sustainable development and the wider aims of the planning system. It should not undermine other requirements such as the responsibilities under the Climate Change Act.

Chapter 14: Approach to roll out and transition

Proposals around protection from speculative development

Question 41: Which of these options should be implemented, and why? Are there any alternative options that we should be considering?

This is a specific question around the waves authorities will be grouped into, and whether this should be fixed or provide flexibility. Given that there may be circumstances arising within an area that need a bespoke approach, flexibility would be the preferred approach. It would not be reasonable to stop a council from producing a plan if they wish to do so because they are not listed as being part of a wave.

Chapter 15: Saving existing plans and planning documents

Question 42: Do you agree with our proposals for saving existing plans and planning documents? If not, why?

Yes. It is important adopted local plans remain in force until replaced by new style local plans. Supplementary Planning Documents are not mentioned but should also remain live.

Equalities impacts

Question 43: Do you have any views on the potential impact of the proposals raised in this consultation on people with protected characteristics as defined in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010?

There is a strong focus on digital, and the use of standard templates. This could support making information accessible, though making information follow a standard for screen readers for example. Avoiding digital exclusion must also be an important consideration when preparing plans and carrying out consultations.



Report to:	Cabinet	28 September 2023
Lead Cabinet Member:	Lead Cabinet Member for Planning	
Lead Officer:	Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development	

Review of the Statement of Community Involvement (Draft for Consultation)

Executive Summary

1. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the Council will engage on planning matters, and must be reviewed at least every five years. This report presents a reviewed and updated draft SCI and seeks agreement to carry out a public consultation prior to a final version being brought back to members for consideration and adoption. The review of the SCI has considered matters including digital opportunities, lessons learned for the Covid 19 pandemic, opportunities to enhance participation on planning applications including youth engagement, and has reviewed the neighbourhood plan support offer.

Key Decision

2. Yes.
3. It was first published in the August 2023 Forward Plan.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - a) Agrees the draft Statement of Community Involvement 2023 (attached at Appendix 1) and accompanying Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) (Appendix 2) be subject to public consultation;
 - b) Agree that the preparation of materials and the running of the consultation be delegated to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development
 - c) Agree that any subsequent material amendments prior to consultation be made by the Lead Member for Planning, Policy and Development Management, and that any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes that do not materially affect the content prior to consultation be delegated to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning, Policy and Development Management.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. This report presents the draft reviewed SCI for consultation purposes, identifying the points at which there will be an opportunity for communities and stakeholders to be involved and engage in the various parts of the planning process. It is recommended that the draft SCI is made available for comment to ensure that the needs and aspirations of our communities and stakeholders are understood and taken into account in finalising the document.

Details

Background

6. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) introduced the requirement for local authorities to prepare a Statement of Community Involvement, and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) requires local planning authorities to review their SCI at least every five years. The current SCI for Greater Cambridge was adopted in July 2019. It is now over four years old, and the review gives the opportunity to consult and consider responses and publish a new SCI before the five years expires.
7. The SCI sets out how to engage in the planning process in Greater Cambridge. The SCI describes how the public, businesses, interest groups and individuals can get involved in influencing local planning policy, the planning application process and neighbourhood planning, and help to shape where we live and work.

The Statement of Community Involvement Review

8. The draft SCI provides an introduction to the overall planning process, and then moves into detail about how stakeholders can get involved in the preparation of plans including Local Plans (which includes Area Action Plans), supplementary planning documents and neighbourhood plans. A further section identifies the mechanisms by which stakeholders will be provided an opportunity to engage in the planning application process. An overview of the process of preparing a neighbourhood plan or order is provided, followed by the broad support available to community groups that are preparing such documents.
9. In carrying out the review officers have in particular considered:
 - Opportunities provided by digital technology, including the lessons learned during the Covid 19 pandemic;
 - Learning from the Greater Cambridge Local Plan consultations, where we tried new methods of consultation;
 - Providing more information to guide pre-application engagement by developers, including a range of engagement methods which they can consider;
 - Highlighting the importance of reaching underrepresented groups, including young people;

- A new section on planning obligations/developer contributions and how the Councils may seek views on the use of contributions on priority projects for infrastructure for example public art or children's play spaces;
- Updates to our neighbourhood planning support offer reflecting experience gained, including refocusing our funding offer on SEA screening rather than a health check.

10. The SCI is drafted to reflect the requirements of planning regulations, and provides examples where the Local Planning Authorities (LPA) may, if resources permit, use methods of engagement that move beyond the regulatory requirements. It is important that the SCI does not commit the LPAs to actions that cannot be resourced in all cases, as this could then call into jeopardy decisions and actions taken, give rise to disproportionate costs, or cause delays to the planning process. This does not, however, preclude the Council from choosing to use additional mechanisms to increase community engagement as and when it is considered appropriate to do so, as we have been able to do with the local plan for example.

11. There is no mandatory requirement for consultation on a draft SCI, however in the spirit of ensuring meaningful engagement in the planning process, it is proposed that a consultation period is undertaken for six weeks. The draft document will be published on the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning website and we will notify stakeholders to seek their views. Comments received will be considered and reported to members when they are asked to adopt the final version of the SCI.

Options

12. The options available to members are:

- a. Agree the draft SCI in Appendix 1 is published for consultation and the accompanying EqlA in Appendix 2,
- b. Not agree the draft SCI for public consultation.

Implications

13. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial

14. The revised draft SCI does not introduce additional costs, and also seeks to make good use of digital opportunities for consultation. The revised neighbourhood plan support offer for the SEA screening has been increased from £1,000 to £2,000 maximum, but the offer of up to £1000 for a health check has been removed.

Legal

15. There are no legal implications arising from the report. Officers have sought appropriate legal advice when preparing the review.

Staffing

16. There are no specific staffing implications of this review. It is currently anticipated that completing the SCI review can be delivered within our existing staffing establishment. This will be kept under review alongside other work priorities.

Risks/Opportunities

17. Risks have been managed by carefully reviewing the document to ensure it meets legal requirements. It also remains in draft such that there are opportunities to explore issues arising with stakeholders prior to its adoption. The report highlights a number of opportunities to improve consultation and engagement that have been considered when preparing the draft SCI.

Equality and Diversity

18. There are no specific implications of this review. The Greater Cambridge SCI has been informed by an equalities impact assessment. This has considered to have a positive effect on providing digital engagement and consultation through our website/s to groups who may have previously felt excluded whilst at the same time ensuring people who cannot or do not have access to digital communication means are not digitally excluded by use of suitable means of communication, for example, use of large print, audio or braille.

Climate Change

19. There are no direct implications. The Greater Cambridge SCI review considers opportunities to use digital and electronic communication which may help in reducing the need to travel.

Health & Wellbeing

20. There are no direct health & wellbeing implications arising from the report, although the positive engagement opportunities sought by the draft SCI may help with community wellbeing.

Consultation responses

21. None.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

A Modern and Caring Council

22. The Draft SCI explores how we can consult both efficiently and effectively.

Background Papers

Background papers used in the preparation of this report:

[Statement of Community Involvement 2019](#)

Appendices

Appendix A – Greater Cambridge Statement of Community Involvement (Draft for Consultation) 2023

Appendix B – Draft Equality Impact Assessment for the Statement of Community Involvement 2023

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Statement of Community Involvement

Draft for consultation Autumn 2023

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service

**Cambridge City Council Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee date:
28/09/2023**

South Cambridgeshire District Council Cabinet date: 28/09/2023

Version

Draft version for consultation Autumn 2023

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Statement of our intention to engage with our communities

Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils are committed to involving as many people and organisations as possible in the planning process. This includes groups and communities that are typically under-represented.

Planning affects the lives of everyone who lives, works, and visits Greater Cambridge. Therefore, it is essential that as many people as possible have a say in the decisions the councils make on new housing, workplaces, open spaces, and the measures we take to tackle climate and biodiversity issues.

We want to encourage you to read and respond to the consultation on the draft Statement of Community Involvement, the document which sets out how the Councils will engage on a wide range of planning matters over the next five years. Widening community participation in planning will always achieve the best outcomes and therefore this Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the councils will achieve this.

Through extensive public engagement during the Covid 19 pandemic, including interactive webinars on our emerging new Local Plan, through to the award winning work we are doing with youth engagement in local schools, we are always pushing ourselves and developers to do more engagement and to reach out to the widest possible audience. Whilst the SCI sets out the minimum levels of engagement the councils will undertake, it also sets out what we can, and frequently do, to go beyond this and how we try to engage in innovative ways alongside documents and websites that are written with as little jargon as possible.

This document also sets out how the Councils will support local communities and parish councils to develop their own neighbourhood plans which can set out local aspirations for new developments within their area.

We will strive to provide opportunities and make it as simple as possible for all individuals to become involved in the planning process, regardless of their circumstances. By involving communities from the earliest stage, they can help to make a difference and, crucially, feel a sense of understanding and ownership of local planning decisions.

Finally, we would encourage you, as residents and stakeholders (including parish councils, neighbourhood forums, groups and associations representing residents and businesses in the area), to use this Statement of Community Involvement and the protocols set out within it, to hold the Local Planning Authorities to account and ensure that all local people have opportunities to have their say. We recognise that consultation and engagement activities are ever evolving, and typically engagement is moving further towards digital means. We understand that whilst digital engagement

is convenient for some members of our community, this is not the case for everyone, and therefore we have been mindful about this as this SCI has been updated.

Whilst this is an SCI for the next five years, it will be reviewed at regular intervals to ensure it is up to date and reflects local and national priorities, practices, and policies.

Engaging with our communities in the planning process is very important. It enables us to hear their views and take those into consideration in making decisions that affect how land is used and developed in Greater Cambridge.

This Statement of Community Involvement goes much further than our current SCI. It ensures that the diversity of our residents and their views and aspirations are reflected in our emerging joint Local Plan as well as how development proposals are prepared, assessed and determined.

I commend this statement and look forward to working with our residents, businesses, developers and other stakeholders in using it effectively to create great places across Greater Cambridge.

Cllr. Dr. Tumi Hawkins, South Cambridgeshire District Councillor and Lead Cabinet Member for Planning Policy and Development Management

It is vitally important that everyone knows how to influence development in our area and make their voice heard. I am very pleased that we now have such a clear statement of how the Councils will ensure that residents, businesses, local organisations and visitors are properly consulted as we decide what to build, what to change, and how to create the best possible spaces within which we can live, work, learn, and play.

Elected members endeavour to continue to work closely with Planning Officers to make sure that we work in a transparent, trustworthy, and effective way, and the practices outlined in this important document demonstrate our ongoing commitment to serving the people of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire.

I am very pleased to have this updated document setting out the Councils commitment and procedures for involving our communities - residents, businesses, local organisation and visitors - in the complicated process to build new buildings and create the best possible places.

It's through a concerted effort by everyone involved in planning that we can work towards improved transparency and arrive a place of mutual trust.

Councillor Katie Thornburrow, Cambridge City Councillor and Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure

1.0 Introduction

What is the Statement of Community Involvement?

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the Local Planning Authorities, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, will consult with local people, groups, businesses, partners, and other organisations in the planning process. This is important to improve understanding about how we prepare planning documents such as the Local Plan and guidance documents, consider planning applications, neighbourhood plans or neighbourhood development orders.
- 1.2 Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council have a shared planning service, the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service (GCSP). Planning officers within GCSP will be responsible for delivering all planning consultations, but Councillors within Cambridge City Council will ultimately have responsibility for consultations which effect the city of Cambridge, and Councillors within South Cambridgeshire District Council will oversee consultations that effect South Cambridgeshire. For consultations which affect both areas, both Councils will retain oversight.
- 1.3 Local Planning Authorities are currently required under [Section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#) to prepare and review a SCI. This establishes the approach and standards of engagement we will make with our communities about planning matters or proposals. We aspire through the aims of the SCI to:
 - Ensure that engagement is managed **efficiently** by consulting at the earliest possible stages of the planning process, providing clear information about the proposals and by conducting early engagement with Councillors, stakeholders, community groups, applicants and individuals in a meaningful way.
 - Set clear and concise objectives of consultations in order to be **transparent** by keeping people informed, being clear on what we are asking for responses on, publishing outcomes, and setting realistic timelines for consultations and being open and clear about our decision making.
 - Be **proportionate** and **cost effective** in resource and promote best practice by exploring new and evolving methods of consultation and

communications including digital to engage more easily with local communities.

- Ensure consultation is **inclusive**, fair, equitable and supports our local communities in feeling heard through consultation methods that are consistent to all, including those people without access or find it difficult using digital communication.
- Be **accountable** in the decision-making process, by explaining how the responses to consultations will be considered, how people will be informed of outcomes or decisions, and ensure that the planning stages are robust, justified and consistent.

- 1.4 During the COVID-19 pandemic, both Councils had to reassess how they carried out public engagement whilst meeting social distancing requirements. In May 2019 and December 2020 GCSP published an addendum to its SCI which outlined the measures that the Councils were taking in response to the pandemic, including restricting face-to-face activities and holding events online. Whilst we are now able to meet face-to-face once again, the Councils learnt some key lessons on how to make good use of webinars and digital communication tools when carrying out public engagement exercises. This has the positive effect of making best-use of our resources whilst also making it more convenient for our communities to participate in engagement activities.
- 1.5 This document sets out the approach of the Councils to consulting and engaging with our communities through the different stages of the planning process. The sections of the document which follow explain the purpose of the SCI, how you can be involved in the process of preparing our planning policy documents, and how we will engage through different types planning applications. The document also provides guidance for how the local community can prepare neighbourhood plans or neighbourhood development orders, and how we will assist with this process.
- 1.6 The Appendices contain the glossary for words abbreviated throughout the document, the consultation bodies, the requirements for consulting on planning applications, and the Council's contact information.

Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service Statement of Community Involvement

- 1.7 In 2018, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council agreed to work in partnership to deliver shared services. This led to the

formation of the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service (GCSP), to deliver the range of services consistent with their responsibilities as the Local Planning Authority for the two areas.

- 1.8 It is important to recognise that although the Councils have prepared this joint SCI, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council remain separate legal entities in relation to their designation as Local Planning Authorities.

Why is the Statement of Community Involvement being reviewed?

- 1.9 The [Town and Country Planning \(Local Plan\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#) require Local Planning Authorities to review their SCI every five years. The current SCI was adopted in 2019, so is coming up to five years old and needs to be updated. This provides the opportunity to review the SCI to ensure it still provides the most efficient and effective approach to consultation and engagement and learns lessons from the wide range of engagement we have undertaken in recent years.
- 1.10 In 2020, the Government's consultation on the [White Paper Planning for the Future](#) proposed substantial reforms to streamline the planning system. This included proposed changes to the preparation of local plans and modernisation of planning, through improved engagement with people, by promoting the use of digital technology. At the time of writing this document, the Government are proposing reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. It is likely there will be further changes to the planning process and how we consult in the coming years, as well as where we capture information currently found in SCI's.
- 1.11 GCSP have already been working to explore digital opportunities to make information easily accessible and to make it easier to provide feedback. We have created [interactive maps](#) and [webinar videos](#) for our Local Plans. We are also seeking to continuously improve, for example we are part of the government's PropTech programme exploring improvements to digital engagement tools and transform community involvement in the planning process.

In carrying out the review of the SCI, particular consideration and changes has been given to:

- Opportunities provided by digital technology including the lessons learned during the Covid 19 pandemic;

- Learning from the Greater Cambridge Local Plan consultations, where we tried new methods of consultation for example interactive online digital engagement;
- providing more information to guide pre-application engagement by developers, including a range of engagement methods which they can consider at the initial stages of them preparing a development proposal;
- Highlighting the importance of reaching under represented groups, including Black and ethnic minorities communities, people with disabilities and young people;
- A new section on planning obligations/developer contributions and how the Councils may seek views on the use of contributions on priority projects for infrastructure, for example public art or children's play spaces;
- Updates to our neighbourhood planning support offer reflecting experience gained, including refocusing our funding offer on Strategic Environmental Assessment screening rather than a health check;
- Setting out how local communities can respond to significant infrastructure projects which are considered and determined by other bodies outside of the councils.

What is the purpose of planning?

1.12 The purpose of planning is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF 2021 sets out the three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental that should be achieved and delivered through plan making and decision taking.

1.13 The Local Planning Authorities are responsible for making decisions to guide where sustainable development takes place and its functions, guided by national planning policy and the development plan. The key functions that GCSP has in the overall planning process are:

- **Planning policy or plan making** is the formulation of a statutory development plan which sets out the vision for the future of the area and provides a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social, and environmental priorities. The main policy documents for the area are the adopted Local Plans. Other documents include supplementary planning documents (SPDs) which may also be produced to provide more detail on the policies in the Local Plan. Neighbourhood plans, produced by local communities, also form part of the development plan. You can find more information on what documents form part of our current development plan on our [website](#).

- **Development Management** is about ensuring that the right type, mix and design of development is provided in sustainable locations through the granting or refusal of planning permission. Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire determine most applications in the area, but some, such as for minerals and waste, are dealt with by Cambridgeshire County Council. Some very large infrastructure proposals are determined at the national level, through Development Consent Orders.

1.14 This SCI sets out in later sections, further detail of the Local Planning Authorities functions in relation to preparing planning policy, determining planning applications, consideration of the design and conservation of the built and natural environment, planning obligations, the approach to compliance, and how local communities can be assisted in preparing neighbourhood plans or neighbourhood development orders. Each of the sections outline the approach to consultation and engagement and the time periods that will be applied to ensure an appropriate balance between effective participation and efficient plan and decision making.

2.0 How can I get involved in the planning process?

- 2.1 Since planning has a direct impact on the daily lives of residents and businesses, it is important that development proposals are transparent and that you have the opportunity to have a say in the planning decisions that are made on your behalf. The Local Planning Authorities want to ensure that you have the opportunity to engage in planning decisions at the earliest possible stages of the planning process.
- 2.2 Early involvement in the planning process gives you the best chance of influencing planning proposals including in plan making, planning application stages and neighbourhood plans. The SCI's intention is to inform you of the formal stages in the planning process, including when and how you can engage and participate. In addition to the formal stages of planning, you are also able to speak to your local ward or parish Councillors about a planning matter or proposal you might wish to comment on or influence.
- 2.3 We recognise that local knowledge is valuable in making better planning decisions. An understanding of our communities concerns and aspirations is key to successful engagement. We also want to understand the aspirations of developers, as they are mainly responsible for delivering the new spaces that we plan for. Developers also have a significant role to play in engagement, and we will encourage them to engage effectively with local communities. Early engagement with our local communities often achieves the best planning outcomes.
- 2.4 The SCI has been written to guide you through the plan making, development management and neighbourhood planning process and set out how you can get involved in each of these areas. There are also a number of other ways you can engage in the planning process at a local level.
- 2.5 We have set up a series of forums for Planning Officers, Councillors and members of the public meet to discuss planning matters. We also sometimes invite developers to present information about their sites. There are the new settlements at [Northstowe](#), [Waterbeach](#), and [Bourn Airfield and Cambourne](#). Community Forums are also held focusing on development areas on the edge of Cambridge for [Cambridge East](#), [North West and West Cambridge](#), and [North East Cambridge](#). We also hold a [Residents Association Forum](#). [Waterbeach](#) and [Bourn Airfield and Cambourne](#). Community Forums are also held focusing on development areas on the edge of Cambridge for [Cambridge East](#), [North West and West Cambridge](#), and [North East Cambridge](#). We also hold a [Residents Association Forum](#). [Bourn Airfield and Cambourne](#). Community Forums are also held focusing on development areas on the edge of Cambridge

for [Cambridge East](#), [North West and West Cambridge](#), and [North East Cambridge](#). We also hold a [Residents Association Forum](#). [Waterbeach](#) and [Bourn Airfield and Cambourne](#). Community Forums are also held focusing on development areas on the edge of Cambridge for [Cambridge East](#), [North West and West Cambridge](#), and [North East Cambridge](#). We also hold a [Residents Association Forum](#) for residents of the city of Cambridge.

- 2.6 We hold [Agent Forums](#) to update planning agents on changes to legislation and procedures within GCSP. We also regularly hold Parish Council Forums where we can discuss planning issues with Parish Councils.

3.0 Our methods for community engagement in planning policy

What is planning policy?

- 3.1 Planning policy involves preparing plans or requirements to provide a vision that will guide decisions about new development in an area. In England, planning policy is delivered through the creation of a development plan which provides a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social, and environmental priorities. Planning applications have to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless there are material considerations that indicate otherwise.
- 3.2 The development plan for an area is typically made up of a number of documents, including a local plan, neighbourhood plans, waste and mineral plans and area action plans. There is also a policies map. There are other planning policy documents which help to guide decisions about new development, but which are not part of the development plan, such as supplementary planning documents (SPDs).

Why should communities help to create planning policies?

- 3.3 The Councils believe it is vital that you can contribute to planning policies in order to help to create the vision which will shape your area. We are therefore committed to providing opportunities for comment, feedback and engagement when preparing different planning policy documents. Including different perspectives from our communities means that the quality and effectiveness of the planning documents will improve. Below, the different types of planning policy documents are explained and there is also guidance about how communities can influence each document.

Local Plans

- 3.4 A Local Plan is a plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. The Local Plan contains policies relating to the amount of development that should take place, the number of jobs and homes that need to be created, where development should take place, and how it should be designed. The Local Plan also identifies

the infrastructure that needs to accompany development, setting policy requirements of developers, for example the provision of affordable housing Policies can apply to the whole area, or they can be specific to individual sites.

- 3.5 In 2018, Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council adopted their Local Plans. Both [Cambridge City Council](#) and [South Cambridgeshire District Council](#) also have a number of documents which contribute to their wider development plan. You can find more information on what documents form part of our current development plan on GCPS's [website](#).
- 3.6 The Councils are currently preparing a joint Local Plan to cover the areas of Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire. When adopted this will replace the adopted Local Plans of the individual Councils.
- 3.7 The [First Proposals consultation](#) on our emerging Local Plan sets out the vision to make Greater Cambridge a place where a big decrease in our climate impacts comes with a big increase in the quality of everyday life for all our communities. The Plan aims to create thriving neighbourhoods with the variety of jobs and homes we need, increase nature, wildlife and green spaces, and safeguard our unique heritage and landscapes.
- 3.8 We are also preparing a North East Cambridge Area Action Plan, which would also have the status of a local plan but cover the specific area around Cambridge North Railway Station and Cambridge Science Park.
- 3.9 A timetable for preparing and reviewing our Local Plan documents is set out in the [Local Development Scheme](#) (LDS). This is regularly updated and explains the stage that the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan and North East Cambridge Area Action Plan has reached and how people can comment on the Plan's policies.

Supplementary planning documents

- 3.10 Local plans can be supported by supplementary planning documents (SPDs). These documents provide guidance to support the implementation of planning policies and can include documents such as design codes for specific sites. The key difference for SPDs compared to local plans is that they do not undergo public examination by a Planning Inspector and are not automatically subject to a sustainability appraisal. SPDs are capable of being a material consideration which means they should be taken into account in decisions but are not part of the development plan.

- 3.11 It should be noted that where documents are being produced by an individual Council rather than jointly, the measures in this SCI will be applied by the individual Council. An example might be if a design code is produced to supplement one of the current adopted individual Council Local Plans.

Neighbourhood plans

- 3.12 Neighbourhood plans are a tool that local communities use to shape development in the places they live and work. Once adopted or ‘made’, neighbourhood plans become part of the development plan which means they become a material consideration when planning applications are decided. With neighbourhood plans, the community carries out the work, such as researching maps, conducting surveys, and drafting policies. This is often conducted by a parish council, or if it is an unparished area, a neighbourhood forum needs to be established which then acts as the qualifying body to prepare the neighbourhood plan.
- 3.13 Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council both have a duty to support communities who are preparing neighbourhood plans. This support could include advising on potential plan policies, supplying maps, or helping to set up a forum. We have also prepared a [Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit](#).
- 3.14 By August 2023, there were eight ‘made’ neighbourhood plans in Greater Cambridge with 15 further areas formally designated indicating their intention to prepare a neighbourhood plan. You can find details of neighbourhood plans being prepared by parish councils and neighbourhood forums and their current status on our [website](#).
- 3.15 Both Councils can also assist communities with the preparation and delivery of neighbourhood development orders (NDOs) which grant planning permission for buildings specific sites or for alterations across areas.
- 3.16 Once a neighbourhood plan is prepared and has undergone an independent examination and a successful referendum it falls to the Local Planning Authority to ‘adopt’ as a made plan. The Council that covers the area(s) of the neighbourhood plan can consider whether it should be adopted, for example a plan within South Cambridgeshire would be the responsibility of SCDC, and a plan in Cambridge City would be for CCC.

How will the Local Planning Authorities consult on Local Plan documents?

- 3.17 Each Local Planning Authority must fulfil a number of public consultations, in line with national government regulations shown in Table 1. However, we want to reflect the aims of this SCI and aspire to go beyond the Government's expectations for public engagement. For example, as part of the First Consultations for the emerging Local Plan, Planning Officers engaged with members of the public at pop-up events, met with groups who are traditionally under represented in planning consultations, and held webinars online to increase outreach. GCSP also tried to make our online consultations accessible by avoiding the use of planning jargon. GCSP will continue to consider innovative ways of carrying out public engagement for the next stages of the Local Plan.
- 3.18 Local Planning Authorities provide you with the opportunity to have your say on planning policy and aim to provide an efficient, transparent, proportionate, inclusive, accessible, accountable, and coherent approach to consultation.
- 3.19 In preparing a local plan document, Local Planning Authorities will engage with relevant stakeholders and gather evidence. For each consultation, Planning Officers will review each submitted comment, evaluate it against evidence, and consider whether the policy needs to be altered. Planning Officers will then prepare a consultation statement setting out how engagement has been undertaken, explaining how GCSP has considered the issues and how the feedback has been incorporated.
- 3.20 As part of the Examination process there could be further consultations, for example the main modifications to the Plan. Any additional consultations will be for six weeks unless it falls over a public holiday period where it may be extended.
- 3.21 The statutory process for preparing these documents is set out in the [Town and Country Planning Local Planning England Regulations \(2012\)](#) (as amended). There are two key stages of consultation during local plan preparation, Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Local Plan preparation

Local Plan stage	Consultation duration
Public participation (Regulation 18)	One or more public consultations, on issues and options or draft policies. Consultations will be undertaken for a minimum of a six week period. All representations must be received within the consultation period.

Pre-submission publication (Regulation 19)	Consultation will be undertaken for a minimum of a six week period. All representations must be received within the consultation period.
--------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

3.22 There are four main methods for consulting at Regulation 18 and Regulation 19 stages that the Councils will apply. These are:

- Inviting representations through a notice on the Councils websites, and advertising through other methods such as social media, news releases, Council publications or press adverts
- Consultations with specific consultation bodies and appropriate general consultation bodies and other relevant stakeholders (see Appendix 2)
- Consultation documents will be available to view on the Councils websites, and at our Council offices (see Appendix 3 for details)
- Public consultation events if appropriate to the nature of the consultation (this may include in person and/or online events).

3.23 Following the consultation stages, the Council submits the Local Plan to the Secretary of State together with the representations received at the Regulation 19 stage. The submitted document and the representations received, will be considered by a Planning Inspector at an independent examination. The Council will notify the specific and general consultation bodies who were invited to make representations at earlier stages, and all those who have requested to be notified, of this stage.

3.24 Individuals and organisations that have made representations may be invited by the Inspector to submit a written statement during the examination. Individuals and organisations that made an objection to the document and have requested to speak at the examination will be contacted by the Inspector to be informed of the procedure for being heard.

3.25 Following the receipt of the Inspector's Report the Councils will notify all those who have requested to be notified, as soon as it is reasonably practicable. The report will also be made available on the Councils website and at Council offices defined in Appendix 3.

3.26 If the Inspector has concluded that the Plan is sound the Council will adopt the plan and will publish an adoption statement on their website and make it available to view at Council offices as defined in Appendix 3. The Council will then again contact all those who have requested to be notified as soon as it is reasonably practical.

Who does Local Planning Authorities involve in Plan-making?

- 3.27 Regulations specify a number of organisations that Local Planning Authorities must consult when preparing planning policy documents. These bodies are set out in Appendix 2. They include specific consultation bodies and various types of general consultation bodies. Specific consultation bodies include utility companies, government agencies, Local Planning Authorities and parish councils. General consultation bodies are voluntary bodies active in the area and those bodies which represent different interests and include neighbourhood forums.
- 3.28 The Council is required to co-operate with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities and other prescribed bodies on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries under the statutory 'duty to co-operate'. The Councils are committed to cooperating with the [Local Nature Partnership](#) (LNP) (Natural Cambridgeshire) and have regard to their activities which are relevant to local plan making. The LNP acts as an independent voice for the natural environment in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and part of its role is to coordinate partners to deliver projects and activity that will meet the Partnership's vision and aims. The bodies identified under the statutory duty to co-operate are defined in Appendix 2.
- 3.29 Individuals and organisations can opt-in to receive notifications in relation to future public consultations. To opt-in, users must register onto the GCSP consultation database. Once logged into the [consultation database](#), the 'My Information' tab allows the user to choose the 'Topics' to receive future mailings about. These can be updated by the registered user as preferred. If you make comments on a planning policy document, we will also offer you the opportunity to opt-in to these updates, which will keep you informed about future stages of the plan making process. Figure 1 below shows the layout of the webpage with a preview of the list of topics to receive mailings about.

Figure 1: Layout of the consultation database screen

[Home](#) > [Consultations archive](#) > [My account](#) > My topics

My account

My information

[Details](#)
[Password](#)
[Topics](#)

My representations and forms

[Drafts \(0\)](#)
[Submitted \(0\)](#)
[Processed \(0\)](#)

My topics

Please select topics you are interested in and would like to be contacted about.

Topics

- ☐ Greater Cambridge Planning Policy Consultations - ALL
- ☐ Spaces and Movement SPD
- ☐ Community Infrastructure Levy
- ☐ Statement of Community Involvement
- ☐ Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment
- ☐ North East Cambridge (Cambridge Northern Fringe) Area Action Plan
- ☐ Greater Cambridge housing trajectory and five year supply
- ☐ Village Design Statement SPDs (all)
- ☐ Supplementary Planning Documents (all)
- ☐ Affordable Housing SPD
- ☐ Greater Cambridge housing trajectory and five year supply
- ☐ Planning Obligations Strategy (including Public Art) SPD
- ☐ Bourn Airfield New Village SPD
- ☐ Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
- ☐ Babraham Neighbourhood Plan
- ☐ Neighbourhood Plans (all)
- ☐ South Newnham Neighbourhood Plan
- ☐ Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.30 If you do not have an email address or do not have access to the internet but would like to opt-in to receiving future mailings in relation to public consultations or notifications on one or more of our planning policy documents, please contact us by telephone or write to us using the details in Appendix 3.

How can representations be submitted?

- 3.31 During the consultation periods our preferred method is to receive comments through our website. This is the easiest way to submit comments, and it helps us process your comments efficiently. Representations can also be sent to us by email, or post using the address in Appendix 3. If you are having difficulty commenting, or need information in a different format, please email us at localplan@greatercambridgeplanning.org, call us on 01954 713694.

- 3.32 Representations received, including names of who they were submitted by, will be published on the Councils websites. You can view the latest versions of our privacy notice on our website.
- 3.33 The online consultation system allows any individual, business, organisation, or group to register their details and submit comments during consultation periods.
- 3.34 The privacy notice for planning policy consultations and notifications sets out how your personal data will be used and by whom, if you opt-in to any of our 'topics' or submit representations. The consultation database will be maintained by the Local Planning Authorities and will follow the latest legal requirements on data protection, currently the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018.
- 3.35 The councils will not accept or publish comments that contravene its compliance with the Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

How will GCSP include a wider range of perspectives?

- 3.36 GCSP will meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, which aims to promote equality, eliminate discrimination and encourage good relations between different groups associated with age, disability, gender and gender reassignment, race, religion and other protected characteristics. It is recognised that some parts of the community in the area are under represented such as Gypsy and Traveller communities, the young and elderly, and it is important to include them in planning consultations. The Councils will work closely with relevant organisations that have experience in finding the best way to engage with these groups.
- 3.37 It is GCSP's aim to explore how innovative forms of public engagement can be further developed and refined in future consultations. In 2022 South Cambridgeshire District Council established the 'Young People Task & Finish Group' to explore how to improve youth engagement in South Cambridgeshire. A [report](#) set out the opportunities to create or develop effective youth engagement along with recommendations relating to the SCI that GCSP will use to improve planning consultation with young people.
- 3.38 The Councils want to ensure local communities are well informed about planning matters within the Greater Cambridge area. To achieve this, the Councils will continue to promote the use of electronic methods of consultation

including our website and social media to make involvement easier, quicker and more cost effective. The Councils are keen to explore new methods of communication and engagement with local communities, recognising that e-communications can be a highly effective way of publicising information about the planning service to the widest possible number of people and organisations.

- 3.39 GCSP aims to include a wide range of perspectives within the Plan-making process and will continue to explore different measures to improve levels of participation. Examples of where GCSP has tried to widen participation include:
- Creating accessible documents that meet the requirements set out in our [GCSP accessibility statement](#)
 - Used social media and videos to publicise consultations
 - Created bespoke consultation websites to support engagement
 - Held events at a wide range of venues and locations, for example providing drop in events, attending established events like coffee mornings, or providing information at railways stations
 - Held interactive webinars to discuss consultation issues and responded to questions, and used interactive tools to allow attendees to participate
 - Engaged directly with groups who are under-represented in planning consultations, such as sixth-form students, and Gypsy and Travellers communities.

Preparation of supplementary planning documents

- 3.40 SPDs can be prepared to add greater detail and guidance to planning policies or allocations. A SPD cannot create new or amend planning policy. SPDs could relate to an area or they may be topic-based, such as affordable housing or design guidance.
- 3.41 Prior to the formal stage of consultation, Local Planning Authorities will engage with relevant stakeholders and gather evidence. They will prepare a consultation statement setting out how this has been done, and how issues that have been raised have been considered in finalising the SPD.
- 3.42 The Local Planning Authorities will consider all comments that are made at formal consultation stage and make any appropriate changes to the SPD before it is adopted. Upon adoption the SPD will be published together with an adoption statement, made available to view on the Councils website, and at the Council's main offices (see Appendix 3). Local Planning Authorities will also send a copy of the adoption statement to all those who requested to be notified.
- 3.43 The statutory process for preparing these documents is set out in the Town and Country Planning Local Planning England Regulations (2012) (as amended).

There is one public consultation stage during SPD preparation, Regulation 12 and Regulation 13 that should be consulted on for a minimum of four weeks.

- 3.44 There are four methods for consulting at Regulation 12 and Regulation 13 stages that will be followed. These are:
- Inviting representations through a notice on the Councils websites, and advertising through other methods such as social media, news releases, Council publications or press adverts
 - Consultations with specific consultation bodies and appropriate general consultation bodies and other relevant stakeholders (see Appendix 2)
 - Consultation documents will be available to view on the Councils websites, and at our Council offices (see Appendix 3)
 - Public consultation events if appropriate to the nature of the consultation (this may include in person and / or online events).

Preparation of neighbourhood plans

- 3.45 The statutory process for preparing these documents is set out in the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 and subsequent amendments. Table 2 below sets out the key stages of consultation during neighbourhood plan preparations that are undertaken by the Local Planning Authorities. More information regarding the neighbourhood planning process can be found on our website and Section 5 of this document sets out how Local Planning Authorities will assist parish councils and neighbourhood forums during the NP process.

Table 2: Neighbourhood Plan Preparation

Neighbourhood plan stage	Consultation duration
Regulation 5, 6 and 7 Neighbourhood Area Designation: The qualifying body applies to the Local Planning Authority for a neighbourhood area to be designated.	No consultation is required where the whole of a parish is proposed. A minimum period of 6 weeks consultation for all other proposed neighbourhood plan areas
Regulation 9, 10 and 11: Designation of a neighbourhood forum	Not less than 6 weeks from the date on which the application is first publicised
Regulation 15 and 16 Submission: Where a draft NP is submitted to the Local Planning Authority and the plan meets the requirements in the legislation, the Local Planning Authority must publicise the NP.	Minimum of 6 weeks

Neighbourhood plan stage	Consultation duration
Regulation 18 Independent Examination: Post receipt of the Examiners Report the local planning authority may decide to make a decision which differs from that recommended by the examiner. If this is the case the local planning authority must carry out a targeted consultation inviting representations.	Within 6 weeks of the local planning authority first inviting representations

3.46 The main methods for consulting on neighbourhood plans at the Regulation 5, 6 and 7, 9, 10 and 11 stages that must be followed are:

- Inviting representations through a notice on the Councils websites, and advertising through other methods such as social media, news releases, Council publications or press adverts
- Consultations with specific consultation bodies and appropriate general consultation bodies and other relevant stakeholders (see Appendix 2)
- The relevant qualifying body will be asked to assist the Local Planning Authority in publicising the consultation by placing information about it in any local newsletters or on their website
- If requested by the relevant qualifying body the Local Planning Authority will also notify local contacts in the proposed neighbourhood area. The contact details of these local groups to be provided by the qualifying body
- Posters prepared by the Council to be shown at key locations in the neighbourhood plan area during the particular stages: creation of a forum, designation of area, and consultation on submission
- Consultation documents will be available to view on the Council's websites, and at the relevant Council offices (see Appendix 3), additionally at the qualifying body's office or publicly accessible venue within the neighbourhood area during normal office hours.

3.47 The main methods for consulting on neighbourhood plans at the Regulation 15 and 16 stages that must be followed are:

- Inviting representations through a notice on the Councils websites, and advertising through other methods such as social media, news releases, Council publications or press adverts
- Notify any consultation body referred to in the consultation statement submitted alongside the draft neighbourhood plan. These bodies are referred to in [Paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 in the Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#). The qualifying body will have considered which of these to notify depending on whose interests the qualifying body considers may be affected by proposals in the draft neighbourhood plan

- Emails to anyone that has 'opted-in' to be notified of consultations on the specific document being prepared
- Consultation documents will be available to view on the Councils websites, and at the relevant Council offices (see Appendix 3), additionally at the qualifying body's office or publicly accessible venue within the neighbourhood area during normal office hours.

3.48 The main methods for consulting on neighbourhood plans at the Regulation 18 stage that must be followed are:

- Emails sent by the Local Planning Authority inviting representations from
 - the qualifying body
 - anyone whose representation was submitted to the examiner and any consultation body that was previously consulted.

4.0 Methods for community engagement at the planning application stage

- 4.1 A planning application is a means by which someone applies for permission from the Local Planning Authority to develop land. Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council are responsible for most planning decisions that are made in their respective areas, with some exceptions such as minerals and waste which is dealt with by the Council. We receive a wide range of planning applications for formal determination. The Local Planning Authorities assess and determine planning applications against national planning policies and local policies, including the local plan. Applications are determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 GCSP makes all applications and decisions available to view online through our [planning applications page](#) (see Figure 2). On the same website, a [weekly list](#) of validated and determined planning applications is made available for parish councils, neighbourhood forums and any other interested parties to be kept informed of planning decisions in their areas. There are four key stages to the planning application process set out in Table 3.

Figure 2: Layout of the Search Function on the Planning Applications Page

The screenshot displays the 'Greater Cambridge Shared Planning' website. At the top, there is a header with the logo and the text 'Greater Cambridge Shared Planning: a strategic partnership between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils'. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for 'Search', 'My Profile', 'Login', 'Register', and 'Apply Online'. The main content area features a description of the online planning register and a link to user guidance documents. The 'Planning – Simple Search' section is highlighted, showing a search interface with tabs for 'Simple', 'Advanced', 'Weekly/Monthly Lists', 'Property', and 'Map'. Under the 'Simple' tab, there are sub-tabs for 'Applications', 'Appeals', and 'Enforcements'. The search form includes dropdown menus for 'Local Authority' (set to 'All') and 'Status' (set to 'All'). A text input field is labeled 'Enter a keyword, reference number, postcode or single line of an address.' and a 'Search' button is located next to it. The 'on idox solution' logo is visible in the bottom right corner.

Table 3: Planning Application Process

Stage of process	Explanation
Pre-application	An applicant or developer prepares the development proposal. Early engagement with the Local Planning Authority, relevant stakeholders and the community is strongly encouraged, especially for larger and more complex proposals.
Planning application	An application is submitted to the Local Planning Authority who will consult on the planning application
Decision making	A decision is made by either a planning committee of elected Councillors or delegated to a Planning Officer
Appeals	The applicant has a right to appeal where they disagree with the decision of the Local Planning Authority to refuse permission

4.3 The statutory requirements for consulting on planning applications are set out in Appendix 4.

Pre-application advice and consultation

4.4 Both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Council encourage applicants or developers to carry out early engagement with the Local Planning Authority and the local community before submitting a planning application. These discussions enable Planning Officers to provide advice to the applicant and in no way predetermine the outcome of the application. Early discussion of a proposal in the form of a pre-application with the council verifies the information required to be submitted with the application and reduces the likelihood of submitting invalid applications. It provides an opportunity for Planning Officers to provide an initial view on a proposal, identifying issues and opportunities at an early stage. This enables more efficient use of resources, as problems can be addressed earlier on in the process.

4.5 There are also significant benefits to involving communities and stakeholders at the pre-application stage, including:

- Helping the applicant to understand how planning policies and other requirements may affect their proposal
- Addressing issues early on is likely to result in higher quality proposals that reflect the aspirations of communities. This could lead to less objections, meaning the applications are likely to move through the application process more quickly.

4.6 Whilst some pre-application discussions can be confidential for commercial reasons, developers are strongly encouraged to undertake community

engagement at this stage of the planning process, particularly where development is likely to have significant impacts on local communities or where the site is particularly sensitive.

- 4.7 An example of good engagement between developer and community at the pre-application stage occurred during a recent application for a mix of residential properties and commercial spaces in Devonshire Gardens, Cambridge. Socius and Railpen were the developers for the scheme and held substantial consultation with the local community, with over 3,000 local residents responding to the proposals. The final site will incorporate new public space and a community pavilion which will be shaped by a local design competition following planning permission. Similarly, the Hartree developers at North East Cambridge held a People City Planet Festival where over 400 people attended the two day event at Shirley Community Primary School to find out more about the proposals for the site, listen to talks and participate in interactive workshops, and provide feedback on the proposals.
- 4.8 The [Localism Act 2011](#) introduced a duty for developers to consult local communities before submitting planning applications for certain developments. For development proposals that fall outside of the requirements of the Localism Act, the Local Planning Authority encourage pre-application consultation with local communities and key stakeholders. This allows those likely to be affected by the development to raise potential issues and to make suggestions.
- 4.9 Further information about the pre-application process or how to request a Duty Planning Officer service where members of the public can obtain advice and guidance on householder applications, can be found on GCSP's [website](#).

Planning performance agreements

- 4.10 GCSP offers the opportunity for applicants or developers to enter into a planning performance agreement (PPA), which sits alongside the pre-application advice service. A PPA is a project management tool that allows all parties to agree timescales, actions and resources for handling planning applications. PPAs are usually agreed at the pre-application stage and relate to the whole development process, from pre-application planning advice and community engagement to application progress meetings right through to the post decision stage, including the discharge of conditions and site monitoring. PPAs can be used for any type of application but are most effective for major and complex planning applications. You can find more information on PPAs on our [website](#).

Pre-application advice for Listed Buildings

- 4.11 GCSP offers separate pre-application advice to the owners of Listed Buildings and their agents. This advice enables the applicant to discuss their proposals with a Conservation Officer and to receive either verbal or written advice as to the suitability of what they hope to do. For bigger schemes, owners of higher graded listed buildings, Grade II* and Grade I, are also recommended to contact Historic England who also offer a pre-application service.

Design panels

- 4.12 Design review panels are a well-established and effective way of offering multi-disciplinary, independent advice from a panel of experts who help to inform the planning process and give greater confidence in the decision making of innovative and quality design of the built environment. Panels involve a group of experts such as architects, heritage professionals, and urban designers, who meet to analyse prospective applications to improve the quality of Greater Cambridge's built environment. It is possible for applicants to book an appointment with design panels and a fee needs to be paid to obtain the expert's advice.
- 4.13 There are currently three design panels which are used at the pre-application stage to improve the quality and accessibility of proposals. The panels consist of members from different disciplines and offer critical design advice to applications. The [Cambridgeshire Quality Panel](#) is led by Cambridgeshire County Council for schemes that are going to the Joint Development Control Committee. The panel helps to raise the quality of development by identifying where designs can be improved to achieve the best possible outcomes, in accordance with the adopted Local Plans. The Disability Panel is led by GCSP and considers applications that go to the South Cambridgeshire District Council's Planning Committee and Cambridge City Council's Planning Committee. There is also the [Greater Cambridge Design Review Panel](#) which is led by GCSP and offers independent advice and considers applications that go to the same two committees. The panel reviews major or significant planning applications and pre-applications for sites within the Greater Cambridge area, that fall outside of the remit of the Cambridgeshire Quality Panel. The Greater Cambridge Design Review Plan may also review any policies, guidance and documents that relate to these sites. The panel reviews major or significant planning and pre-applications for sites within the Greater Cambridge area, that fall outside of the remit of the Cambridgeshire Quality Panel. The Greater Cambridge Design Review Pan may also review any policies, guidance and documents that relate to these sites.

Youth engagement service

- 4.14 There are many under represented groups across Greater Cambridge that we aspire to engage with, including young people. Engagement with young people can ensure that the final design of developments considers the specific interests of children and young people who are often under represented in public consultations, particularly in relation to delivering play areas and public spaces that are child friendly and fit for purpose.
- 4.15 GCSP provides an award-winning [youth engagement service](#). It aims to address the long standing issue of young people being under represented in decision making about the built environment. The service aims to enhance planning outcomes by giving young people opportunities to be involved in our work whilst increasing diversity and inclusion.
- 4.16 The service does this by holding workshops in schools that involve Planning Officers and developers who together deliver activities to help young people learn more about their local built environment. Often, the workshops are shaped around a specific planning proposal, which is then used as a gateway to discuss broader issues, such as the history of development in their areas. The students often participate in activities such as designing play areas, public open spaces, and street furniture. In some instances, benches and art installations designed by the participants have been incorporated into the design of a planning proposal and been implemented in the development.

Other forms of pre-application engagement

- 4.17 The most effective way to achieve good planning outcomes is for early community engagement in the planning application process. The Local Planning Authorities therefore expect developers to engage with local people in a meaningful way that, so that proposals are refined as they progress through the planning process. There are a number of ways to do this, including innovative methods:
- **Urban Rooms:** This is a [space](#) where members of the public are able to come together to discuss and engage with planning issues and are encouraged to express their views about proposed developments. They are sometimes transportable spaces, facilitating meaningful discussions with groups representing the local community. Urban Rooms and other such spaces should be well publicised and easily accessible to the community in order to enable effective community participation. The responses and dialogue at these events could be used to explore

refinements to proposals to achieve wider community support. Developers are encouraged to use feedback loops to explain how they have incorporated community feedback.

- **Co-design:** This process involves developers identifying residents of the scheme and working with them to design their new homes. [Marmalade Lane](#) in Orchard Park, Cambridge was produced by residents, Cambridge City Council, and the developer TOWN, and is an example of community collaboration at the pre-application stage.
- **Online tools:** Developers could use innovative online [engagement tools](#) that enable local people to easily identify areas which are of social value, and spaces that need improvement. The information gathered could be used to inform the content of development proposals.

The Planning Application Process

- 4.18 The [Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) Order 2015](#) (as amended) requires that at any time before a decision is made on a planning application, stakeholders and the local community should have the opportunity to comment on any aspect of the proposal. The level and extent of consultation will vary depending on the size, scale, location, and nature of the proposed development. Planning applications, supporting information and key dates are available for public inspection on the [GCSP website](#).
- 4.19 Comments, known as representations, that are received during the consultation period will be considered in decisions made by and on behalf of the Councils. Representations must be submitted in writing, electronically via email or through the [consultation system](#). Late representations may be considered up to the point of determination of the application, however it is highly recommended that they are received during the consultation period indicated. They can only be taken into account if they relate to material planning considerations. You can find more information on this on the [government's website](#) on the planning system. Representations will be added to the application file and made publicly available online alongside the planning application documents. These will be published in accordance with the Council's Privacy Notice.
- 4.20 When a planning application is registered by the Local Planning Authority, there is a statutory period during which anyone can comment on the proposal, as set out in Table 4. It is the Local Planning Authorities responsibility to publicise planning applications. The approach to notification of planning applications will be to:

- Publish details of planning applications online on [Public Access](#), including which applications have been registered, digital copies of Plans and supporting information. Our websites include a search function to help find specific planning applications.
 - Undertake appropriate notification as shown in Table 4. In some instances, the Local Planning Authority can go beyond the minimum statutory requirements where the development would potentially have a wider impact and may make use of additional methods of communication, for example through articles in the Councils' magazines. Such wider consultation is carried out at the discretion of the Planning Officer.
 - Parish councils in South Cambridgeshire as well as neighbourhood forums in the city of Cambridge are consulted on all appropriate planning applications as statutory consultees.
 - Consult with both statutory and non-statutory consultees. All consultees have 21 days (30 days for applications accompanied by an Environmental Statement) from the issue of the consultation notice to make representations (extended as appropriate where the period extends over public or bank holidays). It is highly recommended that representations are submitted prior to the published consultation deadline. The list of statutory and non-statutory consultees related to planning application consultations is set out in Appendix 5.
- 4.21 Where neighbour notification letters/emails are sent out, Neighbour notification letters/emails are sent to directly adjoining properties of the application site. The Planning Officer may sometimes determine that neighbour notification letters and emails should be sent beyond this where a development could potentially have an impact on a wider area.
- 4.22 In addition, Cambridge City Council operates a [Development Control Forum](#) where petitioners to an application can present their views to Councillors, Planning Officers and the applicant before a planning application is determined. The aim of the Forum is to allow early discussion of the planning issues raised by petitioners and to seek to resolve concerns. The Forum does not determine the outcome of the planning application.
- 4.23 It is at the discretion of the Local Planning Authority whether further publicity and public consultation is necessary when an application has been amended. In deciding if it is necessary, the Local Planning Authority will consider the criteria set out in [Planning Practice Guidance \(PPG\)](#) published by the Government. In most cases a period of 14 days is considered an appropriate period to allow for further comment.

- 4.24 Table 4 sets out how the Councils will publicise planning applications made under planning legislation. Each type of planning application will be the subject of a different method of publicity which will broadly reflect the scale and impact of the proposal on its surroundings.
- 4.25 Where an application falls within a Conservation Area a site notice may be required and the Local Planning Authority will advise. Certain classes of permitted development will require a Prior Notification application. In these cases, an application must be made to the Local Planning Authority who has to make its determination within the statutory period set out in the GDPO from the date of receiving the application. The time period can vary depending on the type and complexity of the proposal and in some cases in agreement with the applicant and Local Planning Authority. Prior notification applications will be publicised online and may in some instances include a site notice and neighbour consultation letter, depending on the type and nature of the development proposal. Further details about prior notification can be found at :-[Prior approval - Consent types - Planning Portal](#)
- 4.26 There is no statutory requirement to consult on the following types of applications:
- Certificates of Lawfulness of proposed use or development
 - Certificates of Lawfulness of existing use or development
 - Approval of details/Discharge of Conditions
 - Non material amendments.

Table 4: Minimum publicity for planning applications

Type of application required for	Minimum methods of publicity
Major Development	Site notice or neighbour notification letter/email, press notice in local newspaper, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Minor Development	Site notice or neighbour notification letter/email, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Householder Applications	Site notice or neighbour notification letter/email, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Applications subject to EIA which are accompanied by an Environmental Statement	Site notice or neighbour notification letter/email, press notice in local newspaper for a minimum of 30 days, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Applications which do not accord with the development plan for the area	Site notice, press notice in local newspaper for a minimum of 30 days, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Applications affecting a Public Right of Way	Site notice, press notice in local newspaper for a minimum of 30 days, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Listed Building applications and applications affecting the setting of a Listed Building	Site notice or neighbour notification letter/email, press notice in local newspaper, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Brownfield Land Register (Part 2)	Site notice, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Works to protected trees	Site notice responsible for by applicant, site notice or neighbour notification letter/email is discretionary (to be determined on a case by case basis by the Local Planning Authority) but the landowner must be notified, website, parish council notification letter/email is discretionary (to be determined on a case by case basis by the Local Planning Authority) and neighbourhood forum letter/email notification is also discretionary (to be determined on a case by case basis by the Local Planning Authority).
Applications relating to an advertisement	Site notice and/or neighbour notification letter/email, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.
Hazardous Substances Consent	Site notice and/or neighbour notification letter/email, press notice in local newspaper, website, parish council notification letter/email, neighbourhood forum letter/email notification.

Decision Making process

- 4.27 Decisions on planning applications are made by Planning Committee and Planning Officers under delegated powers. Delegated powers enable Planning Officers to determine applications without needing a decision from the Planning Committee. This is set out in the [Schemes of Delegation](#). Applications that are likely to be considered by the Planning Committee include applications for Major developments and applications relating to the demolition of a listed building or a Building of Local Interest.
- 4.28 The Councils are involved in three planning committees. There are two separate Planning Committees for the respective Local Planning Authorities. There is also the Joint Development Control Committee which addresses specific areas on the edge of the city, which comprises members appointed by the city and district council. This Committee considers planning applications for major and ancillary developments on the fringes of Cambridge.
- 4.29 Agendas and reports for Planning Committee are publicly available at least five working days before the meeting and are also published online. The committee meetings are minuted and published online. Members of the public may speak at a Planning Committee provided they have previously made written representations on the proposed development. Both Councils have further guidance and information regarding speaking at Committee Meetings and can be viewed on the City [website](#) and South Cambridgeshire [website](#), and on the joint committee [website](#).
- 4.30 Once an application has been determined, a copy of the planning decision notice will be sent to the applicant. As part of [The Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) \(England\) Order 2015](#), Local Planning Authorities are required to send notification of the decision to all third parties who have made representations, in accordance with the Local Planning Authorities statutory requirements. The Local Planning Authority will also make the decision available to view online through [Public Access](#) along with the reports that have been considered in the reaching of the decision. On the same website, a [weekly list](#) of validated and determined planning applications is made available for parish councils, neighbourhood forums and any other interested parties to be kept informed of planning decisions in their areas.

Planning Appeals

- 4.31 An applicant may appeal to the Planning Inspectorate against a refusal or contest any of the conditions imposed to the granting of permissions or the non-

determination of an application. Only the applicant has the right to appeal. The Local Planning Authority will support the appeals process by adding appeal documentation to the online planning file online on [Public Access](#). The Councils will inform all parties that were originally consulted on the application or made representations on the proposal of the appeal. A planning appeal will then be considered by the Planning Inspectorate, who will make the final decision on the proposal. The Local Planning Authority has no statutory requirement to notify neighbours or interested parties of the appeal decision. This will be made available on the Planning Inspectorate [website](#).

- 4.32 There are three procedures that an appeal can follow, written representations which usually relate to householder applications, advertisement consent and minor commercial (shop front) applications as well as a public hearing or a public inquiry. The Planning Inspectorate publish a [Planning appeals: procedural guide](#) where you can find more information about how appeals work and opportunities to participate.

Compliance

- 4.33 Planning compliance (formerly referred to as enforcement) describes the processes involved in ensuring that people comply with planning law and requirements of a planning permission. The majority of cases arise through referrals from the public, Councillors and Planning Officers. Many investigations are confidential, so the process involves little public consultation. Where a breach of planning control is reported, an Officer will investigate and assess the complaint, gather evidence, and establish what, if any, the most appropriate course of action should be.
- 4.34 Many investigations result in the submission of a planning application in an attempt to regularise a breach. When this is the case, the community can become more involved in the same way as with any other planning application. If the breach cannot be regularised, the Local Planning Authority will consider formal enforcement action. The Local Planning Authority will ensure that the complainant is informed of the outcome of the Council's investigation. Further information about the compliance process can be found on the [Councils websites](#), including the [GCSP's Compliance Policy](#).

National Infrastructure Planning

- 4.35 Introduced by the Planning Act 2008 to streamline the decision making for major infrastructure projects, National Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), are large scale infrastructure projects, which fall into one of the following categories:

- Energy Generation
- Transport Projects
- Water and Waste
- Pipelines

4.36 These projects can include new roads, railway lines, power stations, reservoirs and waste water treatment plants. NSIPs require a development consent order (DCO) and this process for granting planning permission is determined by the Planning Inspectorate. It is different from the usual planning application process. There are 6 stages to the process:

- Pre-application
- Acceptance
- Pre-examination
- Examination
- Recommendation and Decision
- Post Decision

4.37 Before submitting a major infrastructure project an applicant, for example, a developer or Government Department has a duty to carry out consultation on their proposals. The applicant must prepare a Statement of Community Consultation (SOCC) which sets out how the applicant proposes to consult the local community. It is a key opportunity for the Local Authority, using local knowledge, to inform how the consultation should be conducted. It is also at this stage the applicant will formally consult the statutory consultees, local authorities, affected parties and the local community of the proposal.

4.38 If you wish to participate in the examination of an application for development consent, you first need to register with the Planning Inspectorate by making a Relevant Representation about an application. More information can be found on the [Planning Inspectorate](#) website.

5.0 How can the community be involved in the allocation of planning obligation funds?

- 5.1 In certain circumstances a planning application will need to be supported by the provision of on site and/or off site infrastructure or financial contributions to make it acceptable in planning terms. An applicant will be required to enter into a planning obligation also known as S106 Agreement. Guidance on S106 Agreements is available on the Councils [Youtube](#). This is a legal agreement between the applicant or the landowner of the application site and the Councils. They normally deal with how a development will be carried out or the provision of new or improved infrastructure, community services or facilities.
- 5.2 Major or strategic developments generally have more complex obligations attached, but obligations may also be applied to small scale developments to achieve, for example, provision of affordable housing or sustainable travel measures.
- 5.3 Through consultations at pre-application stage and as part of the consideration of planning applications, the local community, key partners and stakeholders may give their views on the content of any likely planning obligations. This may be considered in line with previously identified projects and the priorities of both Councils. These will also be taken into consideration when the Council determines the planning application and any required obligations, in accordance with [Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy \(CIL\) Regulations](#) and in compliance with the three 'CIL' tests.
- 5.4 In some instances, the Councils will seek the views of local communities where developer contributions need to be spent on specific off-site infrastructure projects (for example public art or the refurbishment of a children's play space). These types of projects are usually overseen by other Council service areas where information on the scope of the project, funds available and geographically where the funds can be spent is set out on the relevant council website.

Biodiversity

- 5.5 The GCSP Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document was adopted in February 2022. It provides clear guidance on how developments should consider biodiversity at the start of the planning process to make sure Biodiversity Net Gain is integrated, increased and enhances development proposals. This is in line with the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan and the Environment Act 2021, which requires new development to provide

biodiversity net gain. The Councils will seek to require developers to deliver 20% BNG and under the scheme developers who are unable to meet BNG on site in the South Cambridgeshire area will be able to secure biodiversity off site from the Lower Farm BNG scheme in Fulbourn. Habitats will be secured for at least 30 years via obligations and/or conservation covenant and can be delivered on-site, off-site or via statutory biodiversity credits.

6.0 How the local community can prepare a neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order

- 6.1 The [Localism Act 2011](#) introduced the opportunity for local communities to prepare neighbourhood plans and neighbourhood development orders (NDOs). These may be prepared by parish councils or designated neighbourhood forums and form part of the statutory plan for the area which can be used in deciding local planning applications.
- 6.2 Neighbourhood plans set out policies for the development and use of land in a local area or neighbourhood. A neighbourhood plan helps set out a community's vision and can allocate sites for development of housing, employment and community uses. The neighbourhood plan cannot propose less growth than the Local Plan, prevent development from ever taking place in an area and is required to be in general conformity with strategic policies in the Local Plan. Once adopted a neighbourhood plan forms part of the development plan for the area and has the same status as a Local Plan.
- 6.3 Neighbourhood development orders (NDOs) grant planning permission for specific developments within a designated neighbourhood area and remove the requirement to submit a planning application for this type of development.
- 6.4 Whilst the neighbourhood plan making process itself is community led, Local Planning Authorities have a statutory duty to help local communities as set out in the [Neighbourhood Planning \(General Regulations\) 2015 regulations](#). Local Planning Authorities offer assistance through the [Support Offer](#) and [Toolkit](#) that provide guidance on how Local Planning Authorities will support and assist parish councils and neighbourhood forums that are preparing a neighbourhood plan. Neighbourhood plans are required to undergo independent examination and are subject to a referendum of the local community before they can be 'made'.
- 6.5 The SCI broadly sets out how the Local Planning Authorities carry out this duty to advise and assist parish councils and neighbourhood forums at each of the key stages. The amount of support provided will be subject to both the Local Planning Authorities resource availability and the needs of the parish council or neighbourhood forum. Further detailed guidance has been prepared by the Local Planning Authorities and is available on the [neighbourhood planning page](#) of the GCSP website.

Broad overview of how the Local Planning Authorities will provide advice and support for neighbourhood planning

Step One: Getting started

- 6.6 Planning Officers will provide advice online through the GCSP website and will respond to email or telephone enquiries about neighbourhood planning. Officers will meet with parish councils in South Cambridgeshire or neighbourhood forums in Cambridge City who may be interested in preparing a neighbourhood plan to:
- identify the area within which their plan would apply
 - the requirements of preparing a plan
 - any other alternative methods for groups to meet their local objectives
 - whether the parish council or neighbourhood forum has the necessary information to decide which approach works best.

Step Two: Designating a neighbourhood area or forum

- 6.7 For parish councils in South Cambridgeshire, an application form for a new neighbourhood area is to be completed and submitted by the parish council. For groups seeking to create a neighbourhood forum within Cambridge City, an application form for creating a neighbourhood forum is to be completed and submitted as well as the application for a new neighbourhood area.
- 6.8 Where consultation is required for a neighbourhood area this will be for a minimum of six weeks undertaken by the Local Planning Authority. The publicity for public consultation will correspond with the timescales and methods set out in Table 2. The Local Planning Authority can assist by preparing a map to show the proposed neighbourhood area.

Step Three: Preparing the plan and evidence base

- 6.9 Once the neighbourhood area is designated, the Local Planning Authority will meet with the parish council or neighbourhood forum to advise on:
- The adopted local plan, emerging policy and guidance documents;
 - What support the Local Planning Authority can give during plan-making process
 - Regulatory and legal requirements, including the requirement to meet the [Basic Conditions](#)
 - Sources of grants and technical support packages
 - Effective methods of public engagement

- Mapping support
- Sources of information including providing links to a library of resources
- The use of a planning consultant who specialises in neighbourhood planning.

6.10 During the preparation of the NP, the Local Planning Authority will:

- Provide information about where to find data for the evidence base
- Share information on contacts for key consultees
- Highlight the key allocations and designations on the local plan policies map that will impact the neighbourhood plan area
- Provide constructive comments on emerging draft policies in the NP against the [Basic Conditions](#)
- Provide guidance in the [neighbourhood planning toolkit](#) which includes how to prepare a NP and the evidence base and specialist advice on planning issues that may need to be included in the NP, such as local housing needs.

Step Four: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

6.11 There is a statutory requirement for neighbourhood plans to carry out an [Strategic Environmental Assessment](#) and [Habitat Regulations Assessment](#) to ensure:

- The emerging NP provides a high level of protection of the environment (SEA)
- The emerging NP protects and improves Europe's most important habitats and species (HRA).

6.12 A neighbourhood development order may also require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to ensure that the full knowledge of any significant effects on the environment are known. Other European directives or future regulations may apply in particular circumstances of a draft neighbourhood plan or neighbourhood development order and the Local Planning Authority will be able to advise at this stage.

6.13 For neighbourhood plans in both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire, the Local Planning Authority will organise and pay for the SEA and HRA screening of the neighbourhood plan up to a maximum cost of £2,000 including VAT. If the cost is higher than this or a repeat screening is required, the excess will need to be funded by the parish council or neighbourhood forum. The Local Planning Authority will also advise on third party technical support packages for any Neighbourhood Plan that requires a full SEA or HRA, particularly those

offered by [Locality](#) as part of the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities funding.

Step Five: Pre-submission consultation and preparing the plan for submission

6.14 The Local Planning Authority will advise the parish council or neighbourhood forum of how to apply for technical support packages that include a health check of the draft neighbourhood plan. This health check is carried out before they submit the neighbourhood plan and supporting documents to the Local Planning Authority.

6.15 The [health check](#) review considers whether the draft neighbourhood plan meets the [Basic Conditions](#) and the independent examiner will provide guidance on any amendments required to ensure the conditions are met prior to submission of the neighbourhood plan.

Step Six: Submission of the NP for Public Examination

6.16 The final stages of preparing the neighbourhood plan are undertaken with the Local Planning Authority as the lead rather than the parish council or neighbourhood forum. The Local Planning Authority will keep the parish council or neighbourhood forum informed of progress and liaise with them to resolve any issues as the plan goes through the examination and referendum stages of the process. This will include liaising with the parish council or neighbourhood forum regarding:

- The appointment of an examiner
- Arrangements for any public hearing that might be necessary
- Changes proposed in the Examiner's Report to ensure the neighbourhood plan meets the [Basic Condition](#) tests
- Any changes required to the neighbourhood plan.

Step Seven: Public referendum and adoption

6.17 Subject to a successful outcome of the Public Examination, the Local Planning Authority will then inform the parish council or neighbourhood forum of the Council's decision to proceed to referendum and subsequent timescales. The organising of the public referendum and publicity regarding its outcome will be undertaken by the elections team at the Council, rather than by the Local Planning Authority.

- 6.18 Subject to a successful referendum, the neighbourhood plan will then be made by the Council as part of the statutory Development Plan for the area.

7.0 Monitoring and Review

- 7.1 The SCI is based on current national planning policy and legislation. As per the [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) (as amended), the Local Planning Authorities are committed to reviewing the SCI at least every five years from the time of adoption to ensure that it is up to date and reflects current legislation and best practice.
- 7.2 Should significant changes be made to national legislation which no longer apply to elements of the SCI, the Local Planning Authorities will endeavour to update the SCI as soon as possible.
- 7.3 Each year the GCSP produces a joint Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) which is a statutory requirement for all Local Planning Authorities. The AMR monitors and reviews the performance of planning policies set out in the adopted Local Plans and Area Action Plans and provides a general overview of the social, economic, and environmental trends taking place across Greater Cambridge. The AMR also assesses the Councils progress in producing the Local Plan and Area Action Plans against the timetable set out in the [Local Development Scheme](#) (LDS). You can find more information on the AMR on our [website](#).
- 7.4 GCSP continues to review the outcomes of our consultations and reflect on the lessons learnt during the process. As part of the First Proposals for the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan, we published a [report](#) alongside the full record of comments and feedback from the [First Conversations](#) and [Call for Sites](#) consultation. The report sets out the methodology followed in collecting and presenting the datasets and a quantitative analysis of the data. It also provides an overview of the outreach of the First Conversations consultation and the ways we engaged with our communities and statutory consultees.

Appendix 1: Glossary

Abbreviation	Term	Definition
AMR	Authority Monitoring Report	The AMR describes progress against the Local Development Scheme and monitors the impact of planning policies included in the Development Plan documents. Authority Monitoring Reports were formerly known as Annual Monitoring Reports.
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment	Process of evaluating the likely environmental impacts of a proposed scheme or development, taking into account positive and negative impacts related social, economic, cultural and human health.
GSCP	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning	The Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service, formed in 2018, is a partnership between Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils, which provides planning service to both councils.
LNP	Local Nature Partnerships	Are coalitions of organisations, businesses and people from a range of sectors, who aim to improve local natural environments.
LPA	Local Planning Authority	They are responsible for planning functions of an area. Usually through the planning service of a Borough, District or Unitary Council
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	Sets out the Government's planning policies in England and provides a framework in which local plans can be produced
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement	Sets out how and when stakeholders, partners, the community and others will be consulted and the requirements to be met in producing for example any new local development plan documents or supplementary planning documents.
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document	Provides additional details to help implementation of policies set out in development plan documents.
S106	Section 106 Planning Agreement	This is a legal agreement between the applicant or land owner of the application site and the Councils. The agreement deals with how a development will be carried out or the provision of funds for new or improved infrastructure, community services or facilities to support growth and development.

Appendix 2: Consultation Bodies for Plan-making

The [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) (as amended) specify a number of organisations that local planning authorities should consider consulting when preparing planning policy documents. These are known as Specific Consultation Bodies and General Consultation Bodies.

The Regulations allow the councils to select ‘such of’ the Specific and General Consultation Bodies that may have an interest and/or the Local Planning Authority consider appropriate to the consultation document being prepared.

The organisations the Councils will consult will be drawn from the list in this Appendix and will depend upon the nature of the consultation being undertaken, bearing in mind:

1. The area covered by the document - certain organisations may only operate in parts of Cambridge and/or South Cambridgeshire
2. The subject matter of the document - an SPD may address a specific topic which may only be of interest to some organisations.

The consultation bodies outlined in this Appendix are common to both Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. Where there are differences between the councils, these have been identified below.

Specific Consultation Bodies

The Specific Consultation Bodies are defined in the [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#), Part 1 as the following:

- The Coal Authority(b) (The Coal Authority has advised South Cambridgeshire District Council it does not wish to be consulted)
- The Environment Agency
- The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (now known as Historic England)
- The Marine Management Organisation(e)
- Natural England
- Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (company number 2904587) (Network Rail Office of Rail Regulation)
- The Highways Agency (now known as Highways England)

- Relevant authority any part of whose area is in or adjoins the local planning authority's area:
 - a) A local planning authority

Table 5: Local Planning Authorities who will be consulted

Local Planning Authority	Council who will be consulting
Bedford Borough Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Braintree District Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Cambridge City Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
East Cambridgeshire District Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Fenland District Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Huntingdonshire District Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
North Hertfordshire District Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Peterborough City Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council	Cambridge City Council
Uttlesford District Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
West Suffolk Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council

- b) A county council referred to in section 16(1) of the Act

Table 6: County Councils who will be consulted

County Council	Council who will be consulting
Cambridgeshire County Council	Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council
Essex County Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Hertfordshire County Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council
Suffolk County Council	South Cambridgeshire District Council

- c) A parish council

South Cambridgeshire District Council will consult with parish councils within South Cambridgeshire; and parish councils which adjoin South Cambridgeshire. Cambridge City Council will consult parish councils within South Cambridgeshire which adjoin the City.

- d) A local policing body (Cambridgeshire Constabulary)
- any person—
 - (i) to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under section 106(3)(a) of the Communications Act 2003, and
 - (ii) who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the local planning authority's area,

- If it exercises functions in any part of the local planning authority's area—
 - (i) a Primary Care Trust established under section 18 of the National Health Service Act 2006(g) or continued in existence by virtue of that section; (formerly known as Clinical Commissioning Groups, now known as Integrated Care Boards (ICBS))
 - (ii) a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 6(1)(b) or (c) of the Electricity Act 1989(h)
 - (iii) a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986(a)
 - (iv) a sewerage undertaker
 - (v) a water undertaker
- The Homes and Communities Agency (now known as Homes England); and
- where the Local Planning Authority are a London borough council, the Mayor of London (not applicable to Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire).

General Consultation Bodies

The General Consultation Bodies are defined in the [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#), Part 1 as the following:

- a) voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit any part of the local planning authority's area
- b) bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the local planning authority's area
- c) bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the local planning authority's area
- d) bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the local planning authority's area
- e) bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the local planning authority's area

The Local Planning Authorities must also ensure they meet the requirements of the [Equality Act 2010](#). To ensure the views of harder to reach groups are represented, the Local Planning Authorities will work closely with relevant organisations that have experience in a particular matter to find the best way of consulting and liaising with these groups.

The Local Planning Authorities will also consult with other consultation bodies which they consider to be appropriate to planning and who do not fall into the above categories. These may include:

- Residents' Associations

- Developers and agents
- Landowners
- Special interest groups.

Duty to Co-operate Bodies

The Duty to Cooperate Bodies are defined in [Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012, Part 2, Regulation 4](#) as follows:

- The Environment Agency
- The Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (known as Historic England)
- Natural England
- the Mayor of London (not applicable to Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire)
- The Civil Aviation Authority
- The Homes and Communities Agency (now known as Homes England)
- Each Integrated Care Board established under section 14D of the National Health Service Act 2006 (formerly known as Clinical Commissioning Groups)
- The National Health Service Commissioning Board
- The Office of Rail Regulation (known as the Office of Rail and Road)
- Transport for London (not applicable to Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire)
- Each Integrated Transport Authority
- Each highway authority within the meaning of section 1 of the Highways Act 1980 (including the Secretary of State, where the Secretary of State is the highways authority)
- The Marine Management Organisation.

In addition, [Planning Practice Guidance](#), Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 9-006-20160519 states:

“Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships are not subject to the requirements of the duty. But local planning authorities and the public bodies that are subject to the duty must cooperate with Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Nature Partnerships and have regard to their activities when they are preparing their local plans, so long as those activities are relevant to local plan-making.”

The [Local Nature Partnership](#) for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough is Natural Cambridgeshire. The role of Natural Cambridgeshire is to act as an independent, objective voice for the Natural Environment in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, acting as a conduit to local and central government and other stakeholders. The main focus for the Natural Cambridgeshire Board will be to provide strategic leadership, coordinating partners to deliver projects and activity that will meet the Partnership’s vision and aims. More information regarding Natural Cambridgeshire is available on their [website](#).

Appendix 3: Council offices where planning consultation documents will be made available for public inspection

It should be noted that where documents are being produced by an individual Council rather than jointly, documents will only be made available for public inspection at the relevant Council office.

Table 7: Addresses for Councils

Council	Address
Cambridge City Council	Customer Service Centre Mandela House 4 Regent Street Cambridge CB2 1BY
South Cambridgeshire District Council	South Cambridgeshire Hall Cambourne Business Park Cambourne Cambridge CB23 6EA

The opening times for both offices can be found on the Councils websites and by calling the telephone numbers below. Both Councils operate an appointments system.

Table 8: Contact details for Councils

Council	Contact telephone number	Webpage
Cambridge City Council	01223 457000	Council offices - Cambridge City Council
South Cambridgeshire District Council	01954 713000	Council Offices - South Cambridgeshire District Council

Appendix 4: Statutory requirements for consulting on planning applications

The Local Planning Authorities are required to undertake a formal period of public consultation, prior to deciding a planning application. This is prescribed in:

- The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order [2015](#)
- The Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) (Amendment) Order [2017](#)
- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations [1990](#)
- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Amendment) (England) Regulations [2004](#)
- [The Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\) \(England\) Order \(as amended\)](#)

Appendix 5: Consultation Bodies for a Planning Application

Statutory Consultees that Cambridge City Council or South Cambridgeshire District Council may consult (those consulted will vary depending on the type of application)

- Ancient Monument Society
- Anglian Water Services Ltd
- British Gas
- British Telecommunications plc
- Cambridge Water Company
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
- Canal and River Trust
- Coal Authority
- Control of Major-Accident Hazards Competent Authority
- Crown Estates Commissioners
- Council for British Archaeology
- Department of Energy Security and Net Zero
- Designated Neighbourhood Forums
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)
- Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- Environment Agency (EA)
- Forestry Commission
- Health and Safety Executive
- Highways England
- Historic England
- Marine Management Organisation
- Mobile Operators Associations
- National Grid Transco
- Natural England
- Network Rail
- Parish Councils
- Rail Infrastructure Managers
- Rail Network Operators
- Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings
- Sport England
- Theatres Trust
- The Gardens Trust
- The Georgian Group
- Twentieth Century Society

- Victorian Society

Examples of Non-Statutory Consultees that the Councils may consult (those consulted will vary depending on the type of application)

- Cambridge Business Improvement District
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care Board
- Internal council service areas (such as Housing and Environmental Health) (as relevant)
- Adjoining Parish Councils and Local Authorities (as relevant)
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Emergency Services and Multi-Agency Emergency Planning
- Ministry of Defence
- Office of Nuclear Regulation
- Residents' Associations
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
- Police and Crime Commissioner
- Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire

If you wish to join our consultation database, please send your contact details to the email addresses shown below or if you would like to write to us, send your details to our offices shown below:

Table 9: Email Address for GCSP

Email address
planning@greatercambridgeplanning.org

Table 10 Postal Addresses for Councils

Council	Postal address
Cambridge City Council	Application Support, Cambridge City Council, PO Box 700, Cambridge, CB1 0JH
South Cambridgeshire District Council	Planning Department, South Cambridgeshire Hall, Cambourne Business Park, Cambourne, CB23 6EA



Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA): Statement of Community Involvement

Introduction – Please read


The Public Sector Equality Duty, introduced under the Equality Act 2010, requires all public bodies, including local authorities, to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) allow the Council to:

- Show that we are meeting this legal duty by demonstrating due regard for the provisions of the Public Sector Equality Duty
- Identify possible negative impacts on individuals and groups with protected characteristics, plan mitigating action and seek to maximise opportunities to advance equality within our activities.

EqIAs provide a methodical approach to the assessment of impacts across the [nine protected characteristics](#) and should be completed during the development and review of all Council policies, strategies, procedures, projects or functions. Where there is any doubt, the completion of an EqIA is always recommended.

Throughout the course of this form, please hover over the [>] symbol for guidance in relation to specific questions. When the form is completed, please send an



electronic copy to equality.schemes@scambs.gov.uk. If you require any additional support completing the form, please email the above address.

Equality Impact Assessment Complete Form

Section 1: Identifying Details

- 1.1** Officer completing EqIA:
Ciaran Davis, Planning Policy Officer
- 1.2** Team and Service:
Planning Policy, Strategy and Economy - Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service
- 1.3** Title of proposal:
Statement of Community Involvement
- 1.4** EqIA completion date:
13.09.2023
- 1.5** Proposal implementation date:
Consultation anticipated for October – November 2023, formal adoption of the SCI anticipated for Spring 2024.
- 1.6** Who will be responsible for implementing this proposal:
Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils through the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service



Section 2: Proposal to be Assessed

2.1 Type of proposal:

Policy

2.2 Is the proposal:

An update

2.3 State the date of any previous equality impact assessment completed in relation to this proposal (if applicable):

June/July 2019

2.4 What are the headline aims of the proposal and the objectives that will help to accomplish these aims? (Approximately 250 words)

The review of the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council will engage the public in the planning process. The SCI describes how the public, businesses, stakeholders and interest groups within the local authority areas can engage in the creation/influence local planning policy and the planning application process which shapes where we live and work. This is essential to help improve understanding and openness of the planning process.

There is a legal requirement on Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to undertake public consultation on local plans, neighbourhood plans and planning applications. It is important that this is undertaken in a cost-effective, efficient and proportionate manner. This SCI is an important document as it will establish a minimum standard of consultation and publicity on planning matters for both Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils.



The SCI has been split into three main sections which cover the following roles and responsibilities of the planning service:

- Planning Policy including the production of planning policy documents including the Local Plan
- Development Management including how the councils consider and publicise planning applications, and
- Neighbourhood planning setting out how the councils will assist groups who are preparing neighbourhood plans

The Councils are committed to treating everyone fairly and justly, and wants to ensure that everyone gets an opportunity to be involved in the planning process. We recognise that consultation and engagement activities are constantly evolving and this SCI will be revisited at regular intervals to ensure it is fully up-to date and reflects local and national priorities, practices and policies.

2.5 Which of South Cambridgeshire District Council's business plan priorities does this proposal link to?

- Helping Businesses to grow - ✓
- Building homes that are truly affordable to live in -
- Being green to our core - ✓
- A modern and caring council - ✓

2.6 Which of South Cambridgeshire District Council's equality objectives (as detailed in SCDC's Equality Scheme) does this proposal link to or help to achieve?

- Identify, prioritise and deliver actions that will narrow the gap in outcomes between disadvantaged groups and the wider community- ✓

- SCDC is an employer that values difference and recognises the strength that a diverse workforce brings -
- Protected characteristic groups have a voice and are represented in forming the future shape of the district - ✓

2.7 Which of Cambridge City Council's equality objectives (as detailed in CCC's Equality Scheme) does this proposal link to or help to achieve?

- To further increase our understanding of the needs of Cambridge's growing and increasingly diverse communities so that we can target our services effectively - ✓
- To continue to work to improve access to and take-up of Council services from all residents and communities - ✓
- To work towards a situation where all residents have equal access to public activities and spaces in Cambridge and are able to participate fully in the community - ✓

2.8 Which groups or individuals will the proposal affect:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| • Service Users ✓ | • Councillors ✓ |
| • External Stakeholders ✓ | • Other ✓ |
| • Employees ✓ | |

If other, please specify – all residents and visitors to the Greater Cambridge area.

2.9 How will these groups or individuals be affected? (you will be asked to provide more detail on the specific impacts on different protected characteristic groups later on in the form) (approximately 250 words)

The SCI sets out how the public will have an opportunity to engage in the planning process in Greater Cambridge. The SCI describes how the public, businesses, interest groups and individuals within the local authority areas can get involved in the creation of local planning policy and the planning

application process aiming at shaping where we live and work. Therefore the SCI has the potential to affect a large and wide cross section of the community, including:

- Residents across Greater Cambridge
- Local Parish Councils and designated Neighbourhood Forums
- District and City Council Members
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Adjacent Local Authorities
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority
- Delivery partners, including land owners, developers, infrastructure providers, transport providers
- Community organisations
- Statutory, general and wider consultation bodies
- Local businesses

2.10 How many people will this proposal affect? (Approximately)

Land use planning and associated development have a fundamental effect on peoples live who live within Greater Cambridge.


The Planning Service's Authority Monitoring Report will include data on any consultations that have been undertaken during the relevant monitoring period, and will use the following indicators:

- Number of people participating in consultation
- Number of people using the councils' online website to make representations

- 2.11** If any part of the proposal is being undertaken by external partners, please specify how SCDC will ensure that they will meet equality standards?
(Approximately 250 words)

No external partners will deliver this policy but there is guidance on how developers should engage with local communities through the planning process.

Section 3: Evidence and Data

- 3.1** Describe any research (this could include consultation) and analysis you have undertaken to understand how [protected characteristic groups](#) are likely to be affected? Please list any key sources that you used to obtain this Information. 
(Approximately 250 words)

The Officers who are responsible for producing the SCI have examined census data, case studies of best practise at other councils, reports from professional bodies such as the Royal Institute of Town Planning, and researched Civil Service information about correct terminology. The data sources are embedded within the SCI document as hyperlinks. As part of the Consultation, GCSP is keen to hear from people who do fall within protected characteristic groups to understand how they can better engage with the Planning Service.

- 3.2** Describe any research (this could include consultation) and analysis you have undertaken to understand any effects on any other groups of people not mentioned in the nine [protected characteristic groups](#) (for example people

who live in rural areas, who live in areas of high growth, or from low income backgrounds). [📖](#)

(Approximately 250 words)

The Officers who are responsible for producing the SCI have examined census data, case studies of best practise at other councils, reports from professional bodies such as the Royal Institute of Town Planning, and researched Civil Service information about correct terminology. The data sources are embedded within the SCI document as hyperlinks. As part of the Consultation, GCSP is keen to hear from people who do not fall within protected characteristic groups to understand how they can better engage with the Planning Service.

- 3.3** If you have not undertaken any consultation, please detail why not, or when consultation is planned to take place. [📖](#)

(Approximately 250 words)

Subject to formal approval, consultation on the Statement of Community Involvement will take place in 2023.

Section 4: Impact of proposal on those with protected characteristics

4.1 [Age:](#)


- 4.1.1** Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.2 Disability

If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.1.2)

4.1.2 Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

Positive, medium impact.

It is anecdotally recognised that it can sometimes be more difficult to engage with younger age groups. Where possible and appropriate, relevant organisations and individuals will be identified to reach as wide an age range as possible during specific consultation and engagement activities. This could include external organisations such as Cambridge City Council's Community Development Team) as well as the GCSP Youth Engagement Project. Evidence suggests that some older people and those from lower income households are also less likely to have access to the internet. South Cambridgeshire District Council has a Digital Inclusion Strategy in order to support people who are excluded from using the internet gain access and skills they need to use it. Where documents or information is required they can be accessed or be viewed at accessible council offices. Planning applications are publicised by site notices and letters to neighbouring/adjacent properties or land.

4.1.3 Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?

4.2	Monitoring of the number of consultation responses to both planning applications and planning policy documents	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Authority Annual Monitoring Report to be endorsed by Members, usually in December each year.	Monitor and identify levels of public participation over a medium/long time period and identify opportunities to increase this where there is a significant decrease in engagement
	Update the EqiA once the consultation is complete	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Spring 2024	Team Leaders and the Equalities Officers at both councillors will ensure that the SCI actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.

Disability:


4.2.1 Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.3 Gender Reassignment

If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.2.2)

4.2.2 Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 

- approximately 250 words per impact

Positive, medium impact

The SCI identifies a range of external groups and organisations that may be consulted on planning matters, whilst the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service has a Disability Panel operating within Cambridge City helping to feedback on impacts new developments have on people with a range of disabilities. Forums or meeting are held at fully accessible public buildings e.g. council offices.

Evidence suggests that disabled people are more likely than non disabled people to be digitally excluded as IT equipment sometimes is not adapted to their individual needs. The consultation document can be made available on request in large copy print, audio cassette or Braille and officers are willing to meet individuals and talk issues through. This approach would also apply, as necessary, to subsequent consultation documents that are prepared in the plan making process. In respect of planning applications, information can be made available in a range of formats if required.

4.2.3 Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
Monitoring of the number of consultation responses to both planning	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Authority Annual Monitoring Report to be endorsed by Members, usually	Monitor and identify levels of public participation over a medium/long time period and identify

4.3

applications and planning policy documents		in December each year.	opportunities to increase this where there is a significant decrease in engagement
Update the Eqa once the consultation is complete	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Spring 2024	Team Leaders and the Equalities Officers at both councillors will ensure that the SCI actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.

Gender Reassignment:


4.3.1 Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

No

If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.4 Marriage and Civil Partnership

If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.3.2)

4.3.2 Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

4.3.3 Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?

4.4

Marriage and Civil Partnership:

4.4.1 Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?


No

If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.5

Pregnancy and Maternity

If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.4.2)

4.4.2 Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

4.4.3 Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?

4.5 Pregnancy and Maternity:


4.5.1 Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.6 Race

If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.5.2)

4.5.2 Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

Positive, low

Where people are required to care for children, it may be difficult for them to engage in consultation events and meetings. A number of the planning policy consultation events take place within and outside of usual working hours to try and ensure people are able to engage in the process and several take place online which can be more convenient for people to attend or watch back at an alternative time. Planning applications are available for public inspection online and can be accessed at any time of the day.

4.5.3 Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
Monitoring of the number of consultation responses to both planning applications and planning policy documents	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Authority Annual Monitoring Report to be endorsed by Members, usually in December each year.	Monitor and identify levels of public participation over a medium/long time period and identify opportunities to increase this where there is a significant decrease in engagement
Update the EqiA once the consultation is complete	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Spring 2024	Team Leaders and the Equalities Officers at both councillors will ensure that the SCI actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.

4.6

Race:


4.6.1 Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.7 Religion or Belief

If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.6.2)

4.6.2 Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

Positive, low

Under represented groups such as Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities are noted in the SCI as a known hard to reach group, and the SCI notes that in certain circumstances, the councils will consider targeted engagement with specific hard to reach groups/communities as we have done previously as part of the Local Plan process.

4.6.3 Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
Monitoring of the number of consultation responses to both planning applications and planning policy documents	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Authority Annual Monitoring Report to be endorsed by Members, usually in December each year.	Monitor and identify levels of public participation over a medium/long time period and identify opportunities to increase this where there is a significant decrease in engagement
Update the EqiA once the	Greater Cambridge	Spring 2024	Team Leaders and the Equalities Officers at

4.7

consultation is complete	Shared Planning service		both councillors will ensure that the SCI actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.
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Religion or Belief:


4.7.1 Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

No

If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.8 Sex

If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.7.2)

4.7.2 Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

4.7.3 Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?

4.8 Sex:


4.8.1 Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.9 (Sexual Orientation)

If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.8.2)

4.8.2 Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

Low, positive

Through undertaking public engagement and encouraging public participation on a range of planning matters, it is anticipated that a range of people will respond to consultations on both planning policy and planning applications. The Councils have a duty to take into account all comments and responses received, regardless of sex/gender. There are also opportunities for people to engage in Neighbourhood Planning.

4.8.3 Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

4.9

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
Update the Eqa once the consultation is complete	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Spring 2024	Team Leaders and the Equalities Officers at both councillors will ensure that the SCI actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.

Sexual Orientation:


4.9.1 Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

No

If you have selected no – please move forward to question 4.10 (Other)

If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.9.2)

4.9.2 Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

4.9.3 Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?

4.10 Other: (e.g. rurality, growth, socio-economic status etc.).


4.10.1 Has your research identified that the proposal will have an impact on this protected characteristic?

Yes

If you have selected no – please move forward to question 5.1

If you have selected yes – please continue below (4.10.2)

4.10.2 Describe the impacts of the proposal on this protected characteristic group identified through your research, including

- whether each impact is positive, neutral or negative
- whether it is a high, medium or low impact. 
- approximately 250 words per impact

Positive, medium

It can be difficult to contact some low income groups if they have limited access to the internet and transport, and the SCI sets out that where additional mechanisms are required to improve levels of engagement on planning matters that bespoke methods may be used. This will be considered in detail taking into account the subject matters and geographic scope of each new stage of plan making, and in respect of planning applications.

Evidence suggests that some older people are also less likely to have access to the internet. The Councils have a Digital Inclusion Strategy and Digital Access Strategy

in order to support people who are excluded from using the internet gain access and skills they need to use it. Planning policy documents and planning applications are made available to be viewed at Council Offices.

Rural access to high speed internet is also an issue within the district and part of the council's Business Plan is to work with partners to improve broadband and mobile phone coverage across the district. To assist with viewing planning documents online, the councils' will generally split large documents, such as a Design and Access Statement, when they exceed 50 pages or 10MB in file size to assist users with downloading and viewing large files.

4.10.3 Please complete the table below to detail actions that need to take place to minimise the negative and maximise the positive impacts raised in the previous question:

Action	Responsible Officer	Timescale for completion	How will the actions be monitored?
Monitoring of the number of consultation responses to both planning applications and planning policy documents	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Authority Annual Monitoring Report to be endorsed by Members, usually in December each year.	Monitor and identify levels of public participation over a medium/long time period and identify opportunities to increase this where there is a significant decrease in engagement
Update the EqiA once the consultation is complete	Greater Cambridge Shared Planning service	Spring 2024	Team Leaders and the Equalities Officers at both councillors will ensure that the SCI

			actions are implemented so that both Councils are compliant with public sector equality duty.
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Section 5: Summary

- 5.1** Briefly summarise the key findings of the EqIA and any significant equality considerations that should be taken into account when deciding whether or not to proceed with the proposal (this section can be included within the 'equality implications' section of any committee reports). (Approximately 250 words)

The EQIA demonstrates that the Statement of Community Involvement will potentially have positive impacts for a number of groups. GCSP is keen to carry out consultation on this document to incorporate the views of the public to see how we can enhance these positive impacts and reduce any potentially negative impacts. GCSP is also committed to monitoring the efficacy of this document to ensure that it actually delivers the positive benefits set out in this EQIA, and we are willing to work with Equality Officers at both Councils to achieve these aims.

- 5.2** Confirm the recommendation of the officer completing the EqIA (delete as appropriate):
- Approved (No major change): Your analysis demonstrates that the policy is robust, and the evidence shows no potential for discrimination and that you have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.
- 5.3** Signature of individual completing EqIA:

Ciaran Davis

5.4 Date of completion:
13.09.2023

Section 6: Sign Off

6.1 Approving officer EqlA review outcome: (delete as appropriate):

- Approved (No major change): Your analysis demonstrates that the policy is robust, and the evidence shows no potential for discrimination and that you have taken all appropriate opportunities to advance equality and foster good relations between groups.

6.2 Do you give permission to publish this EqlA on SCDC website (delete as appropriate)? If no, please state reason
Yes

6.3 When will this proposal next be reviewed and who will this be?
Spring 2024, post public consultation on the draft Statement of Community Involvement

6.4 Approving officer signature:
Helen Crowther / Kate Yerbury / Emma Pearson

6.5 Date of approval:
13/09/2023

Please send a copy to Equality.Schemes@scambs.gov.uk

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Agenda Item 12



**South
Cambridgeshire
District Council**

Report to:	Cabinet	28 September 2023
Lead Cabinet Member:	John Williams - Lead Cabinet Member for Finance	
Lead Officer:	Peter Maddock - Head of Finance	

2023/2024 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring (Quarter 1)

Executive Summary

1. To consider the latest monitoring data and trends in respect of the 2023/24 General Fund revenue, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and capital budgets and emerging budget issues.

Key Decision

2. No.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that cabinet considers the report and, if satisfied, to:
 - (a) **Note the 2023/24 revenue position against the approved revenue budget to date shown in Appendix B, the projected major variances with reasons for these variances at Appendices C1 to C7 and the action being taken to address the underlying issues.**
 - (b) **Note the latest Capital Programme 2023/24 position [and variances, if any] as shown in Appendix D.**

Reasons for Recommendations

4. To advise the Cabinet of the latest monitoring information in respect of the 2023/24 revenue and capital budgets and emerging budget issues, for the first quarter period to 30 June 2023.

Details

2023/24 Revenue Budget Monitoring – Overview

5. Effective budget monitoring is a requirement of the Council's Financial Regulations and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and is critical to sound financial management. This process enables the Cabinet to monitor the approved budget, to identify emerging issues and, where appropriate, to put plans in place to address forecast budget issues.
6. A framework for budget monitoring has been established and this enables budgetary performance and agreed efficiency actions to be monitored through the use of performance flags (Red, Amber and Green – RAG Status) and Direction of Travel indicators. This provides a statement of financial health and an overview of how the Council is utilising its resources.
7. An integral part of the monitoring process is the regular meetings with Budget Holders to proactively monitor compliance with the approved budget. This enables the identification of potential risks and emerging budget pressures so that appropriate action can be taken at an early stage.
8. The Council like many other organisations will be affected by the significant increase in inflation and cost of living in one way or another over the forthcoming months. there will be some financial challenges as a result, and this has had a more significant impact on the Housing Revenue Account than the General Fund.

Revenue Budget Monitoring – 2023/24 Efficiency Assumptions

9. The ongoing process also includes the monitoring of compliance with the efficiency assumptions built into the 2023/24 revenue budget. The evaluation of the efficiencies has been made on the basis of a RAG rating using the following criteria:

The proposal has been implemented and is on target to achieve the budgeted saving in this financial year.	Green
The proposal has or is being implemented but the delivery of the savings have been delayed but will be achieved in full in a future financial year or years.	Amber
The proposed saving will now not be delivered or the level of saving is expected to be lower than that included in the current year budget.	Red

10. The original budget for 2023/24 included efficiency proposals totalling £1,766,000 comprising of £74,000 one off savings and £1,692,000 ongoing savings. The range of efficiency proposals are summarised at **Appendix A** the current status of these are shown in the appendix.
11. The areas of efficiency savings continue to be subject to ongoing review and there are no further areas of concern at this stage.

Revenue Budget Monitoring

12. This report represents the revenue monitoring information for the period 1 April 2023 to 30 June 2023.
13. A summary of budget variances is reported at **Appendix B**, with explanations for significant items of variance reported at Appendix C1 to C6 (General Fund) and Appendix

C7 (Housing Revenue Account). with explanations for significant. The variances have been assigned a RAG status (Red, Amber and Green) based on the following:

Under spends and overspends up to 2% of the budget	Green
Overspends between 2% and 10% of the budget	Amber
Overspends greater than 10%	Red

14. It is to be noted where negative variances are shown in the appendices, they represent underspends against the budget or when income is greater than the budget.

Revenue Budget Monitoring –Variances

15. The ongoing monitoring and assessment of the 2023/24 revenue budget has not identified any issues that need to be kept under review.

Salary Budgets

The table below identifies the variance on salary budgets by service area as at 30 June 2023:

	2023/24			
	Budget to date (30 June 2023)	Actual to date (30 June 2023)	Variance	Variance %
Chief Exec Office	356,850	281,099	(75,751)	-21%
Climate, Environment & Waste	2,440,440	2,399,456	(40,984)	-2%
Finance	999,003	915,072	(83,931)	-8%
Housing	1,645,110	1,524,954	(120,156)	-7%
Greater Cambridge Shared Planning	1,781,340	1,860,460	79,120	4%
Transformation, HR & Corporate	1,311,030	1,265,999	(45,031)	-3%
Total	8,533,773	8,247,041	(286,732)	-3%

The analysis takes account of the cost of agency staff backfilling vacant permanent posts (with agency costs generally much higher than permanent appointment). The overall variance stands at -3%.

16. The only area with an overspend comparative to the budget at the end of quarter 1 is Planning. This relates to the necessary usage of agency and temporary staffing arrangements particularly in Development Management, Strategic Sites and Technical Support Team. £24,420 contribution from the Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) is to offset some of the expenditure and £13,191 will be funded from the Defra grant for the Biodiversity net gain post.

Virement Movements

17. A virement is when a sum of money set aside in the budget for one purpose is then moved and used for another purpose. There have been no virement movements in the period 1 April 2023 to 30 June 2023.

Revenue Budget – Summary Position

18. The table below summarises the budgetary position relevant to each Service Area, with detailed information included at **Appendix B**, and further explanation of significant variances in **Appendices C(1) to C(7)**.
19. The Council has received £710,000 income during quarter one above the reported budget. This has obviously had a significant impact on the figures presented in the below table. Whilst there are several large variances, some of these might be significant in percentage terms but are not significant in monetary terms and others are delays in income and expenditure.

Directorate	Full Year Budget £'000	Budget to date £'000	Actual to date £'000	Variance to date £'000	Variance to date %
Chief Executives Office	2,457	439	322	(117)	-27%
Climate, Environment & Waste	10,584	(169)	(641)	(472)	-13%
Finance	8,607	902	1,160	258	29%
Housing General Fund	3,023	84	77	(7)	-8%
Greater Cambridge Shared Planning	6,088	658	166	(492)	-75%
Transformation, HR & Corporate	4,752	1,262	1,055	(208)	-16%
Net Service Costs	35,512	3,174	2,138	(1,037)	-33%
Overheads	13,333	2,405	2,366	(39)	-2%

20. The Council has a current underspend position of £1,037,000 (33%) on its net cost of service when compared to the budget. with some quite significant variances within the figures.
21. The only area with an overspend comparative to the budget at the end of quarter 1 is Finance. Housing benefit subsidy levels are set at the start of the year but because of an increase in case load relating to the cost of living crisis expenditure is running at a higher level. The subsidy position is re-assessed at the half way point of the year and will be brought in line with expenditure at that point.
22. The area of highest underspend is within Greater Cambridge Shared Planning, this was because income totalling £370,000 included in the actual to date was not known about when setting the budget. During quarter one the service received a grant of £80,321 from Defra for Biodiversity New Gain (BNG) and £290,000 from the Department of Levelling Up Housing & Communities (DLUHC) to deliver 'The Innovation Fund Project'. These sums will be spent on the projects in question over the remainder of the financial year.
23. The Transformation, HR & Corporate Services variance is due to receiving income from the Integrated Care System (ICS) in respect of setting up a community hubs network and a physical education programme within the district.

24. The position at the end of June 2023 is not necessarily a good guide to the final outturn and needs to be treated as such. Any extrapolations of the figures over the whole year will not give a true indication of the final outturn.

Capital Budget Monitoring

25. The Cabinet monitors the performance of the capital programme by reviewing on a regular basis the progress of all schemes. Regular reports on the Capital Programme to the Cabinet should identify the following changes:

- any schemes that are not being progressed as originally envisaged or those that are no longer required;
- the revised phasing of a scheme(s) having regard to the latest information and any changes in forecast funding;
- changes in funding requirements of committed schemes and the reasons relating thereto;
- any budget amendments.

26. The Capital Programme is summarised at **Appendix D**. It should be noted that the Capital Programme set out is that as approved by Council on 21 February 2023.

Options

27. The report provides monitoring information to ensure awareness of budget trends and emerging budget issues.

Implications

28. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial

29. The financial implications are outlined in the details section of the report.

Legal

30. The legal position and relevant issues can be summarised as follows:

(a) Revenue Budget

The Council is required, by law, to set a balanced revenue budget each year which for 2023/2024 this was approved by Council on 21 February 2023. The purpose of this report in accordance with best financial management practice is to advise Cabinet of any

significant variations from that budget.
(b) Capital Programme

Prudential Indicators that underpin the Council's capital investment demonstrate that the investment is prudent, sustainable and affordable. The Council is required, in compliance with the Code, to monitor and report performance against established Prudential Indicators. The ongoing review of the capital programme is required to effectively monitor these indicators.

Risks/Opportunities

31. The risk implications can be summarised as follows:

(a) Revenue Budget

When the Council considers each revenue service and function budget it is important that endeavours are made to identify potential risks. Inevitably, during the course of the financial year, some of these risks will occur and impact on the budget by either requiring further expenditure or by reducing the Council's budgeted income.

The budget is monitored on a regular basis to identify risks and take action to mitigate the risks when they arise. The Council holds a contingency with regard to budgetary risk in year, together with a range of Reserves to deal with specific issues.

(b) Capital Programme

In relation to Capital resources, the following risks should be taken into account when considering this report:

- (i) Capital schemes can emerge at any time based on newly identified needs or changes in legislation which require funding to be identified;
- (ii) The forecast cost/timing of existing schemes may vary as implementation is undertaken;
- (iii) Forecast capital receipts may not be achieved which could result in some schemes not proceeding until other sources of capital finance become available or unless further recourse is made to borrowing;
- (iv) Key risks associated with the Capital Programme are that budgets are not adequate, leading to overspend with consequent financial implications or that the schemes will not meet the desired objectives.

Consultation responses

32. None

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

Growing local businesses and economies

33. The report provides an update on the latest budget position of those service areas who are providing extra support to local businesses adapting to Covid secure measures via several different grant schemes as directed by Central Government.

Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in

34. This report supports the Councils business plan by providing an update on the New Build Programme within the Capital Programme and HRA budgets for 2023/24.

Green to our core

35. The 2023/24 revenue and capital position provides reasons for variances on a number of schemes relating to the green to our core element of the Councils business plan.

A Modern and caring Council

36. The Council provides an update on the income position which was generated from investments and other commercial activities. In addition, the report supports the Councils business plan by providing an update on expenditure that it would not normally incur to support residents and businesses within the district especially those in hardship.

Background Papers

- Medium Term Financial Strategy – Report to Cabinet: 12 December 2022
- Capital Programme Update – Report to Cabinet: 12 December 2022
- Budget Report – Report to Cabinet: 06 February 2023
- Business Plan 2023/2024 Revision – Report to Council: 21 February 2023

Appendices

Appendix A: Service Efficiency/Income Generation Assumptions 2023/24: Update

Appendix B: Budget Monitoring by Service Area – Position as at 30 June 2023.

Appendix C: Explanation: General Fund & HRA Budget Variances – Position as at 30 June 2023.

Appendix D: Capital Programme – Financial Update Position as at 30 June 2023.

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Service Efficiencies/Income Generation Assumptions: 2023-2024 (Ongoing)

Directorate	Cost Centre	Title	Description of Budget Proposal	2023/24	Forecast	Update on Delivery	Performance
				£'000	£'000		RAG
All	All	Corporate - all services	Transformation programme savings	(720)	(165)	The MTFS includes savings generated from the transformation program. These remain on track to be delivered, and the likely delay in the fair funding review has allowed these savings to be reprofiled for delivery by the end of the 2025/26 financial year. This allows extra time for the transformation to become embedded before budgets are reduced, further ensuring continuity of service for residents. However, this will not slow down the delivery of streamlined processes or the provision of increased self-serve options.	Amber
Chief Executive	Commercial Development and Investments	Investment income	Net income to the General fund from investment in Commercial Properties	(493)	(741)	Income from 270 Science Park will be higher than expected due to earlier occupation dates than assumed in the budget.	Green
Climate, Environment and Waste	GCSWS	Commercial waste income	Expand and grow the commercial waste collection service.	(25)	(25)	On Target	Green
Climate, Environment and Waste	Greater Cambridge Waste Service	Fleet vehicle washing & bin washing new service offering	Full time operative to work on service, operating 3 days a week commercially & 2 days a week on RCV washing & Depot jobs. Will become a self-financing position once established. (Total increased income £15,000 in first year, split 50:50 between South & City Councils)	(5)	(5)	On Target	Green
Climate, Environment and Waste	Environmental Protection	Savings on Consultancy Budget within Environmental Protection	Consultancy budgets not required within the service as sufficient skillset is now available internally.	(15)	(10)	It's been necessary to incur expenditure related on external consultancy services in respect to contaminated land during quarter one. As a result of this only some of the projected saving will now be realised in 2023/24.	Amber
Finance	Revenues and Benefits	Ctax review	Review of all council tax exemptions/discounts using data matching techniques (countywide project).	(35)	(35)	This income comes to the Council in the form of additional council tax. The post was recruited to during quarter 1 and work commenced on the data matching during the second half of July.	Green
Finance	Interest	Additional income from ESH lending	Increase in interest % charged on ESH loans: to increase all loans to Ermine St to 4.25% for 2023/24 the increase in income (or saving) will be £399,000 compared to the current loans at 3.85% and 1%.	(399)	(399)	On Target	Green
			Total Estimated Savings	(1,692)	(1,380)		
			Value Attributable to HRA *	(80)	(80)		
			Value Attributable to General Fund	(1,612)	(1,300)		

*Some initiatives will bring savings to the Housing Revenue Account because they are of a corporate nature.

Service Efficiencies/Income Generation Assumptions: 2023-2024 (One Off)

Directorate	Cost Centre	Title	Description of Budget Proposal	2023/24	Forecast	Update on Delivery	Performance
				£'000	£'000		RAG
Climate, Environment and Waste	Commercial and Licensing	Additional income from certificate services	Creation of additional income streams through additional primary authority and export certificate services to private sector clients (£10k) and additional street Trading policy income (£5k)	(15)	(8)	Following an economic downturn and cost of living crisis the service is finding it challenging to achieve the additional income from a commercial environment. The initial expected £15,000 will now not materialise in 2023/24, though the service expects to achieve half of the projected amount.	Amber
Planning	Planning - Strategy and Economy	Planning - Strategy and Economy budget adjustments	Increased revenue from delivery against BNE Business Plan offset by changes in income streams.	(59)	(59)	On Target	Green
			Total Estimated Savings	(74)	(67)		
			Value Attributable to HRA *				
			Value Attributable to General Fund	(74)	(67)		

*Some initiatives will bring savings to the Housing Revenue Account because they are of a corporate nature.

2023/24 Q1- Financial Position & Variance

Directorate	Full Year Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual to Date £'000	Variance to Date £'000	Variance to Date %
General Fund					
Chief Executive & Chief Operating Officer	2,457	439	322	(117)	-27%
Head of Climate, Environment & Waste	10,584	(169)	(641)	(472)	-279%
Head of Finance	8,607	902	1,160	258	29%
Head of Housing	3,023	84	77	(7)	-8%
Director of Greater Cambridge Shared Planning	6,088	658	166	(492)	-75%
Head of Transformation, HR & Corporate Services	4,752	1,262	1,055	(208)	-16%
Net Service Costs	35,512	3,174	2,138	(1,037)	-33%
Support Service Costs	13,333	2,405	2,366	(39)	-2%
Council Approved Contingencies	350	0	0	0	0%
Finance Charge Reversals	(4,374)	0	0	0	0%
Internal Drainage Board Levies	243	121	97	(25)	-20%
Contribution to Combined Authority from EZ Income	393	0	0	0	0%
Pension Deficit Funding	1,484	247	247	0	0%
Interest Payable	3,032	501	291	(210)	-42%
Investment Income	(7,003)	(1,751)	(2,056)	(305)	-17%
Revenue Contribution to Capital	3,054	0	0	0	0%
Appropriations to/(from) General Reserves	1,294	0	0	0	0%
Contributions to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	1,378	0	0	0	0%
Minimum Revenue Provision	1,329	0	0	0	0%
IAS 19 Reversals	(3,773)	0	0	0	0%
Total General Fund Expenditure	32,918	4,697	3,083	(1,614)	-34%
New Homes Bonus	(1,508)	(377)	(377)	(0)	0%
Other Government Grants	(488)	(160)	(165)	(6)	-3%
Business Rates Pool Gain	(1,000)	(250)	(250)	0	0%
(Surplus) / Deficit on Collection Fund re Council Tax	(75)	(19)	(19)	0	0%
(Surplus) / Deficit on Collection Fund re Business Rates	(695)	(174)	(174)	0	0%
Retained Business Rates (incl. Section 31 Grant)	(16,926)	(4,231)	(4,231)	0	0%
Funding Guarantee Allocation	(1,071)	(268)	(268)	0	0%
Council Tax Sharing Agreement	(25)	0	0	0	0%
Council Tax	(11,130)	(2,783)	(2,783)	0	0%
Total General Fund Income	(32,918)	(8,262)	(8,266)	(4)	0%

Directorate	Full Year Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual to Date £'000	Variance to Date £'000	Variance to Date %
HRA					
Supervision & Maintenance General	5,535	820	775	(45)	-5%
Supervision & Maintenance Special	1,769	288	286	(2)	-1%
Repairs & Maintenance	6,314	1,570	813	(757)	-48%
Capital Charges	7,436	0	0	0	0%
Corporate Management	718	0	0	0	0%
Other	394	39	75	36	-67%
Interest Payable on Loans	7,193	(59)	(59)	0	0%
Revenue Funding of Capital Expenditure	14,914	0	0	0	0%
Pension Deficit Funding	216	36	36	0	0%
Total HRA Expenditure	44,489	2,695	1,926	(769)	-29%
Income	(36,386)	(9,073)	(9,127)	(54)	-1%
Interest Receivable	(1,082)	0	0	0	0%
Transfer from Earmarked Reserve	(6,000)	0	0	0	0%
IAS 19 Reversals	(537)	0	0	0	0%
Total HRA Income	(44,005)	(9,073)	(9,127)	(54)	1%
Deficit / (Surplus) for the Year	484	(6,379)	(7,201)	(823)	-13%

Directorate	Full Year Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual to Date £'000	Variance to Date £'000	Variance to Date %
General Fund Capital					
Chief Executive & Chief Operating Officer	11,419	1,077	0	(1,077)	-100%
Head of Climate, Environment & Waste	2,572	637	1,089	452	71%
Head of Finance	272	3	0	(3)	-100%
Head of Housing	13,155	848	610	(238)	-28%
Head of Transformation, HR & Corporate Services	2,049	359	315	(44)	-12%
Total General Fund Capital	29,467	2,923	2,014	(909)	-31%

Directorate	Full Year Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual to Date £'000	Variance to Date £'000	Variance to Date %
HRA Capital					
Improvement to the Housing Stock	8,417	1,849	1,047	(802)	-43%
New Homes Programme	32,007	4,002	2,332	(1,670)	-42%
Repurchase of HRA Shared Ownership Homes	150	38	0	(38)	-100%
Preparation of Self-Build Plots	25	3	0	(3)	-100%
Total HRA Capital	40,600	5,892	3,379	(2,513)	-43%

Chief Executive & Chief Operating Officer Revenue Financial Monitoring

		First Quarter			Variance Budget v Actual		
Expenditure Items by Directorate	23/24 Full Year Budget £'000	23/24 Budget £'000	23/24 Actual £'000	22/23 Actual £'000	23/24 £'000	23/24 %	Reason for Variance
Major Income Items:							
Investment Properties Rent	(1,980)	(495)	(705)	(629)	(210)	-42%	Rent received from investment properties is higher than the profiled budget at the end of quarter one due to £208,000 income received in advance from a number of properties at the Cambridge Science Park and Colmworth Business Park.
Explained variances	(1,980)	(495)	(705)	(629)	(210)	-42%	

Head of Climate, Environment & Waste Financial Monitoring

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		First Quarter			Variance Budget v Actual		
Expenditure Items by Directorate	23/24 Full Year Budget £'000	23/24 Budget £'000	23/24 Actual £'000	22/23 Actual £'000	23/24 £'000	23/24 %	Reason for Variance
Major Expenditure Items:							
Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Operations	4,706	990	891	905	(99)	-10%	£86,000 of the underspend at the end of quarter one relates to the operational running costs of the fleet which is impacted by the volatility of the fuel market. The average price paid for diesel over quarter one was £1.13 per litre compared to £1.50 assumed in the 2023/24 budget.
Flood Defence and Land Drainage	150	47	24	46	(23)	-48%	The actual for Flood Defence and Land Drainage is lower than expected compared to the 2023/24 budget to date due the annual maintenance works for Webbs Hole Sluice pumping station not having taken place as planned. £16,000 was profiled to be spent in the first quarter of the year.
Green to the Core	253	31	13	15	(18)	-57%	The full year budget includes the cost of the zero carbon communities scheme and footway lighting programme. Expenditure in 2023/24 is lower than the comparative budget, though a total of £125,000 of grants has been awarded which will be paid in quarter two and three.
Explained variances	5,109	1,068	928	966	(140)	-13%	
Major Income Items:							
Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Operations	(8,502)	(3,580)	(3,832)	(2,971)	(252)	-7%	The full year budget for the Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service (GCSWS) includes all facets of the GCSWS i.e., domestic, and commercial collections as well as waste policy. £262,000 additional commercial waste income has been received in comparison to the budget at the end of quarter one.
Licensing: Taxi & Other	(441)	(108)	(104)	(94)	4	4%	No significant variances.
Explained variances	(8,943)	(3,688)	(3,936)	(3,065)	(248)	-7%	

Head of Finance Revenue Financial Monitoring

		First Quarter			Variance Budget v Actual		
Expenditure Items by Directorate	23/24 Full Year Budget £'000	23/24 Budget £'000	23/24 Actual £'000	22/23 Actual £'000	23/24 £'000	23/24 %	Reason for Variance
Major Expenditure Items:							
Rent Rebates (non HRA)	126	32	74	88	42	131%	The first quarter of 2023/24 continues to see an increase in the number of people placed in bed and breakfast accommodation. This is due to the rising demand for support because of the cost of living crisis.
Explained variances	126	32	74	88	42	131%	
Major Income Items:							
Investment Income - Interest	(5,703)	(1,426)	(1,525)	(1,047)	(99)	-7%	Interest income at the end of the first quarter 2023/24 is above expectations, mainly due to an increase in interest rates which are nearing 5% for short term cash holdings in money market funds or call accounts.
Explained variances	(5,703)	(1,426)	(1,525)	(1,047)	(99)	-7%	

Head of Housing Revenue Financial Monitoring

		First Quarter			Variance Budget v Actual		
Expenditure Items by Directorate	23/24 Full Year Budget £'000	23/24 Budget £'000	23/24 Actual £'000	22/23 Actual £'000	23/24 £'000	23/24 %	Reason for Variance
Major Expenditure Items:							
Homelessness	405	89	96	80	7	8%	The first quarter of 2023/24 has seen an increase in the demand for bed and breakfast accommodation driven by a shortage of available temporary accommodation and affordable homes through Homelink. The daily cost of bed and breakfast accommodation has also seen an increase in comparative to previous years.
Explained variances	405	89	96	80	7	8%	
Major Income Items:							
Homelessness	(648)	(557)	(648)	(585)	(92)	-16%	The variance at the end of quarter one 2023/24 relates to £39,000, an additional grant received for Domestic Abuse Victim Support. The increase in demand for bed and breakfast accommodation has also led to an increase in income via housing benefit receipts and recovery of costs not covered by benefit payments.
Improvement Grants	(730)	0	0	0	0	0%	No variances.
Community Lifeline Alarm Service	(185)	(47)	(40)	(44)	7	15%	The first quarter of 2023/24 has seen a small reduction in the levels of fee income compared to the first quarter of the previous year and the budget to date. This is because of the increased competition the service is facing from other lifeline suppliers.
Explained variances	(1,563)	(604)	(688)	(629)	(85)	-14%	

Director of Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Revenue Financial Monitoring

		First Quarter			Variance Budget v Actual		
	23/24 Full Year Budget £'000	23/24 Budget £'000	23/24 Actual £'000	22/23 Actual £'000	23/24 £'000	23/24 %	Reason for Variance
Major Expenditure Items:							
Greater Cambridge Local Plan	416	0	0	19	0	0%	No variances.
Explained variances	416	0	0	19	0	0%	
Major Income Items:							
Development Management	(2,681)	(613)	(691)	(640)	(78)	-13%	Development Management fees received in the first quarter have exceeded both the budget to date and previous years actual due to an increase in the number of planning applications received.
Greater Cambridge Local Plan	(211)	0	0	0	0	0%	No variances.
Strategic Sites	(920)	(170)	(156)	(337)	14	8%	Strategic Sites Income has seen a small decline compared to the budget due to planning performance agreement (PPA) income being £14,000 lower than the expected budget. It is expected in quarter two the actual and comparative will be on target.
Built & Natural Environment	(339)	(86)	(167)	(64)	(81)	-94%	The £80,000 variance at the end of quarter one 2023/24 relates to a Biodiversity net gain grant (BNG), which will be used to deliver measurable improvements for contributing to the recovery of nature while developing land.
Land Charges	(620)	(174)	(157)	(164)	17	10%	The first quarter of 2023/24 has seen a decline in the amount of official searches resulting in reduced levels of fee income compared to the first quarter of the previous year and the budget to date. It is difficult to predict the number of searches the service will receives as it is determined by the buoyancy of the housing market.
Explained variances	(4,771)	(1,043)	(1,171)	(1,205)	(128)	-12%	

Head of Transformation, HR & Corporate Services Financial Monitoring

		First Quarter			Variance Budget v Actual		
Expenditure Items by Directorate	23/24 Full Year Budget £'000	23/24 Budget £'000	23/24 Actual £'000	22/23 Actual £'000	23/24 £'000	23/24 %	Reason for Variance
Major Expenditure Items:							
ICT	1,924	0	7	0	7	100%	The small variance at the end of quarter one of 2023/24 arises from a change in the billing from 3CICT from quarterly to monthly. The amount relates to April charges only.
Mobile Warden Scheme	93	72	64	39	(8)	-11%	The small variance arises from a timing difference in the billing for the mobile warden scheme. It is expected in quarter two the actual and comparative will be on target.
Transformation	187	40	6	3	(34)	-84%	The actual to date is in line with the previous year actual though budgets for 2023/24 have been profiled to the work that was planned and programmed. There has been a short delay in commencing the service reviews which were due to begin in quarter one.
Voluntary Sector Grants	151	107	120	92	13	12%	The grants paid in 2023/24 to date compared to the budget are a little higher than expected due to the expenditure related to the Community Led Plans scheme which is funded from reserves.
Cambourne Offices	999	572	636	515	64	11%	The overspend at quarter one relates to the payment of the NNDR bill which was higher due to the recent business rate revaluation process.
Explained variances	3,354	791	833	649	42	5%	

Housing Revenue Account Financial Monitoring

		First Quarter			Variance Budget v Actual		
Expenditure and Income Items by Directorate	23/24 Full Year Budget £'000	23/24 Budget £'000	23/24 Actual £'000	22/23 Actual £'000	23/24 £'000	23/24 %	Reason for Variance
Housing Revenue Account - Expenditure							
Housing Repairs Planned	2,072	518	65	427	(453)	-87%	The 2023/24 annual planned cyclical works programme has commenced though the actual is significantly lower in the first quarter of this year than the previous year due to our contractors' experiencing issues with billing the council for works completed. It is expected that the next two quarters will begin to see further expenditure materialising as the contractors resolve their issue.
Housing Repairs Response	4,114	1,028	901	773	(127)	-12%	This budget covers the responsive repairs programmes, including repairs on change of tenancy and maintenance of disabled adaptations as well as the responsive repairs contract. Expenditure generally fluctuates throughout the year due to timing differences between the works being carried out and billed and also some technical issues with the billing process.
Explained variances	6,186	1,546	966	1,200	(580)	-37%	
Housing Revenue Account - Income							
Non Rent of Dwellings	(481)	(118)	(119)	(96)	(1)	-1%	No significant variances.
Gross Rent of Dwellings	(31,668)	(8,637)	(8,661)	(8,057)	(24)	0%	No significant variances.
Explained variances	(32,149)	(8,755)	(8,780)	(8,153)	(25)	0%	

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Capital Financial Monitoring

		First Quarter		Variance Budget v Actual		
Expenditure Items by Directorate	23/24 Full Year Budget £'000	23/24 Budget £'000	23/24 Actual £'000	23/24 £'000	23/24 %	Reason for Variance
General Fund Revenue						
Chief Executive & Chief Operating Officer						
Investment Strategy	3,980	995	0	(995)	-100%	The 2023/24 full year budget includes monies set aside for potential new commercial opportunities and regeneration projects. During quarter one no opportunities have materialised.
Waterbeach Renewable Energy Network (WREN)	6,020	82	0	(82)	-100%	No expenditure has occurred to date whilst preparatory work takes place initially on the solar park and options are sought before work can commence. It is likely there will be significant slippage into 2024/25.
Rural England Prosperity Fund Grant (REFP)	1,168	0	0	0	0%	No variances.
Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF)	251	0	0	0	0%	No variances.
Explained variances	11,419	1,077	0	(1,077)	-100%	
Head of Climate, Environment & Waste						
Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service	2,114	600	1,052	452	75%	The expenditure to date relates to the purchase of the electric refuse collection vehicle ordered during the previous year. A delay in the delivery of the vehicle has resulted in expenditure incurring against a budget which has yet to be rolled forward from the 2022/23 capital programme.
Street Cleansing	285	0	0	0	0%	No variances.
Land Drainage	28	0	0	0	0%	No variances.
Footway Lighting: Parish Maintained Street Lights	45	27	27	0	0%	No variances.
Renewable Energy: Additional EV Rapid Charging Facility	100	10	10	0	0%	No variances.
Explained variances	2,572	637	1,089	452	71%	

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Expenditure Items by Directorate	23/24 Full Year Budget £'000	First Quarter		Variance Budget v Actual		Reason for Variance
		23/24 Budget £'000	23/24 Actual £'000	23/24 £'000	23/24 %	
Head of Finance						
Cash Receipting System	10	3	0	(3)	-100%	No significant variances.
Corporate Fraud Case Management System	20	0	0	0	0%	No variances.
Contribution towards A14 upgrade (Inf)	242	0	0	0	0%	No variances.
Explained variances	272	3	0	(3)	0%	
Head of Housing						
Northstowe Community Projects	11,645	600	543	(57)	-10%	The full year budget includes monies set aside for the Northstowe Civic Hub, Sports Pavillion. and Community Centre. The Sports Pavilion is expected to be completed in August 2023 though it is envisaged no further expenditure will occur on the other builds during 2023/24. The capital programme will be re-profiled in recognition that much of this spend will now occur in 2024/25.
Repurchase of GF Sheltered Properties	525	125	0	(125)	-100%	This budget is reactive, and spend is dependent upon the number of homes which are re-presented to the Council in any year, and the value at which they are re-acquired.
Improvement Grants	985	123	67	(56)	-45%	During quarter one of 2023/24 a substantial amount of grant monies have been committed to improvement works which are work in progress. Though some expenditure has materialised it is expected in quarter two the actual and comparative will be on target.
Explained variances	13,155	848	610	(238)	-28%	
Head of Transformation, HR & Corporate Services						
ICT Development	267	0	0	0	0%	No variances.
Cambourne Offices	1,775	359	315	(44)	-12%	The full year budget is made up of several ongoing projects related to the maintenance of the building. The 2023/24 budget and actual to date relate to the curtain wall project. However, generally the majority of the works are phased to be undertaken in the latter part of the year which allows for preparation work to take place initially.
Human Resources System	7	0	0	0	0%	No variances.
Explained variances	2,049	359	315	(44)	-12%	
Total General Fund Capital Expenditure						
	29,467	2,923	2,014	(909)	-31%	

		First Quarter		Variance Budget v Actual		
Expenditure Items by Directorate	23/24 Full Year Budget £'000	23/24 Budget £'000	23/24 Actual £'000	23/24 £'000	23/24 %	Reason for Variance
Housing Revenue Account						
Improvement to the Housing Stock	8,417	1,849	1,047	(802)	-43%	The 2023/24 improvement works programme has commenced though the actual is significantly lower in the first quarter than the budget to date due to our contractors' experiencing issues with billing the council for works completed. It is expected that the next two quarters will begin to see further expenditure materialising as the contractors resolve their issue.
New Homes Programme	32,007	4,002	2,332	(1,670)	-42%	There is an underspend in the new build programme at the end of quarter one 2023/24 due to a short delay in the contract with the developers for schemes at Cottenham and Northstowe. Though these have now been agreed the payments related to these scheme will not materialise until the second quarter where it is expected that the actual and budget will be aligned.
Repurchase of Shared Ownership	150	38	0	(38)	-100%	This budget is reactive, and spend is dependent upon the number of homes which are re-presented to the Council in any year, and the value at which they are re-acquired.
HRA Land	25	3	0	(3)	-100%	No significant variances.
Total HRA Capital Expenditure	40,600	5,892	3,379	(2,512)	-43%	

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Agenda Item 13



REPORT TO: Cabinet

28th September 2023

LEAD OFFICER: Joint Director of Planning

Local Heritage List

Purpose

1. To establish the basis for a local list of Buildings of Local Interest across South Cambridgeshire District.
2. This is a key decision.

Recommendations

3. That Cabinet:
4. a) notes the progress made on the County-wide Local Heritage List Project (LHLP)
5. b) agrees that consultation is now carried out with owners of the buildings identified for inclusion within the Local List of Buildings within South Cambridgeshire District
6. c) Delegates to the Joint Director of Planning decisions to include and/or make changes the Local List following the consideration of responses received during the consultation period.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. SCDC does not currently have a process in place for the adoption of Buildings of Local Interest (BLIs) to recognise the significance of such non-designated heritage assets to the local environment/communities or to support policy NH/14 (Heritage Assets) in the SCDC Local Plan 2018 and its successor in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
2. Greater Cambridge Shared Planning has been collaborating with Cambridgeshire County Council and the other district Councils in Cambridgeshire to create local lists of heritage assets that are important to each of these areas. The project has generated a list of nominations for a local heritage list.
3. The proposal includes the alignment of processes for South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) and Cambridge City Council (CCC). The Local Heritage List Project (LHLP) has been an opportunity to establish a Local List for SCDC and to enhance the existing CCC list according to a unified set of criteria across the wider area.
4. Consultation with owners of buildings that have been put forward will give them the opportunity to respond to the nominations.

Background

1. National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG paragraph: 039) includes that: “It is important that all non-designated heritage assets are clearly identified as such. In this context, it can be helpful if local planning authorities (LPA) keep a local list of non-designated heritage assets, incorporating any such assets which are identified by neighbourhood planning bodies.
2. LPAs should also ensure that up to date information about non-designated heritage assets is included in the local historic environment record.
3. SCDC has not to date had a Local List of buildings of Interest. This County wide project has enabled SCDC to now do this in parallel with other districts to ensure we are following best practice across the County in a consistent manner.
4. Local Listing first and foremost recognises the special historic or architectural interest and significance of a heritage asset to its local area and its character. Predominantly, it refers to buildings, but also to other types of structure such as boundary walls, bridges, telephone boxes etc.
5. Inclusion of the properties within the list does not put in place any further obligations on the owners. They can still make alterations to a home, or site, as they can without the designation.
6. The benefit of having a Local list is that it enables a LPA and applicants/ developers to know what is held of local interest and is valued by the local community. Heritage asset included on a Local List is a heritage asset that has been determined to be of local interest and significant and as such meriting consideration during the planning process. This means that it can be considered against heritage planning policies when an application that would affect its significance is received by a Local Authority. This does not prevent change, however, helps ensure that the significance of the asset is recognised.
7. Policy NH/14 (Heritage Assets) in the SCDC Local Plan 2018 details how to “sustain and enhance the special character and distinctiveness of the district’s historic environment including its villages and countryside and its building traditions and details” and includes “non-designated heritage assets” (including BLIs).
8. A Local Heritage List Project for Cambridgeshire is being carried out as a result of an invitation by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) - now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) – to Councils in England to create pilot projects to identify local heritage assets on a consistent basis.
9. The Cambridgeshire project was proposed by six Local Authorities - The County Council (which hosted it), and the five District/City Councils. The joint bid successfully secured Government funding of £69,995 to establish the website and software platform; to fund a project development officer; and towards community/volunteer outreach. This was largely undertaken during 2022.
10. A project officer (hosted by Cambridgeshire County Council) was recruited in 2021 to co-ordinate volunteers and to promote the project. A particular success of the LHLP was the programme of engagement undertaken by the project officer, particularly in the face of COVID restrictions during the funded project period. The project officer attended events and arranged meetings for local history and social groups. This

helped to build relationships in the community and to reach audiences that do not normally engage with heritage.

11. The project also funded a website launched in January, for nominations (<https://local-heritage-list.org.uk/cambridgeshire>) with guidance on how to get involved and nominate buildings and heritage assets to be considered for the Local Lists to recognise their importance. Members were notified and there was considerable interest in the local press and mentions on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire.
12. Parish councils were emailed with a poster in January 2022. This was followed up in July with an update email, which generated significant renewed interest in the project. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils (CAPALC) was also contacted and Greater Cambridge Shared Planning (GCSP) directed those parishes developing Neighbourhood Plans to the criteria guidance section of the Local Heritage List platform (LHLHP) when considering non-designated heritage assets.
13. Ten volunteers came forward to provide nominations for the LHLHP - after seeing the opportunity through social media posts, or following talks given by the Project Officer. They were given training via one-to-one sessions, website resources and a volunteer 'meet-up' in Fenstanton.
14. As of early August 2023 there were 527 nominations for SCDC on the platform. Of these, 137 are assessed and ready to be incorporated onto the List (status = candidate ready); 199 are pending assessment/review (status = Candidate (work in progress)); a further 170 nominations require more detail (Status = Pre-candidate). 4 have been rejected and 17 have been deleted. The deletions are related to duplicates and data cleansing as part of the import. The platform will also incorporate existing assets from East Cambs DC's list (adopted 2017) and Cambridge City Council's existing list of Buildings of Local Interest (adopted 2006).
15. The majority of nominations In South Cambridgeshire district are of buildings such as houses and chapels, but also include for example, a cemetery (Melbourn), a village sign (Six Mile Bottom), a waterpump (Waterbeach), and a bridge/railings (Little Shelford).
16. The project has successfully addressed its main objectives; to agree standard criteria and assessment of NDHA and to lay the foundations for the adoption of Lists across the county, capturing the uniquely local heritage the areas possess.
17. A project summary event was held on 1st November 2022 in Cambridge Central Library and attended by Lead Cabinet Member for Planning, Cllr Dr.Tumi Hawkins and a representative from DLUHC to celebrate the work of the volunteers and to showcase the project.

Next Steps

18. The next steps are to formally adopt the process for Local Listing and to carry out consultation on buildings that have been successfully nominated so far. Owners will be notified that a building will be included in the Local List and invited to respond within four weeks of the notification. Responses will be encouraged to be relevant to the selection criteria and all responses received will be fully considered before an asset is included in the District's Local list.
19. It is also intended to send on update on the Local List project to Parish Councils to report the progress; advise that consultation will be taking place; and to reiterate that there is a process available to them/the public.

The Process for Local Listing.

20. Nominations with supporting information are made on the LHLHP website.
21. The same process and criteria will be used across Cambridgeshire.

22. The criteria for assessing potential assets across Cambridgeshire have been established by the project team and are based on the latest Historic England Local Heritage Listing guidance. An assessment scores an asset against criteria comprising: archaeological interest; architectural & artistic interest; group value; historic interest; rarity; and whether an asset is a landmark. These criteria are expanded in the appendix to this report and are also on the LHLP website. A sample scoring sheet is also included in the appendix.
23. Nominations are assessed by a panel of archaeological and historic environment officers against each criterion and scored accordingly. Scores are aggregated and if assets reach the minimum agreed threshold score for selection, the nomination is considered as included in the Local List, subject to the list being adopted by the relevant district authority/Director of Planning. This method of review has allowed for broad discussion and external scrutiny, whilst retaining the local focus for each district.
24. It is intended that this process created as part of the LHLP will be utilised to add the buildings within Cambridge City to the existing City list and so to ensure that there is a consistent approach across both areas.
25. The Local List is intended to remain open and active and is not considered to be exhaustive - further candidates for Local Listing may come forward. As and when and if they do, this process will allow for change to be recorded, for new assets to be recognised or for existing assets to be reassessed should more information come to light. The site is linked to the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record database, which is a user-friendly repository for text, documents and photographs, based on digital mapping. This will help make all local lists across the County far more accessible.
26. It is proposed that authority to accept additions to the SCDC Local List (or removals from it if new information arises) is delegated to the Joint Director of Planning - as it is already at Cambridge City Council.

Options

27. Having joined this County wide project, the Council needs to decide what to do with the nominations had have been received.
28. Options include setting up a standalone list or to align the mechanism for adopting buildings, identified against a set of criteria, onto the established Local List (Buildings of Local Interest) used by other Councils including Cambridge City Council which makes for a consistent, efficient process.

Implications

29. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

30. The pre-existing annual Service Level Agreements for the provision of Archaeological Services between the County Council and District Councils will now include delivery of the Local Listing platform website on behalf of each of the five District authorities. Development and content creation for the platform website was included as part of the Project Officer's remit during the 12 months of funded project. The ongoing officer support of the website will continue to be funded by County Council budget and managed by the County Historic Environment Team. The SLA yearly input per authority (represents a 16.6% split between the 6 authorities involved as the County Council also pays for a portion) being £1080 inclusive of VAT per authority.

Staffing

31. Officers in the Historic Environment team of Greater Cambridge Shared Planning have taken part in the nominations assessment work using existing resources and within existing budgets. The remaining work to take the Local List through to adoption will be undertaken in the same way.

Risk Management

32. No significant risk.

Climate Change

33. The promotion of the Local List supports sustainable development and retention and use of existing buildings and other assets of local merit.

Consultation responses

34. No formal consultation has been undertaken yet That will be the next step. This report aims to establish a coherent approach to the Local List over the Greater Cambridge area with owners of buildings affected being notified and given an opportunity to respond once the process has been adopted. Responses would be encouraged to be relevant to the selection criteria and all responses received will be fully considered before the asset is considered for inclusion on the Local list. Objections that demonstrate new/additional information under the selection criteria and therefore require a reassessment, could result in the nomination not being included in the Local List.

Background Papers

Where [the Local Authorities \(Executive Arrangements\) \(Meetings and Access to Information\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#) require documents to be open to inspection by members of the public, they must be available for inspection: -

- (a) at all reasonable hours at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council;
- (b) on the Council's website; and
- (c) in the case of documents to be available for inspection pursuant to regulation 15, on payment of a reasonable fee required by the Council by the person seeking to inspect the documents at the offices of South Cambridgeshire District Council.

Cambridgeshire's Local Heritage List project website:

<https://local-heritage-list.org.uk/cambridgeshire>

Cambridge City Council Buildings of Local Interest:

<https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/media/1472/buildings-of-local-interest.pdf>

Historic England Guidance on Local Listing:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/heag301-local-heritage-listing/>

South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan (2018)

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/media/17793/south-cambridgeshire-adopted-local-plan-2018.pdf>

Cambridge City Council Local Plan (2018)

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/6890/local-plan-2018.pdf>

Report Author: Sarah Cheng (Senior Conservation Officer) & Christian Brady (Historic Environment Team Leader) Greater Cambridge Shared Planning

email: Historicenvironment@greatercambridgeplanning.org

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Appendix: Assessment Criteria & Scoring

Architectural and Artistic Interest

This includes the style or design and aesthetic appearance of the asset, including how it was constructed and any important features which it retains. An asset could be considered of architectural and aesthetic value if it demonstrates some of the following attributes: local and/or national styles, materials, plan form, construction (including traditional, innovative or modern) and craft techniques, or any other distinctive characteristics. An asset with striking aesthetic value, may be singled out as a landmark within the local scene.

Rarity

Appropriate for all assets as judged against local characteristics. For more common types of asset, this criterion could be applied to levels of completeness, surviving architectural detail, or use of unusual materials or technological innovation.

Historic Interest

A significant historical association of local or national note, including links to acknowledged important figures or events, for example landowner, commemorative event, charity, ecclesiastical or other community group or former resident. Social and communal interest has special value in local listing as it provides meaning for communities derived from collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity. It therefore relates to places perceived as a source of local identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence, contributing to the 'collective memory' of a place.

Group Value

The extent to which an asset contributes to the architectural or historic interest of any group of assets of which it forms part, particularly where assets comprise an important architectural or historic unity or a fine example of planning, where they make a significant contribution to the streetscape or area or where there is a historic functional relationship between the assets. Sometimes group value will be achieved through a co-location of diverse assets of different types and dates; groups of assets that together fulfil one of the other criteria.

Archaeological Interest

The local asset provides evidence about past human activity in the locality, which may be in the form of buried remains, crop marks or earth works, but may also be revealed in the structure of assets or in a designed landscape. Heritage assets with archaeological interest are primary sources of evidence about the substance and evolution of places and of the people and cultures that made them.

Landmark Status

Heritage assets with Landmark status are those which tell us where, and who, we are. An asset with strong communal or historical associations, or because it has especially striking aesthetic value, may be singled out as a landmark within the local scene.

As Landmark status is closely related to architectural and historic interest, it will not be sufficient by itself to qualify an asset for inclusion on the Cambridgeshire Local Lists without additional compelling evidence in support of other criteria.

Scoring

A nomination will be assessed low (1 point), medium (2 points), high (3 points) or nil against each of these criteria except Landmark Status which is a yes/no (yes = 1 point). The threshold for acceptance is at least 8 points.

Copy of an assessment Scoring Grid (Site locations for each line omitted)

F19

	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
1													
2	Age (no Score)	Landmark status	Archaeological Interest	Architectural and Artistic Interest	Group Value	Historic Interest	Rarity	Notes	Low = 1	Medium= 2	High = 3	Landmark status	TOTAL
3		no	medium	medium	high	high	medium	elegant industrial building, archaeological interest in site as a whole		6	6		12
4		yes	low	medium	low	low	medium	striking roof scape, pending more information on historic interest	3	4		1	8
5		yes	low	high	medium	medium	medium	defib station	1	6	3	1	11
6			medium	medium	medium	medium	medium	good vernacular building, with later editions, original connection sustained in name of building		10			10
7		yes	low	medium	medium	high	high	granite cross,	1	4	6	1	12
8		yes	low	medium	medium	medium	medium	village sign erected in 1977, accomplished design, commonplace but unique	1	8		1	10
9		yes	low	high	low	medium	high	mneeds research into WMA on plate - village college , rare	2	2	6	1	11
10													
11													
12													
13													
14													
15													
16													
17													



Report to:	Cabinet	28 September 2023
Lead Cabinet Member:	Cllr John Williams (Lead Cabinet Member for Resources)	
Lead Officer:	Jeff Membrey (Head of Transformation)	

2023-24 Quarter One Performance Report

Executive Summary

1. This report presents Cabinet with the Council's Quarter One (Q1) position regarding its operational Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and 2020-25 Business Plan actions, for consideration and comment.

Key Decision

2. No

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - a) Review the KPI results and comments at **Appendix A** and the progress in delivery of 2023-24 Business Plan outputs at **Appendix B**.
 - b) Recommend, where appropriate, any actions required to address issues identified within appendices.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. These recommendations are required to enable management and members to understand the organisation's performance. The information included within performance reports contributes to the evidence base for the ongoing review of priorities and enables, where appropriate, redirection of resources to reflect emerging priorities and address areas of concern.

Details

Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Report

5. This report presents Key Performance Indicator (KPI) results that are aligned to high-level, business-as-usual activities that underpin the successful delivery of the Council's services.

6. The data in **Appendix A** shows actual performance against target and intervention levels and accompanying comments. The Council uses a 'traffic light' system to denote performance, using the following definitions:
- **Green** - target has been met or surpassed.
 - **Amber** - performance is below target but above intervention level. It is the responsibility of service managers to monitor such performance closely, putting in place remedial actions to raise standards as required.
 - **Red** - performance is below the intervention level. This represents underperformance of concern and should prompt interventions and may involve the reallocation of resources or proposals to redesign how services are provided.
7. This report also contains a column labelled 'Outlook RAG'. The purpose of this column is to provide an indication of expected performance levels over the following quarter using the same traffic light system. This is based on estimates provided by service managers and helps to flag any risks to performance levels and prompt discussion about how these may be mitigated.

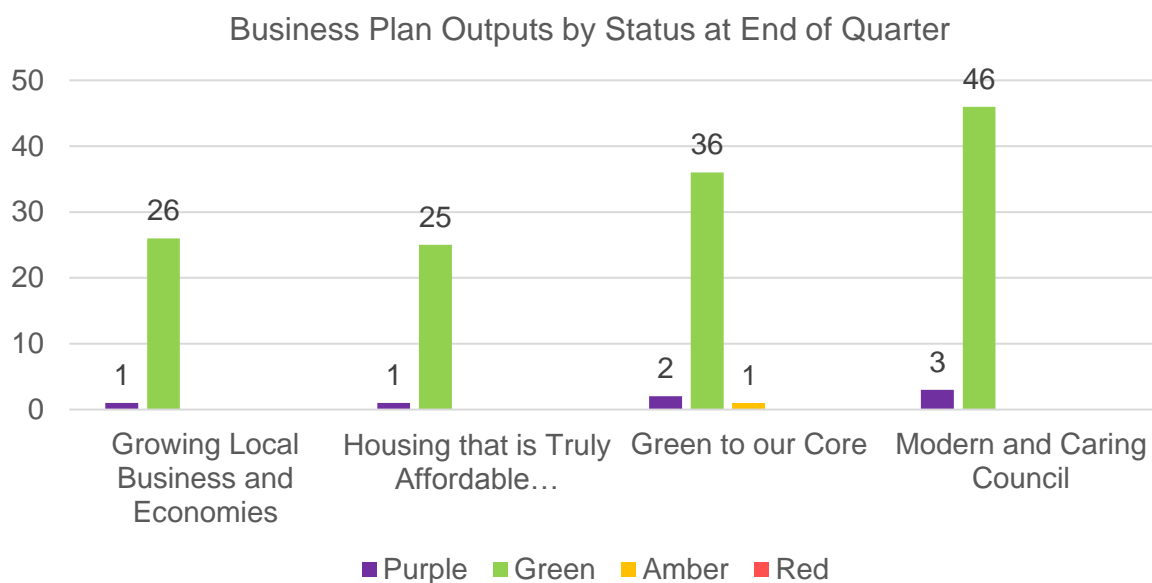
Business Plan Update Report

8. **Appendix B** provides updates in relation to the 2020-25 Business Plan actions and timescales. This report presents progress towards the 2023-24 iteration of the Business Plan Action Plan for the first time.
9. A colour-coding system is applied to this element of the report as follows:
- **Purple** - the output has been delivered.
 - **Green** - the output is on target for completion within target timescale or tolerance.
 - **Amber** - the output has been delayed beyond tolerance but is on track to be delivered by a revised delivery date.
 - **Red** - the output will not be delivered, or a delivery plan is needed.
10. In addition to the above, in instances where the originally anticipated target timescale is no longer likely to be met, entries in the 'Target Timescale' column have been highlighted.

Business Plan Progress Report Summary

11. The following table shows the number of Purple, Green, Amber and Red Business Plan measures at end of the quarter, broken down by each Business Plan priority:

Status	Growing Local Business and Economies	Housing that is Truly Affordable for Everyone to Live in	Being Green to our Core	A Modern and Caring Council	Total
Purple	1	1	2	3	7
Green	26	25	36	46	133
Amber	0	0	1	0	1
Red	0	0	0	0	0
Grey	0	0	0	0	0
Total	27	26	39	49	141



*Please see colour coding definitions at paragraph 9 above.

12. Newly completed (purple) outputs this quarter (see **Appendix B** for full details):

Growing Local Businesses and Economies

- 5di) Publish economic forecasts associated with the Joint Local Plan as part of the evidence base to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan.

Housing That is Affordable for Everyone to Live in

- 6ai) Finalise the Council's Empty Homes Database.

Being Green to our Core

- 3bi) Plant 35 tree across two sites on our own estate, as part of the Treescapes fund.
- 3bii) Create wildflower areas on four sites located across the district on our own estate.

Modern and Caring Council

- 1bi), 1ci) and 2bi) Report produced assessing the findings from the 3-month 4 Day week trial.
- 2aiv) Assess the outcomes of the 'Essential Tools for Managers' training pilot for new and first line managers.
- 7bi) Delivery of the Northstowe Interim Community facility.

13. Outputs outside of tolerance (amber) at the end of this quarter (see **Appendix B** for full details):

Being Green to Our Core

- 4ci) Realisation of year 1 benefits (reduced energy costs and carbon emissions) from Greening of South Cambs Hall project.

14. In addition to the updates provided at **Appendix B**, the following outstanding action from the 2022-23 business plan has now been completed:

- Install energy saving LED fittings in remainder of council owned streetlights (ornate lights) to bring them in line with standard lights already upgraded.

Update - The main work packages for our ornate and Housing lights have now reached practical completion, with minor variations being finalised.

Implications

15. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

There are no significant implications beyond those raised by performance indicator owners within the comments section of the Key Performance Indicator report at **Appendix A**, or lead officers within the Business Plan update report at **Appendix B**.

Consultation responses

16. All performance indicator results, and commentaries are provided by or at the instruction of performance indicator owners. Business Plan updates have been provided by lead officers for each individual action.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

17. The KPI report (**Appendix A**) allows business-as-usual performance to be monitored and managed across the Council's range of activities. The Business Plan Update report

(**Appendix B**) provides a view of progress towards each of the outputs within the within the 2020-25 Business Plan priority areas.

Background Papers

[South Cambridgeshire District Council 2023 to 2024 Business Plan Actions \(scambs.gov.uk\)](https://scambs.gov.uk)

Appendices

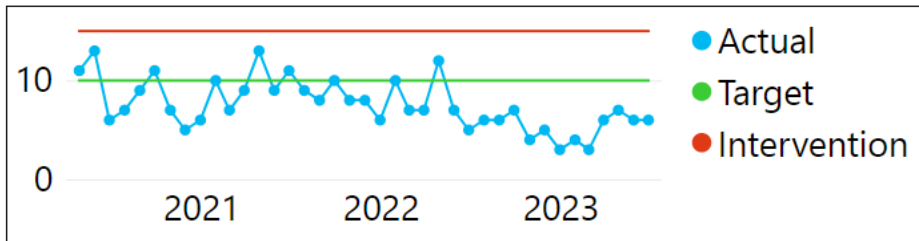
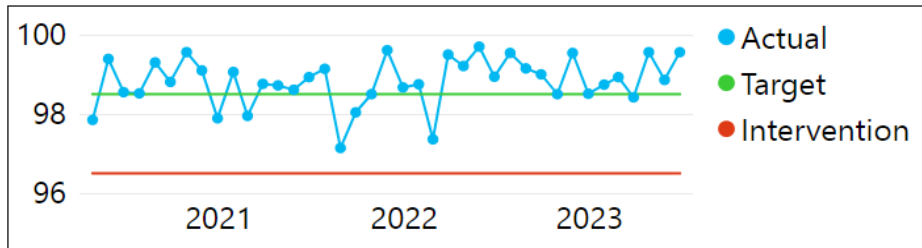
Appendix A: Key Performance Indicator Report

Appendix B: Business Plan Progress Report

Report Author:

Kevin Ledger – Senior Policy and Performance Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713018

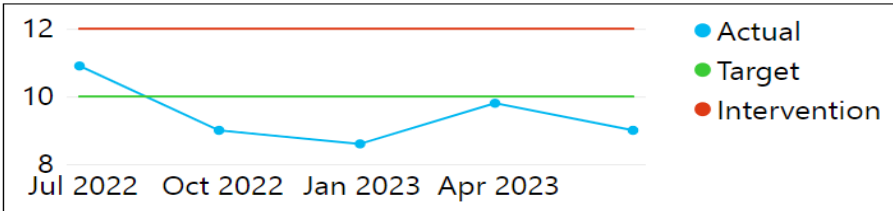
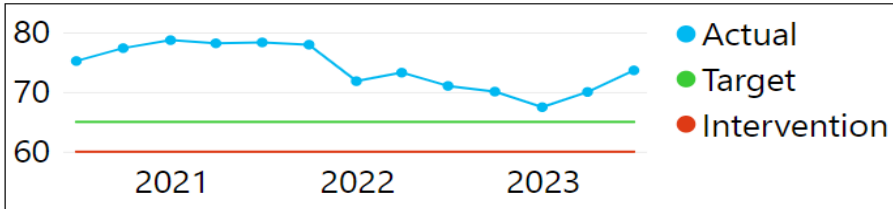
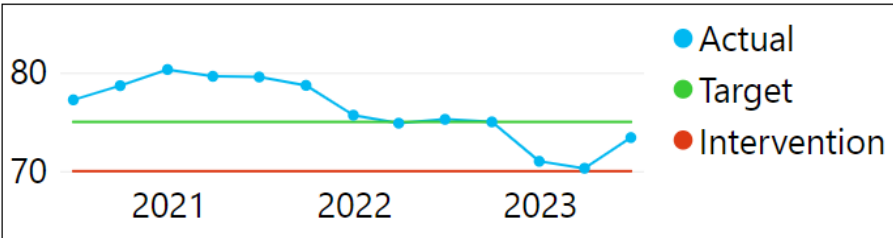
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Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area				Actual	Target	Intervention	Outlook RAG	Comments	
Benefits									
FS112 Average number of days to process new HB/CTS claims									
Dawn Graham									
				Apr	19	15	20	Green	Performance in April was affected by annual processing as well as Easter Holidays. Performance is now back on target and it is expected that processing times will continue to be at or better than target. The latest benchmarking data available for Q3 of 22-23 shows our performance of 8 days to process new claims during this quarter was 12 th nationally for District Councils, placing us easily within top quartile in terms of performance. For change of circumstances we placed comfortably within 2nd from top quartile (better than median).
				May	14	15	20		
				Jun	9	15	20		
FS113 Average number of days to process HB/CTS change events									
Dawn Graham									
				Apr	7	10	15	Green	
				May	6	10	15		
				Jun	6	10	15		
Finance									
FS109 % undisputed invoices paid in 30 days									
Sean Missin									
				Apr	99.56	98.5	96.5	Green	Research recently released by 'Good Business Pays' shows that between June 2022 and January 2023, we were one of only 38 Councils (out of 347 where data was available) to achieve a payment rate of 99% or above within 30 days. www.goodbusinesspays.com/la-payments/
				May	98.86	98.5	96.5		
				Jun	99.56	98.5	96.5		

Note: Whilst some KPIs are reported monthly, others are reported quarterly. For quarterly KPIs the results are labelled based on the month at the end of the quarter (e.g. Q1 = Jun, Q2 = Sep)

Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area				Actual	Target	Intervention	Outlook RAG	Comments
Revenues								
FS102 % Housing Rent collected								
Colin Jones								
				Apr	82.99	82.6	80.95	
				May	89.64	89.5	87.71	
Line chart not included for this PI - chart scale means result is indistinguishable from the target.				Jun	93.22	92.8	90.94	Green
FS104 % Business Rates collected (year to date)								
Colin Jones								
				Apr	13.1	13.00	12.74	
				May	22.0	22.69	22.24	
Line chart not included for this PI - chart scale means result is indistinguishable from the target.				Jun	32.3	31.73	31.10	Green
								Collection rate was slightly below the forecast in May due to the delay in payments hitting the accounts over the bank holiday periods. This is not a cause for concern, with July hitting the target. Therefore the Outlook Rag for Q2 is green.
								For 22-23 our Business Rates collection was comfortably better than the median for all District Councils.
FS105 % Council Tax collected (year to date)								
Colin Jones								
				Apr	11.0	11.0	10.78	
				May	20.7	21.0	20.58	
Line chart not included for this PI - chart scale means result is indistinguishable from the target.				Jun	30.1	30.0	29.40	Green
								Collection rate was slightly below the forecast in May due to the delay in payments hitting the accounts over the bank holiday periods. This is not a cause for concern, with July hitting the target. Therefore the Outlook Rag for Q2 is green.
								For 22-23 we were the joint top performing District Council in the country for Council Tax collection.

Note: Whilst some KPIs are reported monthly, others are reported quarterly. For quarterly KPIs the results are labelled based on the month at the end of the quarter (e.g. Q1 = Jun, Q2 = Sep)

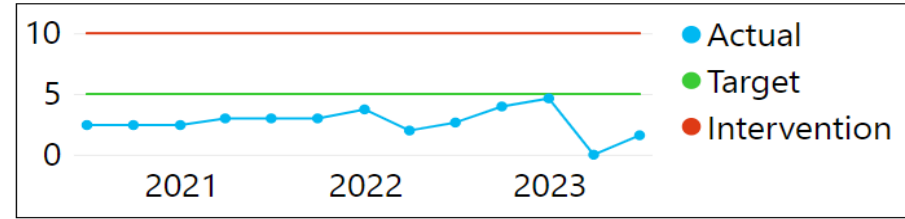
Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area				Actual	Target	Intervention	Outlook RAG	Comments	
Dev. Management									
PN519 Average time to determine validated householder Planning applications (weeks)									
Toby Williams									
				Mar Jun	9.80 9.00	10 10	12 12	The line chart for this KPI shows performance since Q1 2022-23, when this KPI was introduced.	
							Green		
PN510 % of major applications determined within 13 weeks or agreed timeline (2 year reporting period - government KPI)									
Philippa Kelly									
				Mar Jun	70.02 73.64	65 65	60 60	Green	
PN511 % of non-major applications determined within 8 weeks or agreed timeline (2 year reporting period - government KPI)									
Rebecca Smith									
				Mar Jun	70.29 73.41	75 75	70 70	Amber	
				The trend is showing an improvement from the Q4 (March) result and sits just below the 75% target. Non-major applications make up the vast majority of the volume of applications received. We are still working through a cumulative 2 year reporting period where performance has fluctuated and is still influencing our overall results each quarter.					
				A change in the service's approach to extensions of time should have a positive impact on performance regarding applications that have gone beyond their statutory determination period, some of which are historical. Team members are committed to improving performance overall to 2nd quartile this year.					

Note: Whilst some KPIs are reported monthly, others are reported quarterly. For quarterly KPIs the results are labelled based on the month at the end of the quarter (e.g. Q1 = Jun, Q2 = Sep)

Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area	Actual	Target	Intervention	Outlook RAG	Comments
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------	--------	--------------	----------------	----------

PN512 % of appeals against major planning permissions refusal allowed (2 year reporting period - government KPI)

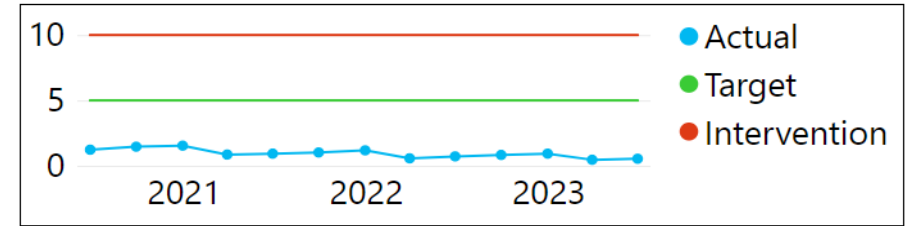
Philippa Kelly



Mar	0.00	5	10	
Jun	1.60	5	10	Green

PN513 % of appeals against non-major planning permission refusal allowed (2 year reporting period - government KPI)

Rebecca Smith

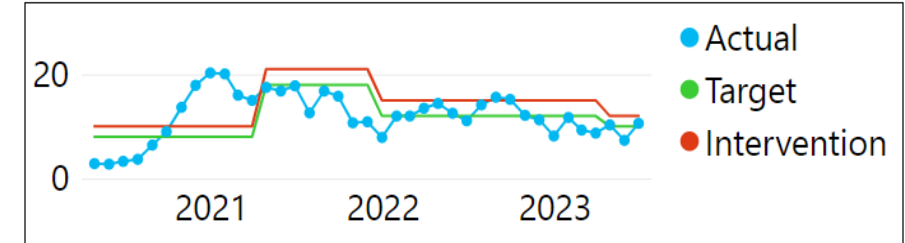


Mar	0.46	5	10	
Jun	0.54	5	10	Green

Land Charges

SX025 Average Land Charges search response days

Charlene Harper



Apr	10.29	10	12	
May	7.34	10	12	
Jun	10.59	10	12	Amber

During April there was a delay in processing due to the changes in fees, which required time to be spent testing and updating of the system.

May was a very good month and wait times were below the target. June waiting times increased slightly due to long term sickness within the small team.

An amber Outlook RAG has been applied as reduced staffing levels are expected to continue into Q2.

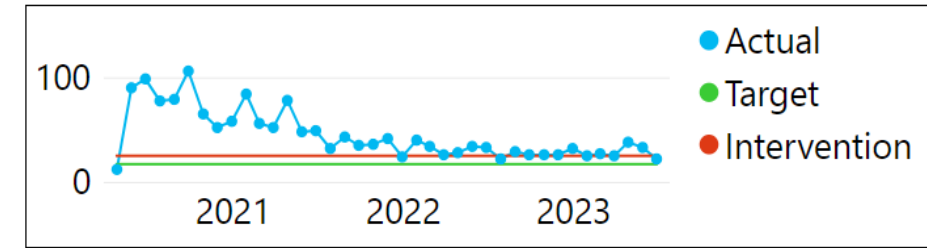
Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area				Actual	Target	Intervention	Outlook RAG	Comments
Housing Advice								
AH215 % successful homeless preventions as a proportion of all homeless cases closed								This is a new addition to the KPI report for the 23-24 financial year (although reported through Business Plan Progress Report throughout 22-23).
Sue Carter								
				Mar	46	50	45	
				Jun	49	50	45	Amber
								Across 22-23 homelessness was prevented in 49.4% of cases. In Q1 52 homeless cases were prevented. This is consistent with the prevention numbers that were seen in 2022-23, where between 51 and 54 preventions were achieved each quarter.
								Whilst homeless prevention numbers remain stable, it remains difficult to access affordable private rented accommodation for families on a low income. To improve this, we are continuing to grow Shire Homes Lettings (our private sector leasing company), and to promote the services it offers.
								The Outlook RAG has been set to amber as we expect next quarter's performance to be similar, in recognition of the increasing pressure on the private rented sector and the growing demand for social housing.
AH230 Number of households with children leaving B&B accommodation after longer than 6 weeks								
Heather Wood								
Line chart not included for this PI - chart scale means result is indistinguishable from the target.				Mar	0	0	1	
				Jun	0	0	1	Green
Housing and Property Services								
AH204 % tenants satisfied with responsive repairs								
Eddie Spicer								
				Mar	92	97	92	
				Jun	96	97	92	Amber
								Although Amber, Q1 performance is within top quartile performance (93% and above) for 171 social housing providers participating in Housemark monthly pulse benchmarking.
								During Q1 there was a short period of missed appointments due to staff sickness. We have however maintained performance significantly above the national average of 86.4%, and close to our sector leading stretch target of 97%.
								The Outlook RAG has been set as amber while we embed a new app for collecting satisfaction data and continue to strive to meet our ambitious target.

Note: Whilst some KPIs are reported monthly, others are reported quarterly. For quarterly KPIs the results are labelled based on the month at the end of the quarter (e.g. Q1 = Jun, Q2 = Sep)

Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area	Actual	Target	Intervention	Outlook RAG	Comments
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AH211 Average days to re-let all housing stock

Eddie Spicer



Apr	38	17	25
May	33	17	25
Jun	22	17	25

We continue to receive a high number of properties returned to us for re-let in an aging and poor condition. This is due to various factors, including mistreatment, refusals of renewal works, and general aging of stock. The result is an increase in the volume of work required to bring properties back to a standard that meets expectations of proposed residents.

Work continues to analyse data on relets for efficiencies within the whole re let process, from 'key-to-key'.

Housemark benchmarking statistics show that within our peer group of similar providers, the upper quartile for re-let times is 32.6 days (excluding major refurbishments) which mirrors our reporting. As such, while we continue to investigate opportunities for improvement, our results are consistently within, or close to the upper quartile of similar providers, whilst our target of 17 can be considered as a sector leading stretch target.

AH245 % of SCDC homes with active HHRS Category 1 or 2 damp and mould cases

Eddie Spicer

This is a new KPI for the 23-24 financial year - line chart will be provided once additional results gained.

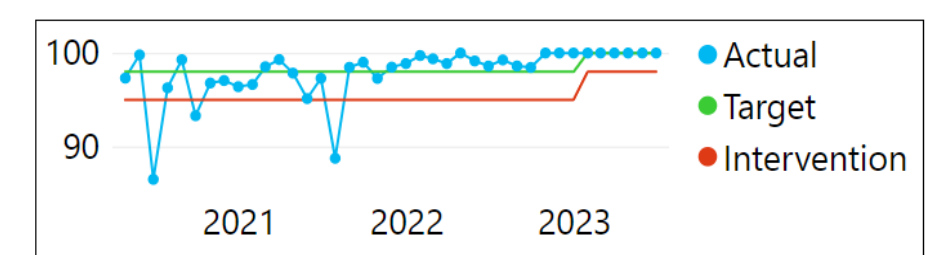
Jun	1.38	0.99	1
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This is a new KPI that has been introduced to ensure an increased focus on damp and mould in our housing, following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak in Rochdale and the subsequent coroner's report which found damp and mould contributed to his death.

We are currently collecting data from our surveyors who are completing a stock condition survey, along with current completions. This is turning up some cases of damp and mould that have not been previously reported by the tenant, and the majority of these issues can be dealt with quickly. The result for June does not reflect the reduction in numbers as a consequence of action by the council.

SH332 % emergency repairs in 24 hours

Eddie Spicer



Apr	100	100	98
May	100	100	98
Jun	100	100	98

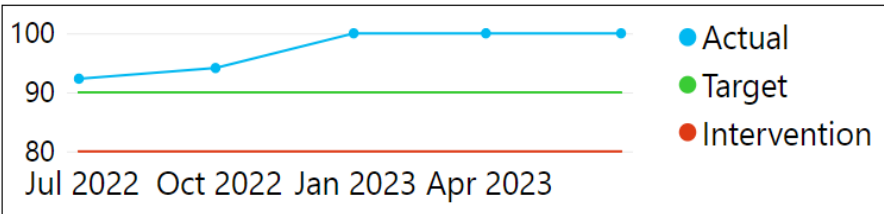
Green

Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area	Actual	Target	Intervention	Outlook RAG	Comments
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Democratic Services

CC314 % of public hybrid meetings run without issues causing downtime exceeding 5 minutes

Andrew Francis



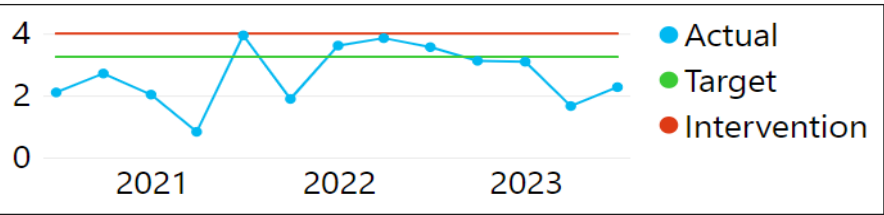
Mar	100	90	80
Jun	100	90	80
			Green

The line chart for this KPI shows performance since Q1 2022-23, when this KPI was introduced.

HR

FS117 % Staff turnover

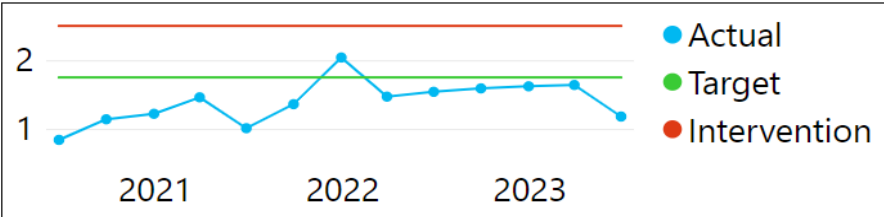
Jeff Membery



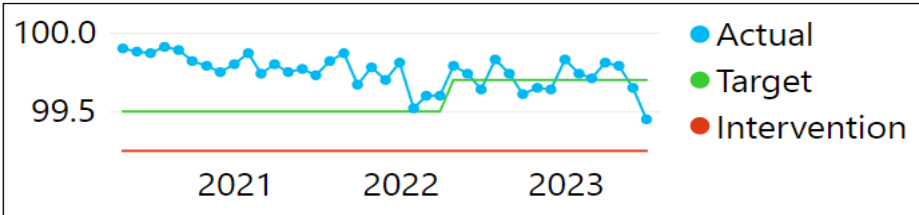
Mar	1.66	3.25	4
Jun	2.27	3.25	4
			Green

FS125 Staff sickness days per FTE excluding Shared Waste Service

Jeff Membery



Mar	1.64	1.75	2.5
Jun	1.18	1.75	2.5
			Green

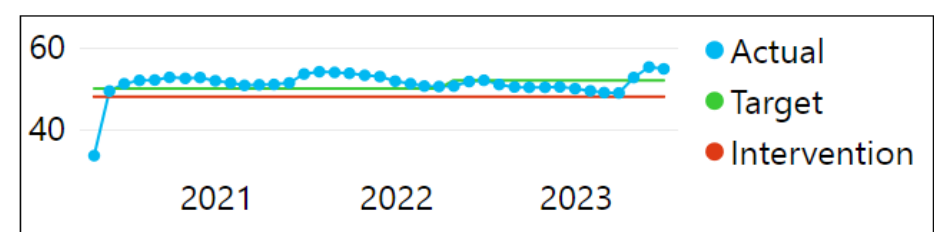
Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area				Actual	Target	Intervention	Outlook RAG	Comments
Environ. Health & Licensing								
ES430 % of fly tips cleared within 10 working days								
Lee Hillam								
<div>This is a new KPI for the 23-24 financial year - line chart will be provided once additional results gained.</div>				Mar	92	85	80	This is a new KPI reflecting the inclusion of the 10 working days clearance target within the SCDC 23-24 Business Plan.
				Jun	94	85	80	
Shared Waste Service								
ES408 % of bins collected on schedule								
Rebecca Weymouth Wood								
<div></div>				Apr	99.79	99.7	99.25	May and June results were marginally below target due to the impact of ongoing road work delays on operations. The Outlook RAG has been set to green on the basis that we expect performance to return to target levels in Q2. New bin collection schedules will start to be implemented from 18/09, with potential for an increase in missed bins in Q3 while new schedules bed in. Next quarter's Outlook RAG (within the Q2 performance report) is likely to be set to Amber to reflect this.
				May	99.65	99.7	99.25	
				Jun	99.45	99.7	99.25	
ES412 Kgs of residual (black bin) waste per household (year to date)								
Rebecca Weymouth Wood								
<div>Line chart not included for this PI - chart scale means result is indistinguishable from the target.</div>				Apr	31.66	35	38	This is a new KPI for Q1 2023-24. It aligns with the ambition to reduce the amount of black bin waste that is collected per household.
				May	65.82	71	74	
				Jun	101.74	106	112	
ES414 Kgs total waste collected per household (year to date)								
Rebecca Weymouth Wood								
<div>Line chart not included for this PI - chart scale means result is indistinguishable from the target.</div>				Apr	70.23	76.44	81.44	This is a new KPI for Q1 2023-24 reflecting the ambition to reduce the overall amount of waste that is collected. The KPI target and intervention has been set based on 2022-23 results. 2022 saw a particularly hot and dry summer resulting in reduced garden waste. This year's wetter summer by comparison is evident in June's Amber result, which is a result of the increased garden waste that has been collected. The Outlook RAG is set at Green on the basis that we expect target to met in Q2.
				May	155.18	156.01	166.01	
				Jun	237.40	235.94	250.94	

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Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area	Actual	Target	Intervention	Outlook RAG	Comments
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ES418 % of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (year to date)

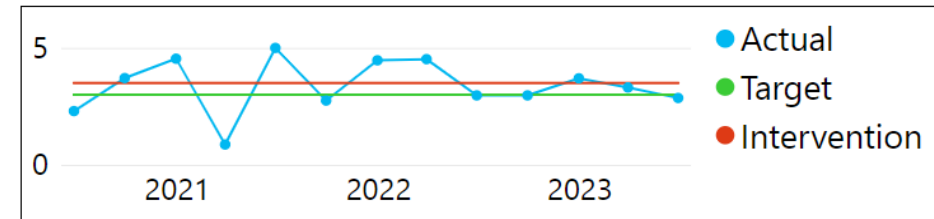
Rebecca Weymouth Wood



Apr	52.69	52	48	
May	55.25	52	48	
Jun	54.81	52	48	Green

SF786a Staff sickness days per FTE - Shared Waste Service Only

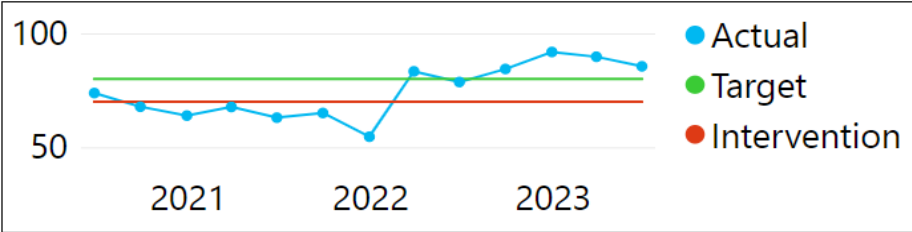
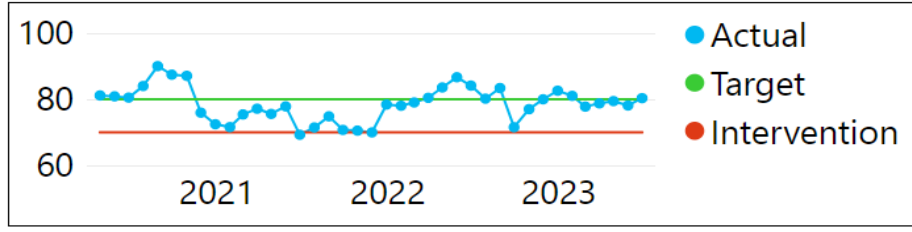
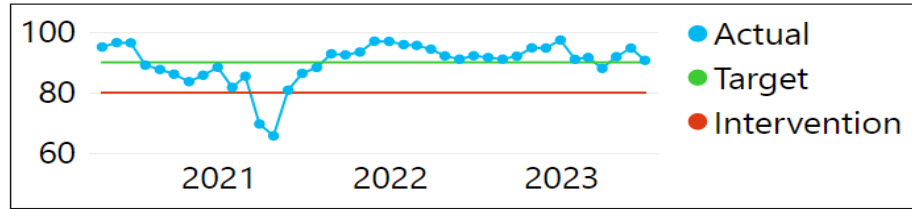
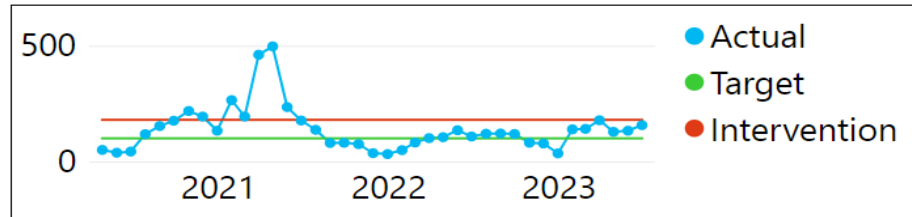
Bode Esan



Mar	3.31	3	3.5	
Jun	2.86	3	3.5	Green

Report continues on the following page.

Note: Whilst some KPIs are reported monthly, others are reported quarterly. For quarterly KPIs the results are labelled based on the month at the end of the quarter (e.g. Q1 = Jun, Q2 = Sep)

Key Performance Indicator and Owner, organised by Directorate and Service Area				Actual	Target	Intervention	Outlook RAG	Comments
Complaints								
CC305 % of formal complaints resolved within timescale (all SCDC)								
Jeff Membery								
	Mar	89.74	80	70	Green			
	Jun	85.54	80	70				
Contact Centre								
CC302 % calls to the Contact Centre resolved first time								
Phil Bird								
	Apr	79.45	80	70	Amber	Performance has remained at or very close to 80% despite the first part of Q1 being within our busiest period of the year.		
	May	78.12	80	70				
	Jun	80.34	80	70				
				We currently have 2 vacancies within the service and one long term sickness case, and are recruiting both permanent and temporary members of staff to ensure good standards of service are delivered.				
				The Outlook RAG is set to Amber whilst this recruitment takes place.				
CC303 % of calls to the Contact Centre that are handled (answered)								
Phil Bird								
	Apr	91.88	90	80	Amber	As is the case in relation to CC302 (above), the Outlook RAG has been set as amber to reflect expected performance in Q2 whilst we recruit additional staff.		
	May	94.73	90	80				
	Jun	90.67	90	80				
CC307 Average call answer time (seconds)								
Phil Bird								
	Apr	128	100	180	Amber	We continue to aim towards our ambitious target of 100 seconds average call answer time. With this in mind, we monitor this KPI closely with weekly reports to our Leadership Team, allowing up to date review of daily performance results and discussion of opportunities for further improvement.		
	May	133	100	180				
	Jun	157	100	180				
				April and May each had one day where average call answer time exceeded 5 minutes (300 seconds), while in June this occurred on 3 days.				
				As is the case in relation to CC302 (above), the Outlook RAG has been set as amber to reflect expected performance in Q2 whilst we recruit additional staff.				

Note: Whilst some KPIs are reported monthly, others are reported quarterly. For quarterly KPIs the results are labelled based on the month at the end of the quarter (e.g. Q1 = Jun, Q2 = Sep)

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
1) We will support businesses in meeting economic challenges	1a) Run communication and marketing campaigns promoting local independent businesses	1ai) Number of local independent businesses promoted through the Visit South Cambs website reaches over 400	Q4	Currently 230 businesses and activity providers and 94 local events listed on the Visit South Cambs Website.	Green
1) - see above	1a) - see above	1aii) Through social media engagement, monthly visits to Visit South Cambs website exceeds 1500	Q4	In Q1 2023, we achieved an average of 2122 monthly visits, in comparison to an average of 963 Q1 2022.	Green
1) - see above	1a) - see above	1aiii) Create topical content to increase our reach through social media by 50%	Q4	<p>In comparison with Q1 2022-23 our reach in Q1 2023-24 has increased as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business Support and Development Facebook +46%, Instagram +3%. - Visit South Cambs Facebook +11%, Instagram +14%. <p>We continue to create more engaging social media content such as promoting our local markets and also sharing successes for our businesses who are nominated for awards.</p> <p>Using hashtags effectively is helping to increase reach. An example of this would be 'Muddy Stiletto' awards where several of our local businesses were nominated. A Facebook post on congratulating our local nominees had a reach of over 4200.</p>	Green
1) - see above	1b) Deliver a series of business support resources to help businesses meet economic challenges	1bi) Deliver 10 business support and resilience webinars and/or workshops, helping businesses to meet economic challenges	Q4	<p>4 webinars have been delivered during Q1 with a total of 56 registrations. Three were on mental health and wellbeing support for businesses, and one on 'Doing business with the council'.</p> <p>Further topical webinar delivery will come forward from responses to the survey work from GLBE 1ci</p>	Green
1) - see above	1b) - see above	1bii) Work with partners to launch business resilience webpages in order to provide a comprehensive online guide to resources to help businesses meet economic challenges	Q1	We have increased content on our webpages for business resilience on cost-of-living crisis. Additional work is ongoing to refresh the business support content in line with the SCDC website refresh and other market factors. This is expected to be completed in Q3.	Green
1) - see above	1c) Develop tailored support for Businesses and strengthen our relationships with local companies to better understand their specific challenges and tailor support accordingly	1ci) 240 conversations with businesses to collate data to help inform planned interventions and identify support required	Q4	A survey has been devised to take out to business to conduct 1-2-1 conversations. This work will commence July 2023.	Green

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
1) - see above	1c) - see above	1cii) Increase Business newsletter subscriptions by 20% and introduce monthly topical themed content to encourage open/click throughs	Q3	Newsletter subscribers are 1194 which is 8% growth on this time last year. Responses gathered from the survey referred to under 1ci) will help inform newsletter content plans.	Green
1) - see above	1d) Identify funding opportunities to help businesses meet economic challenges	1di) Signpost/deliver any funding that comes forwards in helping businesses meet economic challenges	Q4	Through our social media and in person engagements, businesses have been encouraged to apply for remaining European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Local Growth Fund (LGF) funding, administered through Combined Authority to help with costs for projects to improve efficiencies and marketing, skills and training.	Green
2) We will support start-ups and small businesses to set up and grow	2a) Provide space for start-ups and small businesses via the provision of space at our South Cambs Hall office building	2ai) Space rented to start-ups or small businesses at our South Cambs Hall office building	Q3	Project governance is in place and plans are well underway to convert ground floor space at South Cambs Hall into a collaborative space for businesses and community groups to use. The project team is working closely with Facilities Management to clear the space, as it is currently in use as a storage space. Once clear, the space will be painted, and have new carpeting and floor boxes installed. Work is also in progress looking at how best to manage the space once open for use by businesses. Target date for opening will be Q4.	Green
2) - see above	2b) Provide space for small businesses and start-ups at our commercial premises	2bi) Increase and maintain occupancy at our commercial premises	Q4 and ongoing	Currently around 90% occupancy as two suites are empty at 270 Cambridge Science Park, however this is currently under review and progress should be made toward occupying these by the end of Q2. We are hopefully that we will be able to maintain above 90%, achieving 100% occupancy most of the time.	Green
2) - see above	2c) Identify and provide pop-up or market trading opportunities for small businesses	2ci) Create 100 pop-up and market trading opportunities for small business	Q3	Work is underway to create pop-up / market trading opportunities within sheltered housing schemes. Work is also underway to reimplement small traders at South Cambs Hall from July 23 onwards. 30 pop-up opportunities will take place between July and December. Plans are also underway to deliver another South Cambs Christmas Market which will deliver another 70 opportunities to businesses in Q3. The team have also worked to implement a local food van delivering sandwiches and snacks to Cambourne Business Park on a daily basis.	Green

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Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
2) - see above	2d) Identify funding opportunities specifically to help start-ups and small businesses to grow	2di) £200k Shared Prosperity funding administered to help start-up and small businesses to grow over two years	2023-25	<p>As part of Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF), £100,000 has been allocated to work with the Business and IP Centre (BIPC) to provide a program of events and support for pre/new start- ups. This programme includes a £25,000 Jumpstart grant scheme, which will launch in September 2023.</p> <p>This will be followed in 24/25 with a further £100,000 funding administered by SCDC offering grants of up to £5000 to support new start-up businesses.</p>	Green
2) - see above	2e) Deliver a series of business support resources to help new business to start up or grow	2ei) Deliver 2 webinars and/or workshops alongside delivery partners, helping businesses to start up or grow	Q3	Work will commence alongside Shared Prosperity Funding (SPF) programme delivery - see point 2di.	Green
3) We will support local businesses to become more environmentally sustainable	3a) Provide advice and resources to help businesses to understand what they can do to become greener	3ai) Conduct 120 1-2-1 direct business conversations helping businesses to reduce their carbon emissions	Q4	This strand of work is part of the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF). As such, there are no notable updates to provide at present, as work will align with the SPF Green grants programme from Q3.	Green
3) - see above	3a) - see above	3aii) Provide 4 webinars with internal and sector experts to inform business on how to make their businesses greener	Q4	This work will commence to align timing of the Shared Prosperity Funding green grant programme, launching in Q3.	Green
3) - see above	3a) - see above	3aiii) Provide thermal imaging camera loans to help businesses assess heat loss	Ongoing	Thermal imaging cameras are available, however the current time of year is not suitable for accurate results. During Q3, thermal cameras will be promoted throughout our social media to encourage uptake.	Green
3) - see above	3a) - see above	3aiv) Run social media campaigns encouraging businesses to recycle using the Commercial Waste Service	Q2	<p>Action will come forward in promoting Commercial Shared Waste recycling in Q2.</p> <p>In the meantime, we have promoted 'plastic free July', which aims to tackle plastic pollution by making businesses more mindful of their plastic usage. Monitoring the engagement with this campaign can be begin from the end of July.</p>	Green
3) - see above	3b) Identify funding opportunities to help businesses meet economic challenges specifically to help businesses to be greener	3bi) Promote services of our Commercial Shared waste team to businesses	Q2	Content promoting the Shared Waste service has been shared through our 'Open for Business Newsletter'. We are reviewing our content within the newsletter and will take forward plans to run 'feature' type articles by the end of Q3. The first of these will be on out shared waste service and recycling.	Green
3) - see above	3b) - see above	3bii) Deliver £170,000 Shared Prosperity Fund Green Business Grant funding to 53 businesses over two years	2023-25	<p>Working with colleagues in Cambridge City and Huntingdon District Councils, we are undertaking a procurement process (expected completion in Q2) to appoint a delivery partner to manage this program.</p> <p>This will include a business support consultancy program to help advise businesses on how to reduce carbon. The program will launch in September 2023.</p>	Green

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Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
4) We work with partners to promoted skills development opportunities to businesses	4a) Promote skills development opportunities through the implementation of the South Cambs specific actions within the CPCA Employment and Skills Strategy, including by: Promoting and contributing to employer and skills events	4ai) Host a skills event in conjunction with partners at South Cambs Hall showcasing in house and partner skills and career pathways	Q3	Conversations are underway with external partners to jointly deliver a skills event – likely to be Q3 or Q4 once completion of glazing works at front of South Cambs Hall is completed.	Green
4) - see above	4a) - see above	4aii) Apprenticeships focussed communications campaign to businesses	Q2	This will be progressed in Q4, to align with apprenticeship week.	Green
4) - see above Page 266	4a) - see above	4aiii) South Cambs Region of Learning career specific digital badge pathway developed and launched (subject to funding)	Subject to funding	SCDC have provided a portion of the Shared Prosperity Funding (£268,348) to support this piece of work. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) have presented the high level CPCA-wide UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) Skills and People project plan. This includes 3 key elements, including 'Skills Brokerage' which covers the Region of Learning digital badge pathway. The CPCA will lead on the delivery of this with input from SCDC in relation to how this is implemented and where its targeted. Further information is currently awaited from the CPCA.	Green
4) - see above	4a) - see above	4aiv) Develop and adopt the Good Employer Charter as an employer (subject to funding)	Subject to funding	This work is being led by Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC), as part of the DWP backed Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Work, Health and Wellbeing strategy. We will continue to feed into this work over the coming months as required.	Green
5) We will work to promote the vibrancy and health of South Cambridgeshire high streets and commercial areas	5a) Delivery of funding for the improvement of existing and fledgling high streets	5ai) £200,000 allocated through the Shared Prosperity Fund over two years (2023-25) to local communities and businesses to enhance the look, desirability and safety of existing and fledgling high streets	2023-25	Grant criteria is in development and estimated to be open for applications in Q3.	Green
5) - see above	5b) Run communication and marketing campaigns promoting high streets within the district	5bi) 8 high streets featured in communication and marketing campaigns run throughout the year	Q4	South Cambs magazine submission featured Histon and Impington High Street. Further features are planned for Winter Edition of the magazine	Green

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
5) - see above	5c) Provide support for the set-up of new markets within the district	5ci) Provided support leading to the set-up of 6 new markets in the district	Q4	We are currently working with 3 potential new market organisers in Over, Comberton and Bar Hill to support the establishment of new markets in these areas.	Green
5) - see above	5d) Take evidence-based land use planning decisions to ensure appropriate employment provision, in the right place, to meet business needs	5di) Publish economic forecasts associated with the Joint Local Plan as part of the evidence base to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan	Q1	Reports were presented to Cabinet in February 2023.	Purple

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Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
1) We will continue to deliver new, high quality Council homes	1a) Maintain the rate of new Council homes delivery having doubled this from 2019 levels	1ai) 75 new homes completed for rent and / or shared ownership	Q4	No completions in Q1 however this was as expected, with the target to complete 75 new homes by end of Q4.	Green
1) - see above	1b) Introduce higher standards for carbon reduction for properties we develop ourselves	1bi) Agree new carbon reduction standards for properties we develop ourselves and incorporate into new developments	Q4	We are exploring options and feasibility in relation to carbon standards for properties. This includes discussing lessons from other local authorities, including Norwich City Council (NCC), who we met with elected members in June.	Green
1) - see above	1c) Use our SCIP partnership to deliver an exemplar site with net zero / passive house (agreed standards tbc)	1ci) Achieve planning permission for the first SCIP housing scheme	Q4	South Cambridgeshire Investment Partnership (SCIP) currently has planning permission undergoing scrutiny, with a decision expected at the end of Q2/beginning of Q3 at the earliest.	Green
1) - see above	1d) Deliver additional housing for refugees above the levels detailed at 1a) and 1ai) as part of the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF)	1di) Delivery of new homes for refugees (quantity and timescales to be confirmed subject to additional funding details)	Q4	Total of 40 acquisitions agreed with a 20/20 split between new build (NB) and existing market (EM). Total of 10 completed in Q1, made up of 3 NB and 7 EM.	Green
2) We will engage with local people to set out where and how new homes and communities are built, to minimise disruption and to help new residents settle in	2a) Run community liaison meetings and forums where significant new developments are planned	2ai) Community forums are run where significant new developments are planned, allowing issues to be raised and discussions about how developments are moving forward	Q4	All the agreed community forums and liaison meetings are operating fully and providing effective two-way engagement with the local communities	Green
2) - see above	2b) Consult communities on the development of a Joint Local Development Plan for the Greater Cambridge area identifying the quantity and location of new homes across the district	2bi) Publish draft Local Plan for public consultation with our communities	Q3	Work on the local plan is progressing. An update of the Local Development Scheme will be reported to members at the end of Q2	Green

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Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
2) - see above	2c) Produce a Housing Strategy setting out how we will meet housing challenges in the district, including ensuring we have the right homes in right places – by June 2024	2ci) Consult on a Housing Strategy to shape our Housing activity	Q1	High level consultation on aims and objectives of the strategy has been held with key staff, members and stakeholders. This was followed by individual meetings with key stakeholders and staff and a briefing session for staff on affordable housing requirements was held 28/06/23. As such, the initial consultation has now taken place as per the business plan output. Further consultation will take place with officers and Members before the draft is considered by Cabinet in December, prior to public consultation from January 2024.	Green
3) We will improve the energy efficiency of existing Council housing to reduce carbon impact and running costs	3a) Produce a plan for the improved energy efficiency of Council Housing	3ai) Use EPC and stock data to create a costed 5-, 10- and 15-year plan for the improved energy efficiency of Council housing	Q3	Stock condition surveys are underway, due for completion Q3 and results due by end of Q4. During Q1 2023-24 work will start on the long term plan for retrofit and planned programmes for the next 5, 10 and 15 years.	Green
3) - see above	3a) - see above	3aii) Carry out a stock condition survey on all stock	Q4	Stock condition survey work started on site in May 2023 and is due to be complete on site in Dec 2023 with subsequent analysis carried out in Q4.	Green
3) - see above	3b) Continue to identify and implement opportunities for energy efficiency improvement works as part of relet works, as properties become vacant	3bi) Completion of energy efficiency improvement works as part of relet works on empty properties	Ongoing	While stock condition surveys are underway (which will go on to inform a longer term retrofit plan - as detailed at 3ai and 3aii), we continue to consider and undertake retrofit works, such as the installation of heating systems, insulation, windows etc on empty properties during the re-let period.	Green
4) We will support energy efficiency improvements in private sector housing	4a) With partners and under the 'Action on Energy Cambridgeshire' branding: Deliver government-funded energy improvements to homes occupied by eligible households	4ai) Delivery of HUG2 (Home Upgrade Grant) scheme to upgrade off-gas properties	Q4	Preparatory work to deliver HUG2 (Homes Upgrade Grant) has taken place, including initial meetings with contractors and surveys of the first batch of properties. The funding application for these is due to be submitted to government imminently.	Green
4) - see above	4a) - see above	4aii) All necessary processes (including marketing) in place for households to access self-funded work through Action on Energy Cambridgeshire	Q4	An Action on Energy website has been launched, setting out how households can access the Cambs local authorities' framework of installers. Further work to develop, promote, and deliver the retrofit offer for the self-funding market will be prioritised once HUG2 scheme is established (see 4ai above).	Green
4) - see above	4b) Ensure Private Rental Sector meets legislative requirements in relation to energy efficiency	4bi) Run Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) project to identify Private Rental Sector properties which fall below minimum standards and actions required	Q4	The Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards project has started. Initial steps are to gather data from ONS and our own database. We will also be meeting with a neighbouring authority to gain an understanding of the process they have followed.	Green

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
4) - see above	4b) - see above	4bii) Establish a private-rented sector landlord forum to share best practise and advise on support for improvement measures	Q4	We are in the early stages of planning the landlord forum, which is due to be held by the end of this financial year.	Green
5) We will work to create healthy and connected communities	5a) Through the development of the Greater Cambridge area Local Plan: Seek to create diverse and connected neighbourhoods where people can live close to where they work, play and access health providers and education	5ai) Publication for consultation the Regulation 18 Joint Local Plan preferred options capturing spatial and local planning policy considerations	Q3	Work on the local plan is progressing. An update of the Local Development Scheme will be reported to members at the end of Q2.	Green
	5) - see above	5a) - see above	5aii) Create a policy framework to ensure significant future development proposals are connected to cycle and walking networks, including support for the GCP Greenways programme	Q3	Work on the local plan is progressing. An update of the Local Development Scheme will be reported to members at the end of Q2.
5) - see above	5b) Through the development of the Greater Cambridge area Local Plan: Review approaches to open space and recreation provision, to underpin the delivery of healthy places and sustainable ways of living	5bi) Work with the health community on the development of a contemporary open spaces policy for the Joint Local Plan that places wellbeing as a central policy objective	Q3	Work on the local plan is progressing. An update of the Local Development Scheme will be reported to members at the end of Q2.	Green
5) - see above	5c) Work with partners to influence the delivery of significant improvements in public transportation to our villages	5ci) Support the GCP and Cambridgeshire County Council’s delivery of Cambridgeshire Southeast Transport (CSET) and Cambourne to Cambridge through to Transport and Works Act order	Ongoing	Engagement continues during scheme development stages of both projects via the Planning Policy, Strategy & Economy team. The formal TWAO (Transport and Works Act Orders) stages will be dealt with by the Strategic Sites team.	Green
5) - see above	5c) - see above	5cii) Support the implementation of Cambridgeshire County Council’s Transport Strategy, that aims to reduce private car use and congestion, and accompanies the adopted Local Plan	Ongoing	Work on the Local Plan is progressing with an aim that the development strategy minimises use of the private car.	Green
5) - see above	5c) - see above	5ciii) Work with partners to influence improved links between villages in the north of the district to existing transport routes (e.g., guided bus ways)	Ongoing	Engagement with partners continues as required to seek active transport schemes to improve links.	Green

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Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
5) - see above	5d) Support improved access to green spaces that provide health and wellbeing benefits to our residents	5di) Allocate £150k of Shared Prosperity Funding over two years (2023-25) for projects that bring about improvements to green spaces to bring about improvement to the health and wellbeing of our residents	Q4	Procurement is in progress for a company with relevant expertise who will support site identification and work with residents and groups to deliver green space improvements	Green
5) - see above	5d) - see above	5dii) Develop a toolkit to help parish councils provide more allotments with better facilities	Q4	Project initiated and on track. Draft of toolkit underway.	Green
5) - see above	5e) Continue to meet annual housing delivery targets identified in the 2018 South Cambridgeshire Local Plan	5ei) Deal with applications for appropriate new residential development effectively and promptly, meeting national targets for speed and quality of decision making	Ongoing	Performance is now monitored utilising live data on an internal performance dashboard. Four out of five KPIs are above target, with the fifth on an improvement trend towards our own internal target and remaining above the national target (see appendix A).	Green
6) We will take action to bring empty homes back into use	6a) Identify and prioritise empty homes across the district that need to be brought back into use	6ai) Finalise the Council's Empty Homes Database	Q1	Empty Homes Database has been completed. The database is live and up to date, with empty properties to be added/removed over time. Now that this is in place properties are regularly selected to be worked on by the Empty Homes Officer.	Purple
6) - see above	6a) - see above	6aii) Assign 200 empty homes a priority classification using the scoring and rating system against agreed criteria	Q4	On target for completion by Q4. 60 properties have been classified as a priority so far.	Green
6) - see above	6b) Engage and correspond with empty homeowners and take appropriate action, where necessary	6bi) Bring 20 empty homes back into use which have been empty for longer than 6 months	Q4	On target. Four brought back into use in Q1 but many more are expected back in use within the Q2.	Green

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Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
1) We will create and implement planning policies that address climate and ecological emergencies (including working towards net zero by 2050)	1a) Create policies that will help us to achieve net zero carbon as part of work on the Greater Cambridge Local Plan and North East Cambridge Area Action Plan	1ai) Publish the preferred option (regulation 18) draft of the Joint Local Plan (Q3) (as part of the process to create policies that will help us to achieve net zero carbon as part of work on the Greater Cambridge Local Plan and North East Cambridge Area Action Plan)	Q3	Work on the local plan is progressing. An update of the Local Development Scheme will be reported to members at the end of Q2.	Green
1) - see above	1b) Create processes and policies that will help us to double nature as part of wider work on green infrastructure and the Greater Cambridge Local Plan	1bi) Publish the preferred option (regulation 18) draft of the Joint Local Plan (Q3) (as part of the process to create policies that will help us to double nature as part of wider work on green infrastructure and the Greater Cambridge Local Plan)	Q3	As per 1ai)	Green
1) - see above	1b) - see above	1bii) We will plan and prepare processes for the examination of Biodiversity Net Gain obligations on developers (timescale subject to further announcements from DEFRA)	Subject to DEFRA	The project to prepare process for the examination of Biodiversity Net Gain obligations on developers has been highlighted as a priority, and the team have commenced conversations	Green
1) - see above	1b) - see above	1biii) Subject to successful funding bid to Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), assist parish councils to identify locations within their areas that could be improved	Q4	We expect to submit the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) application by end of Aug, which would then see notification of whether this has been successful received in about October.	Green
1) - see above	1c) Implement and communicate to all stakeholders the Council's agreed hierarchy for achieving Biodiversity Net Gain ahead of formal regulation in Autumn 2023	1ci) Develop and deliver an engagement programme with the development community, stakeholders and Parish Councils to explain the opportunities around Biodiversity Net Gain	Q4	This output is closely related to 1bii) - see update for this output above.	Green

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
2) We will work with the City Council, water industry and stakeholders to address water scarcity in the Greater Cambridge area	2a) Engage with the Environment Agency, Water Industry, Lead Local Flood Authority and local stakeholders [including the Cam Valley Forum] to develop a response to water scarcity challenges caused by development in the district	2ai) A strategy for managing new development alongside new water supply and demand management measures set out in approved Water Resource Management Plans for the area	Q3	Responded to the Cambridge Water draft Water Resource Management Plan consultation in May 2023.	Green
3) We will support nature recovery as part of our 'doubling nature' agenda	3a) Review arrangements for the protection of Trees and Hedgerows across the District, including commencing a programme of work with Parish Councils to review and update the register of Tree Protection Orders (TPOs)	3ai) A review of the process to designate and record TPOs across the District	Q4	Project has been highlighted as a priority, team have commenced conversations	Green
Page 273 3b) see above	3b) Identify and deliver new opportunities to plant trees, establish wildflower strips and in other ways enhance nature, in consultation with residents	3bi) Plant 35 trees across two sites on our own estate, as part of the Treescapes fund	Q4	With the support of our grounds maintenance contractor, 34 new standard trees and 228 whips were planted across both sites in March / April. We also have a 3 year maintenance programme in place. A final claim is being prepared to submit to draw down the Treescapes funding.	Purple
3) - see above	3b) - see above	3bii) Create wildflower areas on four sites located across the district on our own estate	Q2	The 4 sites (at West Wickham, Coton, Fen Ditton and Guilden Morden) now have a new grass cutting regime that has allowed wildflowers and grasses to flourish.	Purple
3) - see above	3b) - see above	3biii) Undertake a pilot using alternative methods to control weed growth, avoiding harmful environmental impacts	To be confirmed	We will start a pilot project in conjunction with the launch of our new grounds maintenance contract later this year. We are in conversation on this subject with residents in Cottenham.	Green
3) - see above	3b) - see above	3biv) Engage with communities on sustainable agriculture and food production	Q4	An article will be included in the South Cambs magazine, which will be delivered to all residents in the autumn. This will explain what is meant by sustainable food, how they can eat more sustainably, and highlights how SCDC supports and promotes sustainable food in communities and businesses.	Green

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
3) - see above	3c) Support local communities to plant trees and help deliver 'doubling nature' at the parish level	3ci) Provide grants to villages to plant trees and help biodiversity projects to deliver 'doubling nature' at the parish level	Q4	No grants were awarded for this purpose during Q1, however an application has been received which will be considered during Q2.	Green
3) - see above	3c) - see above	3cii) Deliver trees to at least 50 parish councils through our '6 Free Trees' initiative	Q4	The 6 Free Trees Scheme will open in Q2/Q3	Green
3) - see above	3d) Share information and local case studies through our Zero Carbon Communities programme of events, e-bulletins and webpages	3di) Deliver conference sessions, webinars and visit two case studies	Q4	A Climate and Environment conference is proposed for parish councils and community groups is proposed, to take place during the UN Climate conference COP28 30 Nov - 12 Dec. This would be to share good practice, network and get inspired.	Green
4) We will decarbonise the Council's estate and operations Page 274	4a) Procure low emissions vehicles or alternative fuels (e.g., HVO biofuel) as replacements for our existing fleet	4ai) Deployment of at least 20% alternative fuels as proportion of total fuel usage by refuse fleet	Q4	Fuel for the Council's fleet accounts for over two thirds of greenhouse gas emissions. We are addressing this by switching a proportion of the fleet to using sustainably sourced Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO). This is a fossil-free paraffinic diesel which can be used as a direct replacement for mineral diesel fuel. Procurement for HVO has been completed and contract awarded.	Green
	4b) Deliver the Waterbeach Renewable Energy Network (WREN) project - to deliver solar PV, battery storage and electric vehicle charging at the Council's Waterbeach depot	4bi) Complete design and implementation review and finalise contracts for the WREN project	Q1	Final design changes are scheduled to complete in Q2. These changes have been made to absorb inflationary pressures and maintain project costs within budget. Enabling works have also been progressed.	Green
	4b) - see above	4bii) Start on-site	Q2	Start on-site has commenced with access road. Full start on site for the solar array and micro grid due to take place in Q3.	Green
	4b) - see above	4bii) Finalise installation and commissioning	Q4	Due to the reprofiling of prior milestones, the install and commissioning is now expected to take place in Q1 of 2024. Although the project completion will be slightly delayed from the original timescale, this will not directly impact on the overall goal of our net zero targets.	Green
	4c) Increase the energy efficiency of our South Cambs Hall office building	4ci) Realisation of year 1 benefits (reduced energy costs and carbon emissions) from Greening of South Cambs Hall project	Q4	Due to delays in the completion of the Greening South Cambs Hall project (to install a number of green energy and energy efficiency measures), full year-1 benefits (energy costs and carbon emissions reduction) will not be fully realised by end of Q4. Work continues with project completions now expected by end of Q2 / beginning of Q3.	Amber

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
4) - see above	4c) - see above	4cii) Explore opportunities to further decarbonise our office building	Q4	Opportunities to further decarbonise our office building will be considered following the completion of the Greening South Cambs Hall project (as detailed above - 4ci)), which is expected to be completed by the end of Q2/beginning of Q3.	Green
4) - see above	4d) Increase the energy efficiency of our sheltered housing communal rooms	4di) Install solar PV array at Elm Court sheltered housing scheme, Over	Q4	We are due to agree a final specification in Q2 and start work on site in Q3.	Green
4) - see above	4d) - see above	4dii) Complete energy retrofit assessments of communal rooms, identify feasible improvements and agree delivery plan	Q1	Energy retrofit assessments of communal rooms will be carried out during Q2.	Green
4) - see above	4e) Improved energy performance of our Commercial buildings	4ei) Review Asset Register for commercial assets and schedule opportunities for energy efficiency improvements at tenant breaks	Q4	Our Commercial Investments, Procurement and Climate and Environment teams are working together to explore further opportunities for energy efficiency improvements on our commercial assets. It is expected that this work will be completed in Q1 2024. Efficiency improvements have been completed at 270 Cambridge Science Park and the EPC improved to A rating (20).	Green
4) - see above	4f) Reduce carbon emissions from SCDC business travel by reducing mileage and promoting low carbon alternatives	4fi) Communications to help reduce carbon emissions through business travel	Q4	We continue to provide communications promoting the Tusker Green car scheme to staff, alongside other approaches that seek to reduce emissions from business travel. including the Council's pool car and the CamShare car sharing scheme. Mileage continues to be monitored as part of the Council's annual carbon reporting.	Green
5) We will support parish councils and local communities to respond to the climate emergency	5a) Award Zero Carbon Communities grants to community projects that support carbon reduction and community engagement around climate change	5ai) Funding of £125k (up from £100k during 21-22) awarded to eligible projects	Q4	Zero Carbon Communities (ZCC) applications have been scored and a proposal will go to the Grants Advisory Committee in July to agree the final grant allocations to successful applicants.	Green

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
5) - see above	5b) Promote delivery of EVCPs in Parishes via Electric Vehicle Charge Point Grants Programme	5bi) Award up to £50k funding via Electric Vehicle Charge Point Grants Programme to eligible applicants	Q4	In Q1, three applicants have been awarded £5k each, totalling £15k grant award to install EV charge points at Milton, Over, and Shepreth.	Green
5) - see above	5c) Provide a programme of networking and information sharing (Zero Carbon Communities and Green Connect)	5ci) Deliver at least four webinars, four e-bulletins and a one-day conference, covering subjects including carbon-friendly diets, community energy and behavioural change	Q4	Two E-bulletins (Zero Carbon Communities (ZCC) newsletters) were sent out in April and June respectively, with an Autumn newsletter set to be sent out in September. Surveys are being developed in order to gain feedback from ZCC contacts and social media followers to gain a better understanding of what webinar content would be useful. The first webinar is set to be delivered in Autumn. A one-day conference is due to take place in November, in line with COP28.	Green
6) We will work to promote and protect air quality in the district	6a) Run communications to promote and educate on air quality within the district	6ai) Monitor and publish reports on air quality in at least 6 targeted areas utilising portable equipment (Zephyrs)	Ongoing	Work has been undertaken and Zephyr equipment has been deployed to report on air quality in 3 new locations (Girton, Waterbeach and Barton), with a further location identified.	Green
6) - see above	6a) - see above	6aii) Communications campaign highlighting the impacts of air quality, to coincide with Clean Air Day	Q1	Clean Air Day (15th June) was promoted via our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter social media channels, generating 3,400 impressions. Further air quality promotion is due to take place in Q3.	Green
6) - see above	6b) Undertake Environmental Permit inspections in line with our new regime, to ensure compliance	6bi) Undertake all Environmental Permit processes in accordance with programmed inspection	Ongoing	A scheduled inspection programme is in place for Environmental Permits, with inspections due to be complete in the last two quarters of the year.	Green
6) - see above	6c) Ensure compliance with the Taxi Licencing Policy with regard to emissions standards (Euro 6 compliance, zero or ultra-low emissions category from 1 December 2023 for new licences or renewals)	6ci) Compliance of taxi fleet with current taxi policy	Ongoing	Taxi fleet compliance monitoring is ongoing, with good levels of compliance currently evident. There have been no notable breaches in terms of inappropriate vehicles being used; thus ensuring emission standards are being met.	Green
7) We will reduce consumption of resources and waste	7a) Identify and implement strategies for overall waste / materials reduction, decreased residual waste and increased recycling	7ai) Work with RECAP partners on new Joint Waste Municipal Strategy setting out how authorities across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough will collect and dispose of waste over the next 10-20 years	Q4	The current strategy will remain in place while conversations with DEFRA continue and we await further guidance from DEFRA. It is unclear as to when the DEFRA guidance will be provided.	Green

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
7) - see above	7a) - see above	7aii) Provide support for schemes (such as repair cafes, reuse, refill, kit hire and food waste redistribution schemes) that help the transition to a circular economy	Ongoing	The updated circular economy strategy is now finalised and in action, with the schedule for the year currently being developed. We also continue to support report cafes and other community work via the Zero Carbon Communities (ZCC) grants (see 5ai).	Green
7) - see above	7a) - see above	7aiii) Carry out communications campaigns focussed on increasing recycling rates and reducing non-recyclable waste from Circular Resource Plan	Ongoing	Metal matters campaign concluded at the beginning of July and an evaluation meeting is scheduled for 15th August. The outcomes from this evaluation can be included in the Q2 update. The current phase of the food waste prevention campaign concludes at the end of December.	Green
8) We will build carbon reduction and nature recovery perspectives into decision making across the Council	8a) Work towards becoming a carbon literate organisation	8ai) Secure Bronze status as a Carbon Literate Organisation	Q2	Two courses have been completed with 10 employees completing pledges and receiving certification, with a further course taking place 26th July. Due to scheduling of Carbon Literacy courses and availability of key colleagues – meeting the requirements of bronze status needs to be reprofiled to Q3, however this remains within tolerance.	Green
8) - see above	8a) - see above	8aii) Develop reporting on our Scope 3 (supply chain) carbon emissions reporting	Q4	Work has started to explore what reporting of supply chain carbon emissions currently takes place through our existing procurement activities. We are focusing on the housing maintenance contract as our largest contract. This will allow us to identify how this can be built upon.	Green
8) - see above	8b) Undertake carbon impact assessments in relation to all new budget bids exceeding £20k	8bi) Share carbon impact assessment tool with service areas and put guidance in place to utilise during bids/savings MTFS process	Q2	A draft template for the carbon impact assessment process has been produced following discussions about how to integrate the tool into the bids/savings process.	Green

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
9) Our Councillors will act as climate and environment advocates to promote action by organisations and stakeholders beyond South Cambs	9a) Promoting action on climate change mitigation and environment, including showcasing good practice	9ai) Articles and presentations promoting action on climate change mitigation and environment, including showcasing good practice	Q4	<p>Climate and Environment Advisory Committee Chair attended and chaired the speaker panel at Histon and Impington Eco Fest.</p> <p>A number of articles have been published in the Summer 2023 edition of the South Cambs Magazine relating to climate change mitigation and environment, including on the subject of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work to retrofit Council homes - Habitat awareness training for watercourse team - Promotion of reuse, repair and recycling for bulky items - Home composting. - Local Plans (helping to protect local environment) - Electric Vehicle Charing Point grants <p>An article was also published in the Cambridge Evening News detailing our green support for local businesses.</p> <p>Further promotion activities will take place throughout the remainder of the year.</p>	Green
Page 278 9) - see above	9a) - see above	9aii) Representation at key regional, national and international events relating to climate change and environment	Q4	<p>Member and Senior Officer attendance at the Oxford to Cambridge Pan-Regional Partnership.</p> <p>Our Head of Climate and Environment is a member of the Selection Committee for the Zayed Sustainability Prize in the Climate Action Category (https://www.zayedsustainabilityprize.com/apply/committee).</p> <p>This is a global prize that recognises non-profit organisations, small and medium sized businesses and high schools for their impactful, innovative and inspiring sustainable solutions across a range of categories.</p> <p>The 2023 award cycle is underway and the Prize Award ceremony and events will be held at COP 28 in December 2023.</p> <p>Representation at further regional, national and international events relating to climate change and the environment will be reported on throughout the year.</p>	Green

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
1) We will ensure the Council is structured and appropriately resourced to deliver efficient and effective services	1a) Complete reviews of all services, identifying and implementing opportunities for improved efficiency and service delivery by the end of 2023.	1ai) 3 service reviews completed and recommendations made	Q4	Corporate Admin and Revs and Bens Phase 2 service reviews are on target for completion in Q3. Dem Services review completed and findings being implemented.	Green
1) - see above	1a) - see above	1aii) Service Review recommendations implemented	Q4	The recommendations from the Revs and Bens phase 1 service review are currently being implemented, including a management restructure. The recommendations from the Executive Assistant review are in process. The Team Leader role has been recruited to. Implementation of further recommendations will be subject to the completion of the service reviews details at output 1ai above.	Green
Page 27 1) - see above	1b) Assess the impact of the initial 4 Day Week trial on the efficiency and quality of service delivery and the health and wellbeing of colleagues	1bi), 1ci) and 2bi) Report produced assessing the findings from the 3-month 4 Day week trial	Q1	A report was produced at the end of the 3-month trial, with a review of the KPI's. The overall conclusion was these had been maintained. Data from the Robertson Cooper staff survey was also included in this report and showed the results were overwhelming positive. The recommendation was to extend the trial until March 2024, which was approved. A 3-month trial will commence in September 2023 for the Shared Waste service. A report will be produced in Q3 once the initial Shared Waste trial has been completed.	Purple
1) - see above	1c) Secure approval and undertake a further trial in the Shared Waste Service	1c) As per 1bi) (Approvals for Shared Waste trial)	Q1	As per 1bi)	
1) - see above	1d) Implement approach for the ongoing review of customer feedback in relation to all council services, identifying and acting upon opportunities for improved service delivery	1di) Introduction of annual tenant satisfaction survey to allow implementation of new performance monitoring under new requirements by the Social Housing Regulator	Q1	Consultants appointed to undertake annual survey in October. In the process of implementing repair satisfaction surveys on a monthly basis. First surveys to go out in August to those that had a repair undertaken during July 2023.	Green
1) - see above	1d) - see above	1dii) Implementation of new approaches to the collection and review of customer feedback	Q2	The Council is receiving feedback data through its Customer Feedback Survey (available through our website). From Q2 onwards, key findings from this feedback will be reviewed at regular Digital Programme board meetings.	Green

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Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
2) We will attract and retain the best talent and ensure we are an employer of choice	2a) Offer a wide range of development initiatives to ensure we're growing our own talent and providing development opportunities for staff	2ai) 10 apprenticeship courses completed by SCDC staff during the 2023-24 year	Q4	We have 10 apprentices completing courses at Levels 2-7 who are on track to complete their apprenticeships by April 2024. Apprenticeships represent a key opportunity for us to develop colleagues and to bring in new talent.	Green
2) - see above	2a) - see above	2aii) Promotion of apprenticeships as a development route for SCDC staff and recruit a new intake of apprentices (internally or externally) to commence their courses during the year	Q4	Meeting with Growthworks to discuss apprenticeship development opportunities w/c 24/7/23. 6 colleagues are starting apprenticeships in Q2, 4 new hire apprentices joined SCDC in Q1 and we have 9 apprentice roles open, with a view to them joining SCDC in Q2.	Green
2) - see above	2a) - see above	2aiii) Complete the delivery of a modular leadership development program for 49 managers	Q2	Leadership Academy provided SCDC's leaders with an opportunity to develop their skills and awareness of self, others, change management, critical thinking and performance management. Sessions on financial management, motivation, resilience and negotiation skills were also offered. There are two sessions remaining, which will be delivered in Q2.	Green
2) - see above	2a) - see above	2aiv) Assess the outcomes of the 'Essential Tools for Managers' training pilot for new and first line managers	Q1	This pilot programme has been assessed and was deemed successful. We are developing further plans for line manager training, to be launched in Q3.	Purple
2) - see above	2b) Assess the impact of the initial 4 Day Week trial on our ability to attract and retain talent and consider a longer trial to enable better data collection and analysis	2b) As per 1di) (Ability to attract and retain talent)	Q1	As per 1bi)	
2) - see above	2c) Promote SCDC as an employer of choice	2ci) Attend 3 careers fairs to develop better relationships with schools and colleges and encourage SCDC as a realistic local employment opportunity, including the provision of work experience opportunities	Q4	1 careers fair attended at Cambridge Jobcentre during Q1 – approx. 25 potential candidates signposted to potential roles across the Council. Continuing to liaise and partner with Jobcentre to provide information for potential candidates on South Cambs roles. Shared Planning Service attended Long Road Sixth Form Careers Fair (Cambridge) in May 2023 to promote opportunities within SPS 1 work experience completed. Review of work experience programme started to ensure we are offering the best experience to students, promoting us as an employer of choice and to encourage future apprenticeship applications by raising the profile of the Council and the opportunities for employment.	Green

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
3) We will generate additional income through our services and commercial activities	3a) Explore and pursue ways of increasing income generation through our services	3ai) Increase Greater Cambridge Commercial Waste Service customers by 150 over the course of the year	Q4	44 total new customers at the end of Q1.	Green
3) - see above	3a) - see above	3aii) Improve cost recovery for discretionary services provided within the Shared Planning Service through the effective use of Planning Performance Agreement and pre-application charging regimes and appropriate partnership working arrangements where possible	Q4	Review of Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) completed and improved invoicing process in place. Training rolled out to service. Q1 monitoring indicates improved cost recovery through PPA's and pre-application process. BNE service developing new service offer to key partners to improve cost recovery and enhance service delivery.	Green
3) - see above	3b) Generate rental income from our office space	3bi) Lease office space at our South Cambs Hall office	Q3	As per GLBE 2ai) (Green)	Green
3) - see above	3c) Maximise returns from commercial space owned by the Council	3ci) Lease office space at our 270 Science Park premises	Q4	As per GLBE 2aii) (Green)	Green
4) We will make it easier for customers to access and carry out transactions online	4a) Make it easier for customer to access and complete services online	4ai) 12 services made easier for customers to access online, via self-service, online	Q4	Three services are now easier to access online and complete via self-service - Elected Tenant Enquiry form, Council Tax Payment form, and Council Tax and Benefits form. These are all being advertised to make customers aware. Nine more services are underway with the aim of making it easier for customers to self-serve. These services are expect to be online by end of Q2.	Green
4) - see above	4a) - see above	4aii) Provide an integrated portal for businesses to access SCDC online services	Q4	Project launch meeting is scheduled for Sept. In advance of this a user requirement document has been created and we are in discussions with IEG4 (supplier) re the creation of a demo. We also continue to explore alternative delivery options.	Green

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Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
4) - see above	4a) - see above	4aiii) Launch of web-chat functionality	Q4	<p>Webchat 'iteration 1' went live 20th July. This allows customers to interact with us within business hours, have a free-text conversation with a member of the Contact Centre and have a transcript of their conversation emailed to them.</p> <p>Webchat iteration 2 is being developed with 3C Digital and will have further enhancements, such as the look and feel, offer signposts to call actions based on the page web chat started from.</p>	Green
4) - see above	4b) Make it easier for customer to find information on our webpages	4bi) Design and implement new websites for SCDC and Greater Cambridge Shared Planning	Q4	Stakeholder workshops have been organised for both SCDC and GCSP websites and early conversations are taking place with management teams to set the vision for the websites.	Green
5) We will work with communities and individuals to tackle issues that are affecting them locally Page 282	5a) Support communities to consider and address the local initiatives that matter to them using our Community Led Plan framework.	5ai) Carry out a review to consider best way to support communities to consider issues that are affecting them locally beyond existing Community Led Plan work	Q4	Review to take place in Q3. In the meantime, parishes have been made aware of our toolkit and the support that is available for them to pursue a Community Led Plan. Officer support is available where communities choose to take up this opportunity	Green
5) - see above	5a) - see above	5aii) Continued support for the creation of neighbourhood plans and village design guides	Q4	Ongoing support is being provided to communities for the creation of neighbourhood plans. 8 neighbourhood plans have now been made and adopted. Programme for village design guides has concluded - further guidance will be subject to further funding and officer capacity	Green
5) - see above	5b) Ensure a consistent approach to consultation, providing all groups with opportunities to make their views known	5bi) Launch an internal SCDC consultation toolkit to achieve a consistent approach to consultation	Q2	<p>We are working with The Consultation Institute to develop a toolkit which colleagues from across the organisation will be able to refer to. This toolkit is complete and ready for internal distribution / publication this summer.</p> <p>Alongside this, relevant officers are receiving in-person training. Session 1 (preparing for a consultation) and session 2 (carrying out a consultation) have both taken place. There will be a third in-person session (training on the toolkit) on Thursday 6 July. Following this training session, the toolkit will be made live and shorter process training will be made available to a wider pool of staff</p>	Green
5) - see above	5b) - see above	5bii) Carry out a review of the Greater Cambridge Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which outlines how communities are engaged on planning related matters	Q4	Review has commenced, with a programme leading to public consultation on a draft Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) in Q3 2023.	Green

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
5) - see above	5c) Work with partners to produce an agreed cultural strategy for South Cambridgeshire	5ci) Release an action plan and toolkit for the delivery of a cultural strategy	Q4	A survey is being created to understand the aspirations, to help guide the establishment of a possible 'Arts & Culture' strategy. Survey to be circulated to Councillors by the end of this summer.	Green
5) - see above	5d) In partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council and the Greater Cambridge Partnership deliver a civil parking enforcement scheme for South Cambridgeshire.	5di) Launch the civil parking enforcement scheme	Q3	Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) has submitted the Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) application to the Department for Transport. The timescale for this application being determined is set by Government, but we are expecting a decision to allow the scheme to launch before the end of 2023 as planned. SCDC officers working with CCC to ensure the communications plans are in place to ensure communities, and those who have become accustomed to parking illegally due to reduced Police capacity to enforce, have sufficient warning and understanding of the change.	Green
5) - see above	5e) Establish mechanisms for council tenants to have an input into wider estate management issues	5ei) Complete at least 86 estate inspections (note inspections take place over an 8-month period)	Q4	Formal Estate inspections carried out by officers and supported by tenant reps have commenced and will continue through the summer months. 6 formal estate inspections have been completed in the first quarter.	Green
5) - see above	5f) Take action to minimise fly tipping	5fi) Deploy additional cameras at new locations to deter fly tipping	Q4	12 additional cameras have been purchased, two new locations have been fitted with cameras, poles, and accompanying deterrent signage: Washpit lane (Girton) and Caxton Gibbet.	Green
5) - see above	5f) - see above	5fii) Prompt clearance of fly tips to reduce further occurrences at the same site	Q4	Fly tips are currently being cleared within 10 days with the Q1 KPI report showing that 94% of fly tips are being cleared within 10 days, which is above the 85% target.	Green
5) - see above	5f) - see above	5fiii) Deter criminal activity through development and use of 'fly tip under investigation sticker' highlighting ongoing investigations	Q4	The task of producing stickers has been assigned to the Envirocrime Support Officer. Currently, a design has been drawn up and is ready for printing.	Green
5) - see above	5f) - see above	5fiv) Undertake joint roadside checks initiatives with the Police, HMRC and other partners	Q4	Operation Chambers was attended on 25th April 2023 at Duxford (A505). This multi-agency action day was attended by the enforcement officer from SCDC.	Green

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
6) We create places where people feel safe and communities thrive	6a) Undertake all landlord safety checks (including electrical safety, gas installations and where appropriate fire risk assessments and water safety tests).	6ai) 100% compliance with landlord safety checks to council housing (including, electrical safety, gas installations and where appropriate fire risk assessments and water safety tests)	Q4	<p>As of the end of Q1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gas Compliance is 100% - Electrical Compliance with our new policy of 5 year cycle is 88% (there are 573 properties to bring into the 5 year plan during the next year from the previous 10 year cycle. There are no properties certificated longer than 10 years ago). - All required fire risk assessments are complete. Some actions remain outstanding where a procurement exercise has been required. - Water Hygiene is 100% with no outstanding actions. - Our regulatory responsibilities relating to asbestos inspections is 100% compliant across 98 public access spaces. - We have 100% coverage on asbestos reports on dwellings falling outside of regulatory requirements, however we have identified that some are older than we would like and have a programme of resurveying ahead of any major works within dwellings. We also have 810 garage blocks being resurveyed each year and are 100% compliant on these. <p>Q2 will see a full review of compliance actions and of the corporate fire strategy for HRA stock communal areas and Sheltered schemes following changes in regulations in 2019/2020 and 2022.</p>	Green
6) - see above	6b) Provide support to help people to live safely in their homes	6bi) Support 200 new clients through the housing department's visiting support service (Q4)	Q4	<p>In Q1 the Visiting Support Service supported 139 clients and is currently working with 107 so far in July. The service provides elderly residents in the district with wide-ranging practical support to help, for example, manage their finances and housing costs, loneliness and access to specialist services. These are some of the outcomes achieved by the service in the quarter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supported 22 clients to move into sheltered or supported accommodation and 12 clients with home adaptations. - Supported 30 clients with technology enabled care. - Accessed health professionals for 41 clients. - Assisted 36 clients to participate in leisure or social activities - Supported 109 to improve the safety of their homes. - Supported 132 clients to claim benefits and 24 clients to manage debts 	Green
6) - see above	6b) - see above	6bii) Spend disabled facilities grant and repairs grant to allow people to live independently and safely in their homes	Q4	<p>Better Care Fund Allocation received from County 2023/24 - £787,473. Grants are available to qualifying applicants (in line with the Cambridgeshire Adaptations & Repairs Policy 2019) in the private sector or in housing association properties across the District.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Spend within Q1 - £72,285 - Committed Spend this year so far – £338,412 - Pipeline spend identified so far this year - £323,886 	Green

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
6) - see above	6b) - see above	6biv) Run a communications campaign promoting the reporting of concerns about private rental housing conditions to the Council	Q4	A damp and mould article was included in the spring edition of the South Cambs magazine. Information on damp and mould and advice on renting housing in poor conditions has also been made available on the SCDC website.	Green
6) - see above	6b) - see above	6bv) Undertake inspection visits to all caravan sites to ensure that residents have suitable housing provision	Q4	20 sites have been risk assessed and 20 more sites are on record as having a licence. The next stage is to ensure that all sites are correctly licenced, which will commenced in Q3/Q4.	Green
6) - see above	6b) - see above	6bvi) Run a workshop to promote the Mobile Wardens scheme and plan the development of the new scheme which will run from 2024-27 (Q2)	Q2	The review of schemes is in progress to understand how the Council could support schemes over the next 3 years. A workshop was held in June, with parishes and Mobile Warden Schemes, to ensure a full understanding of the local benefits these schemes deliver and financial sustainability.	Green
6) - see above	6b) - see above	6bvii) Support tenants facing mental health issues to maintain their tenancies and prevent homelessness	Ongoing	We employed a mental health worker on a 2 year fixed term contract in January. This officer is now working intensively with a number of identified cases, providing support and enhancing life skills through innovate solutions tailored to each client.	Green
6) - see above	6c) Target support to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for vulnerable residents	6ci) Run a series of outdoor activity events to support young people to improve their mental health	Q4	Two programmes have been held at Milton Country Park this year. The second is currently ongoing. There will be a summer break before with a third programme starts at Milton in September. Programmes at Wandlebury have been suspended due to low uptake. Instead, we have provided a bespoke programme at Cambourne Village College. We are currently awaiting feedback on the success of this and whether this could be replicated at other schools.	Green
6) - see above	6c) - see above	6cii) Provide funding to support activities that benefit the health and wellbeing of our residents, in the form of Service Support Community Chest and Let's Get South Cambridgeshire Active grants	Q4	Service support grant process for 2023-2026 reviewed and allocations complete. A total £167,400 of funds was allocated to the voluntary sector to help deliver support to residents on a range of issues from Debt advice services to voluntary car schemes. Let's Get South Cambridgeshire Active grant is now closed. £9,000 of funding allocated to set up 30 new physical activity schemes. .	Green

*Purple = Completed, Green = On target for completion within target timescale or tolerance, Amber = Delayed beyond timescale or tolerance, but on target for revised timescale, Red = Not going to be delivered or delivery plan needed

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
6) - see above	6d) Assist in the relocation and support for refugees and asylum seekers in the district	6di) Coordinate the Homes for Ukraine scheme to ensure support for hosts and guests, and to help guests to transfer from hosted to more independent living where required	Q4	<p>There has been a steady decrease in Ukrainian arrivals over the past months, however the current processes and workflow are robust and working effectively and will continue to do so as the scheme continues.</p> <p>A suite of moving on options have been provided to hosts and guests to support the next phase of guest's journeys to more independent living. Two moving on events have been held to help answer queries and a further event will take place this summer. The SCDC moving on team has a process to ensure each guest is contacted 60 days in advance of when they might be asked to move on by their host to minimise emergency support requests and homelessness.</p>	Green
6) - see above	6d) - see above	6dii) Support further requests to aid and support refugees, should they be located in the district	Q4	We continue to support applications and requests as required, including provision of support to Uttlesford District Council to respond to arrivals from Sudan by loaning Housing Advice staff for two days.	Green
6) - see above	6e) Provide support to residents through the cost-of-living crisis	6ei) Review (Q1) and implement the cost-of-living support package for the 2023-24 financial year	Q4	<p>Councillors at a Cabinet meeting in March 2023 agreed the projects the Council will focus on to support communities.</p> <p>Projects include setting up a mobile food hub (July); facilitating the set up of a sustainable food network (July); talks to parishes to connect residents with the various sources of help and support (Sept); procuring and distributing warm blankets (Aug); devising an info leaflet to be sent to residents who have missed a CT payment to signpost to additional support (May). All of the above projects are being delivered on time.</p>	Green
6) - see above	6f) Work as part of the South Cambridgeshire Community Safety Partnership to identify and take action to combat local crime and anti-social behaviour issues	6fi) Plan the delivery of a £100k Shared Prosperity Fund project to prevent ram raids against ATM machines	Physical measures to be delivered in 2024-25	Parish Councils and local district councillors with cashpoints in their area have been contacted with the relevant information about this scheme and the concept will be discussed at Parish Council meetings. Once feedback is received work will commence with those that are keen to proceed.	Green
6) - see above	6g) Build on Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation to ensure best practice and fully embedded response to domestic abuse	6gi) All staff complete mandatory domestic abuse training and targeted training updated for roll out to specific roles	Q1	Work is underway with the HR team to review the mandatory safeguarding training, including Domestic Abuse (DA) training. Initial focus is on delivering Safeguarding training (Mandatory training related to Adults with Care and Support needs delivered in June 2023). Work on targeted DA training scheduled for Qs 3&4.	Green
6) - see above	6g) - see above	6gii) Role out and promotion of a network of Domestic Abuse Champions across the organisation	Q1	<p>Domestic Abuse Champions identified and trained. Ongoing work to embed their role is now required.</p> <p>Further awareness training and Domestic Abuse champions training booked for Sept 2023</p>	Green

Objective	How the outcome will be achieved	23-24 Business Plan Outputs	Target Timescale	Position at end Q1	Q1 RAG*
7) We will deliver a range of community buildings at Northstowe	7a) Delivery of two Sports Pavilions	7ai) Phase 1 Sports Pavilion delivery	Q1	<p>Phase 1 of the Sports Pavilion delivery is due to complete at the end of August 2023. Tender has been issued for an operator.</p> <p>We hope to open to the public soon after completion and on-boarding of the operator.</p>	Green
7) - see above	7a) - see above	7aii) Start land transfer process for Phase 2 Sports Pavilion	Q4	<p>Only the land owner can instigate the land transfer process, however we are scheduled to discuss this among other items with Homes England in August.</p> <p>The trigger for this facility is 2500 homes, but there is an ambition to deliver as soon as possible.</p>	Green
7) - see above	7b) Delivery of Community Centre (including the delivery of an Interim Community facility)	7bi) Delivery of the Interim Community facility	Q1	<p>The Interim Community Facility was officially opened on 17/07/23.</p> <p>The single-storey building includes a generous lobby with kitchenette and toilets, storage, and contains space for three offices, an NHS room, and two large community rooms which can be used for a wide range of activities for all ages including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community cafes and pantry - Baby and toddler groups - Private hire for events such as birthday parties - Children and youth activities - Art workshops and events - Meeting spaces for sport and activity groups 	Purple
7) - see above	7b) - see above	7bii) Submit Planning application for delivery of Phase 1 Community Centre	Q2	<p>Extensive public consultation has been very positive. Pre-application meetings held with the Local Planning Authority and the Highways Authority.</p> <p>The Design Review Panel were exceptionally positive, especially about our sustainability ambitions.</p> <p>Application to be submitted late July/early August with anticipated Planning Committee date of November.</p>	Green
7) - see above	7c) Delivery of Civic Hub (containing health, library and community facilities)	7ci) Full stakeholder consultation prior to submission of planning application for the Civic Hub	Q3	<p>There have been discussions with stakeholders looking at what they would like to see at the Civic Hub and what space they require. Ongoing discussions are taking place with Homes England about the site and transfer of the land. Civic Hub is due to be delivered in 2028.</p> <p>A working group / board is due to be re-established with the stakeholders involved in the development of the Civic Hub. The first meeting is due in Q3.</p>	Green

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Report to:	Cabinet
Lead Cabinet Member:	Cllr John Williams (Lead Cabinet Member for Resources)
Lead Officer:	Anne Ainsworth (Chief Operating Officer)

Strategic Risk Report

Executive Summary

1. This report provides details of the council's current strategic risks, in the form of the Strategic Risk Register. This is the first such strategic risk report to be submitted to Cabinet following a review of the Council's organisational approach to the review and reporting of risk.

Key Decision

2. This is not a key decision.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - a) Review the current Strategic Risk Register at **Appendix A** and make any comments and suggestions as appropriate for future reporting on Risk.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. To ensure that the approach to managing, reporting and mitigation of strategic risks is appropriate across the Council.

Details

Risk Reporting Developments

5. Since September 2022 the Council's Leadership Team has overseen a review of our organisational approach to risk management. This has included:
 - A comprehensive review of the corporate risk register, facilitated by Risk Leads who have been established in each service.

- Adoption of a simplified approach to the logging and reporting of risk as an interim solution, while other systems are reviewed.
 - Transfer of the corporate home of risk management from the Finance team, to Policy and Performance (sitting alongside the performance reporting function).
 - Ensuring adequate resources to support ongoing risk management.
 - Review of strategic risks facing the organisation.
6. Following this change in approach, strategic risks were reported to Audit and Corporate Governance Committee in December 2022, where committee requested updates on strategic risks bi-annually.
7. Since December 2022 the following additional work has been undertaken in relation to risk management at SCDC:
- Risk leads have worked with service managers to undertake further risk updates.
 - Service risk summary have been presented to Corporate Management Team (CMT)
 - Proposed strategic risks have been collated from CMT and reported alongside existing strategic risks to Leadership Team for review.
 - The strategic risk log at **Appendix A** was reported to Audit and Corporate Governance Committee in July 2023.
8. Going forward CMT and Leadership Team will review risks quarterly at a minimum, with bi-annual updates for Audit and Corporate Governance Committee set to continue.

Risk Scoring and Categorisation Approach

9. In line with the council's Risk Strategy, the risks detailed at **Appendix A** have been scored using the following approach.

An impact score has been assigned using the following categorisation:

Score	Impact
5	Critical
4	Significant disruption and/or damage
3	Noticeable effect
2	Some limited disruption
1	Virtually no impact

A likelihood score has been assigned using the following categorisation:

Score	Likelihood
5	Dead cert
4	Probable
3	Strong possibility
2	Some possibility
1	Little chance

These two scores have been multiplied to obtain a total score. For example:

Impact score 3 x Likelihood score 3 = Total risk score 9.

10. For each risk on the risk log, this approach has been undertaken to obtain both an 'Inherent Risk' score (the score prior to control measures being taken), and a 'Residual Risk' score (the score that is anticipated once control measures have been completed).

11. The risks at **Appendix A** are displayed in order of residual risk score, from high to low. In addition, a colour-coding system has been used to provide a visual indication of Inherent and Residual risk scores, as detailed below:

- Red is any strategic risk with a rating of 16-25 high risk
- Amber is any strategic risk with a rating of 12-15 significant risk
- Yellow is any strategic risk with a rating of 5-10 medium risk
- Green is any strategic risk with a rating of 1-4 low risk

Implications

12. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial

13. There are no resource implications associated with the approach to risk management outlined within this report. Some of the risks reported on will have financial implications if risks are not mitigated as outlined or if external factors change. Timely review and appropriately planned mitigations will ensure these are identified as early as possible.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

14. The management of risks affects all areas of the Council's business and inherently aims to support achievement of all priorities.

Background Papers

None

Appendices

Appendix A: Strategic Risk Register

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Appendix A: Strategic Risk Register

URN	Risk Event	Leading To	Resulting In	Inherent Impact Score	Inherent Likelihood Score	Inherent Total Score	Control Measure 1	Control Measure 2	Control Measure 3	Residual Impact Score	Residual Likelihood Score	Residual Total Score	Owner	Status	Notes / Comments
SR15	Economic pressures increase, (including Cost of Living and changes to funding system).	Recession. Borrowing rates increase. Reduction in public spending. Restrictions on PWLB borrowing. Reduction in income from businesses and residents.	Impact on budgets (significant for 23/24 budget) and SCDC investment plans. Demand for services outstrip income. Economic growth reduces, impacting Local Government Settlement.	4	5	20	Medium Term Financial Strategy updated regularly to track potential impact on the Council before the impact actually occurs. Regular contact with Pixel our MTFS advisors. Reviewing projection regularly to check reasonableness. Continue to actively monitor situation at service and LT level	Economic Development Team in place bringing together Business Support and Commercial/Regeneration Investments Promote the support available to businesses and residents; remain open to discussion on payments and remain proactive on financial management of debtors	Refresh Investment Strategy. Transformation Programme (including Service Reviews) to continue to identify opportunities for financial savings	3	5	15	P Maddock	Open	The Fair Funding Review has been pushed back to 2025-26, however this does not have an impact on the risk score at this stage, just it's proximity.
SR03	Technical skill shortages, highly competitive employment market and high cost of living and housing in the region.	Difficulties recruiting, vacancies and shortage of skills and capacity in the organisation. Reliance on contractors. Increased stress and sickness.	Impact on service deliver. Failure to meet statutory deadlines. Damage to reputation and legal challenge. Increased expenditure due to use of contractors.	4	4	16	Use of apprenticeship opportunities to 'Grow our Own'. Launch of Management Apprenticeships scheme, Internal development opportunities for staff including secondments and training inc. funding for professional qualification	Keep pay, reward, benefits, staff satisfaction levels under review. Review and improve council 'brand' and marketing use of market supplements in place.	Trialling a 4 day week scheme, if successful will attract staff to the Council for better work/life balance	4	3	12	J Membery	Open	
SR21	Failure to deliver partnership working to deliver infrastructure.	Failure to delivery key infrastructure (such as water supply and electricity) and improved transport and infrastructure for the public.	Impacts implementation of the adopted Local Plan. Delays to delivery of strategic developments. Less opportunity to address climate change through improved connectivity.	4	4	16	Close working with partners at Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority and Greater Cambridge Partnership	Close collaboration on consultations emanating from CPCA, GCP and GCSPS to ensure project outcomes are aligned		3	4	12	S Kelly	Open	Note from Caroline Hunt - at this point in time infrastructure (particularly water) is a live factor delaying delivery of strategic developments.

Appendix A: Strategic Risk Register

URN	Risk Event	Leading To	Resulting In	Inherent Impact Score	Inherent Likelihood Score	Inherent Total Score	Control Measure 1	Control Measure 2	Control Measure 3	Residual Impact Score	Residual Likelihood Score	Residual Total Score	Owner	Status	Notes / Comments
SR23	Ability to deliver Local Plan due to limitations on water and utilities.	Delivery of key infrastructure across Greater Cambridge is critical to implementation of the Council's Local Plan, and improved transport and infrastructure for the public.	Delays to delivery of strategic developments. Less opportunity to address climate change through improved connectivity. Lack of utility provision such as water supply and electricity.	3	4	12	Effective input into infrastructure planning through engagement with statutory providers, or bodies like the Greater Cambridge Partnership.	Review of processes and systems to ensure most effective way is introduced.	Programme management resource to be recruited, along with use of Uniform/PM3.	3	4	12	S Kelly	Open	Residual likelihood score was lower but has increased due to current objections from the Environment Agency to major planning applications due to uncertainty over water supply.
SR24	Non-compliance with council housing legislation.	Risk to health and life.	Legal action. Reputational risk. Intervention by Regulator for Social Housing. At extreme corporate manslaughter.	4	4	16	Policies and procedures being developed to ensure assessments are carried out within timescales	Regular audits to ensure compliance with current regulations. and continuity checks with contractors records External contractor engaged to review compliance risks	External verification of processes	4	3	12	P Campbell	Open	
SR29	Demand for refugee housing outstrips supply.	Increased risk of homelessness.	Increased homelessness, impacts on refugee welfare, potential increase costs and impacts on staff stress levels.	4	4	16	Re-matching of Ukrainian refugees with hosts	General Housing Advice and intervention	Purchase of properties through Local Authority Housing Fund for refugees	4	3	12	P Campbell	Open	New risk added 05/07/23 following discussion at LT and based on discussion with Peter Campbell.

Appendix A: Strategic Risk Register

URN	Risk Event	Leading To	Resulting In	Inherent Impact Score	Inherent Likelihood Score	Inherent Total Score	Control Measure 1	Control Measure 2	Control Measure 3	Residual Impact Score	Residual Likelihood Score	Residual Total Score	Owner	Status	Notes / Comments
SR02	Cyber security breach.	Risk of having data stolen and held to ransom – potential data breach for residents with sensitive data. Includes medical history and bank details and family history.	Implications, legal, financial, reputational.	5	3	15	Active intelligence client with 3CICT to ensure the risk management approach to cyber security is active and industry good practice.	Ensure risks are reported and discussed at IG boards, to Shared Service Boards and are included in the ICT Business plan.	We now have a cyber security team sat within 3C ICT - keep up to date with the latest cyber threats, ensure security releases are installed in Council devices and communicates with Intelligent Client where any potential security breaches occur.	5	2	10	J Membery	Open	Updated controls 05/07/23 as per conervation with Jeff Membery. Additional control measures include: Risk Management Secure Configuration; Network Security; Managing user privileges; Incident management; User education and awareness; Malware prevention; Monitoring; Removable media controls; Mobile Working.
SR09	Failure to deliver Northstowe civic hub and other community buildings.	Risk of project failure to deliver on time and to budget.	Additional costs; reputational damage and/or delays to service and community provision.	5	3	15	Senior Responsible Officer structure in place; with leads for each aspect of the programme reporting to the Senior Responsible Officer	In July 2022 the Council agreed to provide additional financial support to deliver the buildings The Northstowe Delivery Group has been established to support the Council in delivering the buildings and includes representatives from the County Council and Town Council.	Programme Management in place to provide clear oversight and continuous review of progress and potential risks	3	3	9	A Ainsworth	Open	
SR11	Failure to effectively manage, control and utilise data and intelligence across the council.	Decisions and planning processes based on inadequate / missing information.	Reduced quality of delivery, reputational damage.	3	4	12	Community of Practice in development; options for service improvements and partnering being developed.	Completion of Data Maturity Self Assessment to help inform investigations into potential data strategies	Training, Protocols & Sharing agreements	3	3	9	A Ainsworth	Open	Risk re-scored by Jeff Membery following dsicussion at LT on 26/06/23. Increased from inherent score of 9 and residual score of 6.

Appendix A: Strategic Risk Register

URN	Risk Event	Leading To	Resulting In	Inherent Impact Score	Inherent Likelihood Score	Inherent Total Score	Control Measure 1	Control Measure 2	Control Measure 3	Residual Impact Score	Residual Likelihood Score	Residual Total Score	Owner	Status	Notes / Comments
SR12	Failure to deliver programme of work to reduce SCDCs carbon emissions.	Failure to reduce our carbon footprint by 45% by 2025 and 75% by 2030.	Environmental and reputational damage. Reduced access to funding. Exposure to uncertainty linked to climate change (e.g. fuel costs).	3	4	12	Fleet - decarbonisation programme in place and funded Ensure electricity supply for electric vehicles - additional projects of solar farm for micro grid	Strategy and action plan delivery - this is monitored by CEAC and the programme of projects is monitored by the cluster board. Embed the business plan targets for climate change in other departments, not just the cluster.	Implementation of the Asset Management Strategy relating to our council stock with a focus on decarbonisation Utilising specialist skills and knowledge from the new repairs contract to support decarbonization, including supporting bids for funding.	3	3	9	B Esan	Open	
SR18	Page 296 Organisational culture doesn't reflect organisational direction.	Inappropriate skills, behaviours and attitudes in Managers and Staff. Ineffective use of resources. Poor Member-Officer partnership working, and a lack of a joined-up approach.	Reputational damage, failure to deliver, loss of partner engagement, low retention and recruitment.	3	4	12	'Appraisal and performance management processes in place. Good recruitment practices, including recent changes to support improved diversity (e.g. blind recruitment). Inclusive & enabling organisational structure now Well embedded Development of Team Charters. Consideration of how to manage teams in a hybrid environment	Well-developed Comms strategy and significant programme of engagement and communications across the council, including: Awards ceremony and Town Hall sessions, Weekly Vlogs from CEO and Leadership Team, Corporate management Team (CMT) development/formal meetings and briefings, Insite opportunities to thank colleagues and celebrate excellence.	A range of internal and external training for all staff and members. Further development of CMT through a programme of training events, some of which will be mandatory.	3	3	9	L Watts	Open	
SR25	Ermine Street Housing (ESH) £100m investment fails to deliver return.	There are a range of factors that impact on ESH (included in the Housing Risk Register) that may impact on the future profitability on ESH.	Lower than anticipated returns on investment.	4	4	16	Interest Rates Rise - Strong financial management	House Price Deflation - House prices are more resilient in the Cambridgeshire Area. Business Model is less dependent on property values, rental income is more important	Property Condition - properties are generally new and in good condition. ESG will complete a stock condition survey to allow a long term investment plan together with an acquisition and disposal strategy	4	2	8	P Campbell	Open	Over time, a consequence of house price inflation will mean that value of assets will continue to grow, providing a buffer to ESH and protecting SCDC investment

Appendix A: Strategic Risk Register

URN	Risk Event	Leading To	Resulting In	Inherent Impact Score	Inherent Likelihood Score	Inherent Total Score	Control Measure 1	Control Measure 2	Control Measure 3	Residual Impact Score	Residual Likelihood Score	Residual Total Score	Owner	Status	Notes / Comments
SR26	New Mears Contract fails to deliver service.	Repairs not being completed on time and/or poor quality. Dependence on one contractor.	Dissatisfaction from tenants and reduction in satisfaction levels potential action by regulator and risk of disrepair claims.	4	4	16	Robust monitoring of performance. Expectations and performance measures have been made clear at the outset of the new contract.	Monitoring of contract to include tenant representatives, which will feed into the Housing Performance Panel and Housing Engagement Board.	Robust procurement process including financial check on company.	4	2	8	P Campbell	Open	
SR30	3 day week trial is stopped prematurely by government.	Continued difficulties in recruitment and retention.	Reduced ability to deliver high quality services (particularly in areas such as Planning) and the rise of agency spend to cover posts that are not filled by permanent recruitment; impact on staff morale.	4	3	12	Concern raised by sector about government intervention has been strong, with responses sent by cross-sector membership groups	SCDC has requested a meeting with DLUHC minister to understand their concerns, given early evidence of positive outcomes of the trial (financial and staffing)	Continued use of external independent research team at Cambridge University's Bennett Institute to ensure objectively and independently verified data is produced	4	2	8	L Watts	Open	New risk added - July 2023
SR31	4 day week trial is unsuccessful in achieving its aims of solving recruitment and retention challenge.	Continued difficulties in recruitment and retention.	Reduced ability to deliver high quality services (particularly in areas such as Planning).	4	3	12	Trial is being carefully monitored by officers and members (through Scrutiny of KPIs by O&S and employment impacts by E&S Committees).	Use of external independent research team at Cambridge University's Bennett Institute will ensure objectively verified data is presented to members	Recruitment to new posts advertising the benefits of working in a 4 day week environment	4	2	8	L Watts	Open	New risk added - July 2023

Appendix A: Strategic Risk Register

URN	Risk Event	Leading To	Resulting In	Inherent Impact Score	Inherent Likelihood Score	Inherent Total Score	Control Measure 1	Control Measure 2	Control Measure 3	Residual Impact Score	Residual Likelihood Score	Residual Total Score	Owner	Status	Notes / Comments
SR05	Failure to deliver organisational review and operating model.	The Council's operating model, organisational values, capabilities, and structure fail to deliver the Business Plan.	Limitations to service delivery, possible financial and legal penalties and reputational damage.	4	3	12	Engagement and comms plan for colleagues, members and Partners in place. Transformation Fund set up to resource change programme. Transformation projects and Board established to oversee delivery of objectives.	Service Review governance involves members of LT, ensuring input into definitions of objectives for reviews.	Increased number of cross service reviews requiring corporate monitoring and governance rather than relying on service only delivery	3	2	6	J Membery	Open	
SR16	Cost of living crisis – residents.	Increased costs of energy and fuel, housing and food, alongside stagnation / reduction of income (wages, social security benefits such as Universal Credit).	Housing, food, bills less affordable and residents (particularly the vulnerable but also those 'just about managing') suffer physically and financially.	3	3	9	Promote the existing mechanisms available for resident support (such as income maximisation advice, specialist debt advice, spreading payments, discretionary grants, food banks and vouchers, signposting more advice).	Implement new options agreed by Cabinet in Nov 2022, including discretionary housing payments, changes to Localised Council Tax Support, Discretionary Council Tax discounts, charitable giving, warm hubs, warm packs, community chest grants, improving access to affordable food.	Use of grant funding for additional staff for key areas, such as money advice and tenancy sustainability for those suffering from mental ill health	2	3	6	L Watts	Open	
SR20	Fail to harness synergies from partnership working (with e.g. CPCA, Health sector).	Fail to build programmes of work and improve existing services in line with available data, intelligence, partnership funding and collaboration opportunities.	Services not optimised or delivery prioritised as well as possible; funding opportunities not taken; residents failed by partners working in isolation.	3	3	9	CPCA Improvement Plan is supported by all CEOs across C&P and SCDC leads on one workstream	SCDC chairs the C&P Public Service Board which is creating a programme to create a network of officers from all organisations to learn and co-deliver new projects	SCDC CEO is on the Health & Wellbeing board and leading the housing and skills priority area for delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy in December 2022. COO leads on a newly established C&P data sharing working group.	3	2	6	L Watts	Open	

Appendix A: Strategic Risk Register

URN	Risk Event	Leading To	Resulting In	Inherent Impact Score	Inherent Likelihood Score	Inherent Total Score	Control Measure 1	Control Measure 2	Control Measure 3	Residual Impact Score	Residual Likelihood Score	Residual Total Score	Owner	Status	Notes / Comments
SR22	Failure to deliver housing and maintain 5 year housing supply.	Lack of suitable sustainable housing for residents The NPPF provide a tilted balance in favour of development applications.	Higher house prices, lack of workforce for businesses, shortage of transport and facilities. The NPPF provide a tilted balance in favour of development applications.	3	3	9	Authority Monitoring Report produced annually along with Housing Trajectory prepared in consultation with housing developers, to ensure an effective understanding of delivery.	Measures to support delivery through the planning application process, with Planning Performance Agreements put in place for strategic developments with established programmes and secured monies for staff.	Measures to address the delivery of infrastructure needed to support growth, such as the transport infrastructure programme of the Greater Cambridge Partnership. Review of the Local Plan, to ensure an ongoing policy framework and identified developments to meet future needs.	3	2	6	S Kelly	Open	At the moment the water issues have not impacted on housing land supply, therefore risk is unchanged.
SR27	Page 299 Fire at Cambourne HQ	Loss of (all or part of) building, structural integrity leading to possible loss of life of, or injury to, staff or customers	Possible injury or loss of life, financial costs of damage to the building, disruption to Council operations and services. Possible reputational damage if fire detection or prevention systems are found to be inadequate.	5	3	15	Fire risk assessment completed, and regularly reviewed	Fire safety management plan up to date, and regularly reviewed, alongside training and test and live evacuation drills	Highest risks of fire are due to arson and electrical faults. Regular monitoring of potential sources of ignition / clearance. Thorough testing is regularly undertaken (PAT and fixed wire testing)	5	1	5	L Jones	Open	Escalated from THC21 following discussion at 28/06 LT meeting

Appendix A: Strategic Risk Register

URN	Risk Event	Leading To	Resulting In	Inherent Impact Score	Inherent Likelihood Score	Inherent Total Score	Control Measure 1	Control Measure 2	Control Measure 3	Residual Impact Score	Residual Likelihood Score	Residual Total Score	Owner	Status	Notes / Comments
SR14	Failure to catch up on producing the statement of accounts (SOA) (overdue, including approval of accounts to obtain unqualified audit opinion)	Resulting in increased stress and workload and diversion from other accounting responsibilities such as budget monitoring.	Reputational loss, and uncertainty over the Council's financial position	4	3	12	A Plan of actions and timetable is prepared for each statement of accounts, including supporting information for auditors whilst monitoring progress regularly to deadlines set. Close liaison with the auditors to ensure all requests are fulfilled on time.	The SOA preparation process has been updated and more automation introduced using the SOA explorer model. This means the statement and notes can be produced quicker and with more accuracy. There are two additional fte's dedicated to the accounts catch up process avoiding significant impact on BAU activities. Training is and will continue to be provided to colleagues to enable the transition to accounts preparation and audit to be carried out.	A report is due to be made to Audit Committee in July to agree a catch up plan between the Council and our auditors with a view to completing two audit cycles per financial year meaning that for the 2024/25 cycle we will aim to be up to date. Attendance at CIPFA / external audit final accounts workshops.	2	2	4	F Ahmed	Open	Additional resources to support and train the team as required in the interim period of catching up.
SR01	IT infrastructure failure	Complete loss of service and network connectivity in one or more service areas across SCDC	Potential to miss statutory obligations, risk to vulnerable residents; incurring financial penalties, and reputational damage.	4	2	8	Active intelligent client with 3CICT to ensure risk management approach to infrastructure failure is active and industry good practice (see notes for categories of control measures).	Ensure risks are reported and discussed at IG boards, to Shared Service Boards and are included in the ICT Business plan.	Services to ensure business continuity plans are updated by the end of Sept 2023 and submitted to a central registry (with hard copy also available). Hosted services can now be accessed directly rather than through network in event of failure. Communication through social media outside of the Council's network to mitigate impacts and ensure up to date comms.	3	1	3	J Membery	Open	Updated controls 05/07/23 as per conervation with JM. Additional control measures include: split-site data centre, resilience built into hardware and software, separate networks for systems management and application, ability to reroute network traffic in the event of any failures, alternative power generation, data backup tools, 24/7 hardware support and maintenance, cooling, fire suppression and smoke detection, leak detection and site security.

Appendix A: Strategic Risk Register

URN	Risk Event	Leading To	Resulting In	Inherent Impact Score	Inherent Likelihood Score	Inherent Total Score	Control Measure 1	Control Measure 2	Control Measure 3	Residual Impact Score	Residual Likelihood Score	Residual Total Score	Owner	Status	Notes / Comments
SR06	Failure of information governance, data management	Use of incorrect information and legal non-compliance. Loss or corruption of data, inability to access or share data.	Limitations to service delivery, possible financial and legal penalties and reputational damage.	3	2	6	Agreed additional funding for IG team to ensure review of processes to reduce likelihood of failure	Governance changes being introduced so cross council accountability is delivered and efficiencies obtained.	Continual development of training and awareness to reduce likelihood of unintentional failures.	3	1	3	J Membery	Open	
SR07	Lack of clear documented digital strategy	Ad-hoc delivery of digital projects not contributing to SCDC objectives, diverting resources	Reduced savings, more unintegrated systems and increased maintenance costs. Less joined up information.	3	3	9	Commissioned an external organisation (6x3) to complete and document digital strategy to guide future IT procurement and delivery.	Include LT in "signing off" the strategy to ensure corporate buy in	We now have a draft digital strategy which is in the process of being revised.	3	1	3	J Membery	Open	Updated controls (added measure 3) 05/07/23 as per conervation with JM.

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Report to:	Cabinet	28/09/2023
Lead Cabinet Member:	Cllr Bill Handley	
Lead Officer:	Jeff Membership	

Homes for Ukraine – Landlord Incentive Scheme

Executive Summary

South Cambridgeshire District Council has seen one of the highest number of Homes for Ukraine arrivals for a lower tier local authority, welcoming over 850 Ukrainian guests into the district since the scheme beginning in April 2022. The first phase of the project has been a success, and now our focus turns to moving guests on into their own independent accommodation.

Feedback we have received from guests highlight that accessing the private rental sector is proving increasingly difficult. In response to this, and to mitigate the potential for increased social housing wait times, it is proposed that SCDC consider the launching of a Landlord Incentive scheme. The aim of this scheme will be to provide more affordable & sustainable housing options for Homes for Ukraine guests within South Cambridgeshire. A similar scheme has been successfully run by Bristol City Council, which has housed 100 families.

The scheme will offer up front payments to landlords, depending on both the size of their property, and if they provide a tenancy at the local housing allowance rate, or at market rent. Larger incentives payments will be available to landlords who offer a tenancy at the local housing rate to make it more affordable and sustainable for Homes for Ukraine guests.

Key Decision

1. No

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that Cabinet approves the proposed policy to increase the number of private rented homes accessible to Homes for Ukraine guests who are moving on from being hosted.

Reasons for Recommendations

3. A total of 841 Homes for Ukraine guests have arrived in South Cambridgeshire since the scheme began. This is the highest numbers of arrivals for a lower tier local authority.
4. The Council has effectively managed the core processes necessary to allow guests to arrive and be hosted. A wide range of wraparound support has also been given to both hosts and guests to ensure their stay was successful. These processes are well established. Early in the scheme it was identified that supporting people to move on from hosted accommodation to live more independently would be a big challenge and a sub-team was set up.
5. The private rental market in South Cambridgeshire is highly competitive with landlords having their choice of tenants in most cases. Many tenants have good rental history and credit scores that most HFU guests cannot compete with.

Details

6. To date, 241 groups of guests (a group can be one or more guests as a family unit) have moved on from being hosted. 80 have returned to the Ukraine, 36 have moved into social housing and 125 are renting privately. However, we still have 171 groups who are currently being hosted who will need to transition to more independent living.
7. Despite a range of moving on options being available, including financial support for rent in advance, rent deposits and furniture, Ukrainian guests have reported challenges in securing rental properties due to the competition they face.
8. A landlord incentive scheme can help provide equal opportunity to refugees in finding sustainable and affordable housing, without causing extra pressures on the social housing system.
9. There is no impact on the Council's general fund as the scheme can be fully funded using the Government tariff we receive for each guest arriving under the Homes for Ukraine (HFU) scheme. There is sufficient tariff funding to allocate to this scheme.
10. The data we hold for our Ukrainian guests shows the need for one and two bed properties, which are more in demand through the social housing allocations system.
11. Similar schemes have been run in other local authorities in the UK. Bristol City Council have housed over 100 Ukrainian families through running a similar scheme. Although it is not possible to predict the number of private rented homes this scheme could secure in South Cambridgeshire, the evidence from other parts of the country is positive.
12. Providing Homes for Ukraine guests with affordable housing options will mean there is less chance they will need further support from South Cambridgeshire District Council in the future.
13. The scheme will provide private landlords with an incentive payment for offering a tenancy at either market rent, or at local housing allowance. Initially this will be for a 6-month period. Top up payments will then be offered if further tenancies are offered after the initial agreement. Details are provided in the tables in this paper

and attached draft policy. The incentive increases for larger properties and for those offering their homes at Local Housing Allowance rates which are more affordable to those in receipt of housing benefits.

14. As an example, if a landlord offered a 3-bed property at the local housing allowance for 6 months, they would qualify for an initial payment of £2,750. After the initial 6 months, if they offered a further 6-month tenancy, they would receive a further £2,750. The landlord would receive a higher payment if they offered a 12-month tenancy following the initial 6 months.
15. Each landlord can receive a maximum of 2 top-up payments after their initial payment whilst providing their home to the same group.
16. To retain landlords and their properties on the scheme, if a new family is offered a tenancy after the original family vacates, landlords will qualify for another initial payment, and another 2 top-up payments. The Council will only incentivise payments for a family for 18 months as we want to promote independence.
17. Landlords who have already provided a property to Homes for Ukraine guests will be able to sign up to the scheme once the initial tenancy comes up for renewal.
18. *Figures A-C* below provide the proposed incentives by tenancy type and size of home.
19. The payment is proposed to be made up front to landlords as soon as they have a tenancy in place and their tenant has moved in into the home offered under the scheme. This payment structure is to ensure there is sufficient incentive to secure more homes. Under current legislation, landlords cannot end a tenancy early unless there is a good reason, such as repeat non-payment of rent or major damage to the property, and a legal process is required. A payment will not be made until SCDC have received proof of the tenancy agreement, and that the tenants have moved in to the property.
20. If a tenant moves out during a longer tenancy and at least 6-months remain, for example returning to Ukraine, the terms of the scheme will mean the landlord will need to offer the home to a new family for 6-months. This will not require a further incentive payment as it has already been paid.
21. It is worth noting that there is currently a Renters Reform Bill in the early stages of development. It was first introduced to parliament in May 2023. This bill will abolish fixed term tenancies, and replace all tenancies with monthly rolling tenancies, which require 2 months' notice to end. This bill will also abolish 'non-fault evictions', providing more security to tenants. As this bill progresses it might be necessary to amend the incentive scheme.
22. Officers have held informal discussions with contacts within the private lettings sector and have had positive feedback that the scheme would be well received.

Table A. Initial proposed payment to landlords. Payments increase with size of home. Larger homes have a bigger gap between Local Housing Allowance and market rents as shown in figure D.

Number of bedrooms	Market rent incentive	LHA rate incentive
1 Bedroom	£1140	£2280
2 Bedroom	£1300	£2600
3 Bedroom	£1350	£2750
4 Bedroom	£1410	£2820

Table B. Top-up payment proposal following initial 6-month tenancy (at market rent).

Number of bedrooms	Monthly rolling	6-month tenancy	12-month tenancy
1 Bedroom	£570	£1140	£1710
2 Bedroom	£650	£1300	£1950
3 Bedroom	£675	£1350	£2025
4 Bedroom	£705	£1410	£2115

Table C. Top-up payment proposal following initial 6-month tenancy (at Local Housing Allowance rent rate)

Number of bedrooms	Monthly rolling	6-month tenancy	12-month tenancy
1 Bedroom	£1140	£2280	£3420
2 Bedroom	£1300	£2600	£3900
3 Bedroom	£1375	£2750	£4125
4 Bedroom	£1410	£2820	£4230

Table D. Current average market & LHA rent in South Cambridgeshire.

Number of bedrooms	Private rental rate	LHA rate	Difference
1 bedroom	£900	£773	£127 (14%)
2 bedroom	£1150	£848	£302 (26%)
3 bedroom	£1300	£947	£353 (27%)
4 bedroom	£1700	£1296	£404 (23%)

Options

1. To approve the Homes for Ukraine Landlord Incentive Scheme
2. To approve the Homes for Ukraine Landlord Incentive Scheme with amendments suggested by members.
3. To defer a decision to the next Cabinet meeting.
4. To reject the Homes for Ukraine Landlord Incentive Scheme.

Implications

23. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered:-

Financial

24. The full cost of this scheme will be covered by the tariff funding that South Cambridgeshire District Council receives per Homes for Ukraine arrival, and will have no impact on any other budgets that SCDC hold. There are no implications for the funding of this scheme.

Equality and Diversity

25. An Equality Impact Assessment was completed on the Homes for Ukraine scheme, considering any potential perceived equalities issues. The assessment highlighted the potential for negative social view on the support that is being provided for Ukrainian refugees. However this support is fully funded and is necessary for the large number of Homes for Ukraine refugees in South Cambridgeshire.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in

26. The proposal aligns with this aspect of South Cambridgeshire District Councils business plan. The scheme will help to provide more affordable housing to refugees in the district, as it will encourage landlords to provide more properties available at a lower rental cost. There will be continuous review of uptake of the scheme and any wider impacts of the scheme on the private rented sector and homelessness applications in South Cambridgeshire.

Appendices

Appendix A: Landlord Incentive Scheme Policy

Report Author:

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Appendix A

Homes for Ukraine – Landlord Incentive Scheme Policy

Policy statement:

South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) acknowledges its responsibility to address the pressing humanitarian situation faced by Ukrainian refugees seeking their own independent accommodation within our region. In line with our commitment to providing support and assistance to those in need, we are implementing the Landlord Incentive Scheme for Homes for Ukrainian (HFU) refugees. This scheme aims to encourage landlords within South Cambridgeshire to rent their properties to Ukrainian refugees who are seeking safe and stable accommodation.

Objective:

The primary objective of the landlord incentive scheme is to increase the availability of suitable and independent housing for Homes for Ukraine refugees within South Cambridgeshire. The policy seeks to achieve this by incentivising landlords to offer tenancies to Homes for Ukraine refugees by providing a payment based on how many bedrooms their property has, and what type of tenancy they provide. South Cambridgeshire District Council will ask participating landlords for a minimum of an initial 6 month tenancy, with an option to provide a 12 month tenancy if they choose. If the landlords agree to a further tenancy after the initial tenancy, we will provide a top-up payment. This will depend on the length of the tenancy, and if the rent is charged at market or Local Housing Allowance (LHA). Landlords will qualify for payments for up to 18 months of tenancies with the same HFU family group. After



this, if they take on a new family, they will qualify for payments again subject to eligibility criteria. This is so we can retain landlords and their properties for HFU guests who may arrive in South Cambridgeshire later. The rationale to provide incentive payments for 18 months for each family a landlord provides their home to ensures SCDC supports them to access private rented accommodation whilst also promoting the Ukrainian guests to become self-sufficient where possible. This scheme aims to address the urgent need for suitable accommodation for HFU refugees, promoting a welcoming environment while also offering attractive incentives to participating landlords.

Incentives:

The landlord incentive scheme will provide landlords with a payment if they offer their rental property to a HFU guest. This will be a payment up front when a tenancy agreement is signed, and the family have moved in. The decision was made to make the payment up front as we feel this is the most attractive option to landlords, and a partial payment will not be enough to incentivise them. As well as this, there is no concern of a landlord evicting a guest after taking the payment, as this cannot be done during a fixed term tenancy agreement unless a legal route is taken, for example if reoccurring non-payment of rent take place.

Landlords can choose to either offer a tenancy at market rent, or at local housing allowance. Both the type of rent they charge, and how many bedrooms the property has will impact what payment the landlord will receive from SCDC. The Council will pay landlords a higher fee if they provide tenancies at the LHA rate, as this is more affordable for tenants, and provides long term stability. The scheme will ask for a minimum tenancy of 6 months when a landlord first signs up. They may offer 12 months initially and will receive double the initial 6-month incentive payment set out in figure 1A below:

Figure 1A – initial 6 month incentive payment:

Number of bedrooms	Market rent incentive	LHA rate incentive
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1 Bedroom	£1,140	£2,280
2 Bedroom	£1,300	£2,600
3 Bedroom	£1,350	£2,750
4 Bedroom	£1,410	£2,820

Once the initial 6 months has come to an end, SCDC will offer another payment to the landlord if one of the following is offered at either market rent, or at LHA; periodic tenancy (monthly rolling), 6 month tenancy, or a 12 month tenancy.

Figure 1B – Top-up incentive payment for tenancies offered at market rate:

Number of bedrooms	Monthly rolling	6 month tenancy	12 month tenancy
1 Bedroom	£285	£1,140	£1,710
2 Bedroom	£325	£1,300	£1,950
3 bedroom	£338	£1,350	£2,025
4 Bedroom	£353	£1,410	£2,115

Figure 1C – Top-up incentive payment for tenancies offered at Local Housing Allowance:

Number of bedrooms	Monthly rolling	6 month tenancy	12 month tenancy
1 Bedroom	£570	£2,280	£3,420
2 Bedroom	£650	£2,600	£3,900
3 bedroom	£688	£2,750	£4,125
4 Bedroom	£705	£2,820	£4,230

The base figure for payments is £1,000 for market rent tenancies, and £2,000 for LHA tenancies. The figures displayed below in figure 1D have then been used to calculate the tapered incentive payments using the percentage difference. For example, the difference between the 1 bedroom market rent and the LHA rent is £127, or 14%. We have then taken 14% of £1,000 (£140) and added this to the base figure, giving a payment of £1,140. The same logic has been used for the LHA



tenancies, however the percentage figure has been doubled. It has then been applied to the £2,000 base payment. All of these figures have been displayed below in figure 1D.

Number of bedrooms	Private rental rate	LHA rate	Difference
1 bedroom	£900	£773	£127 (14%)
2 bedroom	£1150	£848	£302 (26%)
3 bedroom	£1300	£947	£353 (27%)
4 bedroom	£1700	£1296	£404 (23%)

Figure 1D – Current average market and LHA rent in South Cambridgeshire (2023):

To calculate the figures for tenancies after the initial 6 month period, the following logic has been used. For a monthly rolling tenancy, the landlord will be offered a payment of the value of 25% their initial payment. A further 6 month tenancy will result in a payment that is the same value as their original payment. A new 12 month tenancy will mean a payment worth 150% of the original 6 month payment will be applied. The figures for these can be viewed in figures 1B & 1C.

Eligibility criteria:

1. Tenants: The scheme is open to Homes for Ukraine guests who are currently registered & residing within South Cambridgeshire.
2. Properties: The scheme is open to private landlords who own residential properties within South Cambridgeshire. The properties must meet basic standards of safety and liveability as defined by local housing regulations.
3. Rent control: Participating landlords who opt for a tenancy at market rate must agree to charge a reasonable and fair rent in line with prevailing market rates for similar properties within South Cambridgeshire. Participating landlords who opt for a local housing allowance tenancy payment must agree to charge



the local housing allowance rate for the type of property they are providing, in line with the local housing allowances rates within South Cambridgeshire.

4. Contract duration: Landlords must be prepared to offer a minimum contract of 6 months. Afterwards, if the landlord wishes to keep their tenants, they can opt to offer a periodic tenancy, a further 6 month tenancy, and a 12 month tenancy. A new offer and acceptance of tenancy means the landlord will qualify for a top-up payment.
5. Renewal process & eligibility for additional payments: When a Homes for Ukraine family group has been provided rental accommodation by a landlord for 18 months under the incentive scheme, the landlord will only qualify for a new incentive payment for a new family group if they have given first refusal to renew the tenancy with the existing tenants at no more than fair market rent. This offer to the existing tenant must be made at least 2 months before the incentive period ends.
6. Compliance: Landlords should comply with all relevant legal requirements and tenancy regulations during the rental period, as well as all safety requirements.
7. Agreement: Prior to participation in the scheme and before the payment is made, landlords and South Cambridgeshire District Council will sign a formal agreement outlining the terms and conditions of the incentive, rental arrangements, and responsibilities.
8. Participating landlords may only receive a maximum of 2 payments after their initial payment is received.

Application process:

1. Expression of interest: Landlords who are interested in participating in this scheme should get in contact with the Homes for Ukraine Liaison Team through dedicated channels, such as email or the teams phone line. An online form can also be created to register interest. The email address is HFULiaison@Scambs.gov.uk and the phone number is 01954 713411.



2. Assessment: The landlords will need to provide documentation to show that the property is eligible to be used as a rental property. This will include providing gas safety certificates, an up to date energy performance certificate (EPC), confirm they will provide a legitimate tenancy agreement, and they can provide a right to rent booklet.
3. Approval: Upon receipt of relevant documentation and proof of eligibility, landlords will receive formal approval that they can participate in the landlord incentive scheme.
4. Placement: South Cambridgeshire District Council will work with its cohort of Homes for Ukraine guests to identify a suitable match for the rental property, and connect them with the landlord. Landlords may also have been approached directly by a Ukrainian family who suggested they join this scheme. In this case, the match will have already taken place.
5. Payment: Once the tenancy agreement has been signed, and the Ukrainian family has moved into the property, the payment will be made directly to the landlord. This payment will be made via a BACS payment, and can take several weeks to show in their account.

Duration:

The Homes for Ukraine Landlord Incentive scheme will be implemented to run alongside the duration of the Homes for Ukraine scheme. There will be continuous review of uptake of the scheme and any wider impacts of the scheme on the private rented sector in South Cambridgeshire. The Council reserves the right to end the scheme at any point in time.



Report to:	Cabinet
Lead Cabinet Member:	Cllr Bill Handley (Lead Cabinet Member for Communities)
Lead Officer:	Anne Ainsworth (Chief Operating Officer)

Northstowe – Acquisition of Western Park Sports Pitches; governance arrangements for the Western Park facility; and procurement of an external operator

Executive Summary

1. The report updates Cabinet on a decision taken by the Chief Executive to accept a land transfer from L&Q for the land containing the sports pitches within the Western Park, Northstowe. These are the facilities which the Phase 1 Sports Pavilion is designed to serve.
2. The report provides an update on governance arrangements for the Phase 1 Sports Pavilion and the procurement of an external operator to manage and maintain the combined facility.

Key Decision

3. No, although this report updates Cabinet on a Key Decision taken on 19 September 2023 by the Chief Executive. This decision was required to enable the Council to receive land through a land transfer agreement from L&Q, Northstowe Phase 1 master developer, to bring the Western Park sports pitches into the ownership of South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC). Although this transfer was offered at nil consideration, the red book valuation of the land (not received until after Cabinet's last meeting on 27 June) required that this acquisition be treated as a key decision.
4. The decision to accept the land transfer by the Chief Executive was urgent in order to commence the procurement process to secure an external operator to manage and maintain both the pitches, sports pavilion and car park to operate the facility as a single entity. The main construction of the building is expected to be complete in September 2023 and an operator must be in place to open for public use at the earliest point possible. Therefore, this matter could not be delayed for Cabinet to consider on 28 September 2023.

Recommendations

5. The report asks that Cabinet notes the following:
 - i. The acceptance of the freehold land transfer of the Sports Pitches within the Western Park through a Decision taken by the Chief Executive, having considered the valuation report and assessment of resultant liabilities.
 - ii. The procurement of an external specialist operator for the unified Western Park sports facility has progressed and an operator has been identified; the contract has been awarded subject to satisfactory references and is conditional upon successful land transfer.
 - iii. The establishment of a Governance mechanism by which Northstowe Town Council and the local community can partner with SCDC to ensure local accountability and oversight of the management and maintenance of the Phase 1 Sports Facility, i.e. the creation of a management board through a memorandum of understanding.

Reasons for Recommendations

6. The Council had an obligation, resulting from the Northstowe Phase 1 Section 106 agreement, to deliver the Sports Pavilion serving Northstowe's first phase development of 1,500 homes. The measures taken allow the Council to bring this facility into operation for the benefit of the community. Without the unification of the pavilion and the pitches the operation of the facility would not be viable.
7. The Council lacked the necessary in-house expertise to operate the Phase 1 Sports Pavilion and pitches at Northstowe. An external operator therefore offered the best available solution to deliver a fully functional community sports facility on completion of the construction project.
8. The governance arrangements put in place will serve as an interim solution; the Council can still consider any proposal arising from the community to take on the Phase 1 Sports facilities at a later date in accordance with the Council's Asset Transfer Policy.

Details

Background

9. Developers L&Q activated a provision in the Phase 1 Northstowe Section 106 agreement which meant that the district council was passed the responsibility for building the Phase 1 sports pavilion.
10. The Pavilion and car park is constructed on land that has been transferred to the district council from L&Q. However, the adjacent sports pitches (including the bowling green) are still the freehold property of L&Q. The leasehold for the

pitches and bowling green were set to transfer to Greenbelt, the management company appointed by L&Q, a company that does not specialise in managing sports facilities.

11. A Phase 1 Northstowe Open Space Steering Group was established in 2021 to oversee the management and maintenance of open space in Phase 1 Northstowe, including the sports facilities. Membership of this group includes representation from SCDC, Cambridgeshire County Council, Northstowe Town Council, Longstanton Parish Council, Greenbelt and Anglian Water. The group discussed the issue and agreed that joining the sports pavilion and pitches together would be both desirable and necessary for the effective management and maintenance of the provision.
12. L&Q and Greenbelt were supportive of a proposal to transfer the freehold interest in the grass pitches, Multi Use Games Area, Artificial Turf Pitch and bowling green to SCDC in the first instance, whilst the remainder of the Western Park and other open space elements are transferred (as a leasehold interest) to Greenbelt as planned.
13. In 2020 officers commissioned consultancy Strategic Leisure Ltd to produce a Governance Options report for the Phase 1 Sports Pavilion (and Phase 1 Community Centre). This has been recently revised by the same consultants, with a final report provided in February 2023, taking account of changing market conditions and projected running costs and with the full construction particulars now available.
14. A Red Book Valuation for the building and associated car park has been undertaken. This provides an accounting value of the asset of £5.4 million; (however, when the planning constraints and covenants that will be attached to the land transfer are taken into account, the restricted and unrestricted value (on which value must be assessed for Asset Transfer purposes) are both set at £1.
15. A Red Book Valuation for the Western Park sports pitches has also now been undertaken, it indicates they have an accounting value, based on Depreciated Replacement Value, of £6.23 million (see Appendix A), although the transfer arrangements within the Section 106 agreement require transfer at nil consideration to the district council.
16. The governance options for the Phase 1 Sports Pavilion and pitches have been appraised and are set out in Appendix B.
17. A working group established by the Town Council investigated the role taken by other similar local authorities in facility and open space management. Having examined the resources required to operate the facilities, the group formed the view that at this stage they could not recommend to the Town Council that it should pursue this course of action.

18. Given the need to secure an operating solution, SCDC, working with the Town Council, have therefore developed a proposal for an interim period of outsourced management, procured by SCDC.
19. The principle underlying the procurement approach is one of achieving financial sustainability of this key community asset, such that it may ultimately become an attractive and viable asset of interest for transfer either to the Town Council or another local stakeholder, to provide a long-term stewardship solution.
20. Since many of the sporting seasons begin in September, commencing operations later in the year could impact on earning potential. It is therefore in the interests of SCDC and of the operator to commence operation as soon as practical.
21. It is common practice for the operator of a sports facility to be offered the leasehold of the land over which it is to operate. In this instance the leasehold arrangement would cover all areas within the curtilage of the pavilion and the sports pitches.
22. The intention would be to offer a licence to occupy to Longstanton Bowls Club to manage and maintain the bowling green with access to on-site storage to stow maintenance equipment to maintain the bowling green at their own expense. This would remove this element of management and maintenance cost from the operator contract.
23. To provide the leasehold to the operator, and licence to Longstanton Bowls Club, the land must first be in the ownership of SCDC, and therefore this is contingent upon the land transfer of the Western Park sports pitches to SCDC from L&Q.
24. Appendix C provides a plan of the combined facility and illustrates how the proposed operator model would function in terms of responsibilities held by the operator, SCDC, Longstanton Bowls Club and L&Q/Greenbelt.

Implications

25. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk, equality and diversity, climate change, and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

Financial

26. The District Council is building the sports pavilion and car park and is the freeholder of this site. Operation of the facility without access to the sports pitches it supports is unviable. Without joining the pavilion and pitches the district council would be the owner of a building it is unable to operate for its

intended purpose. SCDC would also be without access to revenue from sports pitch hire which is required to support the pavilion.

27. The financial implications of taking on the sports pitches arise from the costs of management and maintenance, less the revenue generated from their use. The financial model provided by Strategic Leisure Ltd indicates annual maintenance costs of all sports pitches to be £33,535 (at three years of maturity). This cost is based on full utilisation of the pitches. In addition, £25,000 per annum is assumed to be set aside into a sinking fund to resurface the Multi Use Games Area and Artificial Turf Pitch in due course.
28. The operational expenditure of the facility as a whole (pitches and pavilion) is circa £200,000 per year in the Strategic Leisure Ltd model, although these costs would be offset by income. The s106 allows for £180k revenue support contribution to offset any net loss, should it be required in the early years of operation.
29. The Strategic Leisure Ltd model indicates that a break-even position could be possible by year 4 of the operation if revenue generation from the pavilion and pitches is optimised.
30. The proposed terms of the land transfer agreement will see SCDC holding responsibility for maintaining the drainage which exclusively serves the pitches. This includes drainage that crosses the pitches and the drainage channels outside the transferred land that solely take water away from the pitches and to Kingfisher Pond. L&Q has full responsibility for maintaining Kingfisher Pond. Confirmation has been received that the drainage has been built as per the specification. A proportionate maintenance regime to ensure these drains continue to function as required is to be undertaken. SCDC would seek to recover such funds as are necessary from the reserved Management and Maintenance fund provided by the s106 agreement.

Staffing

31. There are no staffing implications for the recommendations in the report, as the staffing resources needed to operate the pavilion and pitches would be outsourced to the specialist provider.

Risks/Opportunities

32. Failing to secure an external operator with the required expertise to take on the management and maintenance of the Western Park sports facilities is a risk to SCDC.
33. If the procurement process to find a suitably qualified operator were to be delayed there is an increased risk the operator would not be ready to take advantage of the start of the sporting year in September, when block bookings for facilities often begin.

34. If the Council does not progress a suitable model to run the facilities at Northstowe it risks not fulfilling its Section 106 obligations and the achievement of the Council's goal of making Northstowe a Healthy New Town.

Equality and Diversity

35. The community buildings specifications have been altered to include disabled-adapted facilities now required by law. This ensures access for all and encourages inclusivity. The specification included in the procurement documents for the sports operator requires that the operator caters for diverse groups within the community, promoting inclusivity and equal access.

Climate Change

36. SCDC is committed to tackling the climate crisis. Design decisions made with regard to the heating, cooling, and ventilation of the sports pavilion and integration of renewable technologies, including air-source heating, solar pv, waste-water heat recovery and increased air-tightness levels will reduce carbon emissions as well as helping to achieve long-term financial sustainability of the combined facility.

Health & Wellbeing

37. As with any new development, many people moving to the town will be forming new social circles and creating links that will support positive health and wellbeing outcomes. Good quality community spaces and sports provision will play a key role to ensure a sense of community and a place to meet and improve opportunities for integration with surrounding communities. The Western Park sports facility will enable already active people to stay active and encourage activity in those who are not currently active.

Consultation responses

38. Pre-planning consultations for the Phase 1 sports pavilion were carried out with Cambridgeshire FA, Cambridgeshire RFU, Longstanton Parish Council and Meridian Trust. Early designs were presented at the Northstowe Community Forum and Drop-in. This was all undertaken in anticipation of the resulting facility becoming a single operational unit with the sports pitches, which it is designed to serve.
39. Full statutory consultation on the Phase 1 sports pavilion was undertaken as part of the planning process.

Alignment with Council Priority Areas

Growing local businesses and economies

40. Outsourcing the management and maintenance of the Western Park sports facilities will afford business opportunities to local contractors and sub-contractors in the leisure market.

Housing that is truly affordable for everyone to live in

41. SCDC's Asset Management Strategy recognises that as a housing provider we are about more than just bricks and mortar – that we look to build communities that can thrive and grow. Our Business Plan 2020-25 reflects this and commits to delivering in Northstowe the community facilities that will support housing delivery, including the phase 1 sports pavilion and community centre, and the phase 2 civic hub and pavilion.

Being green to our core

42. SCDC'S Business Plan 2020-25 commits to identifying and delivering opportunities to reduce carbon emissions from our estate. The designs for the Community Buildings account for the use of renewable technologies.

Background Papers

- Report to Cabinet: Northstowe Phase 1 – Section 106 Funding: February 2014
- Report to Cabinet: Northstowe Phase 2 – Community Infrastructure Delivery & Requirements: July 2015
- Report to Cabinet: Northstowe – Update and Recommendations July 2022
- Report to Council: Northstowe – Update and Recommendations July 2022

Appendices

Appendix B: Governance Options Assessment

Appendix C: Plan of the combined facility, showing management responsibilities.

Restricted Papers

Appendix A: Valuation Report, Western Park Pitches

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Appendix B: Options appraisal for governance of the Phase 1 Sports Pavilion and Pitches

a) In house management

The district council could take the management and maintenance of the sports pavilion and car park “in house”. Set-up costs would include staff and management posts to operate the facility. It would enable the Council to control the activities hosted and all marketing and engagement activity.

This option would allow the Council control over activities and marketing, assuming that the Open Space Steering Group would endorse this approach and allow the operational management, booking arrangements and revenue to remain within the district council to operate the facility as a single unit.

The Council does not own or operate similar sports facilities, therefore has no expertise in this area. With direct responsibility for management and operations all risks rest entirely with the Council. It would require the employment of specialist staff, with no wider pool within the organisation to draw upon to provide resilience.

The Council would be responsible for ongoing expenditure, maintenance, and investment beyond the period where revenue support is available from the Management and Maintenance contribution, which may result in ongoing financial exposure.

The Council would not be eligible for VAT or NNDR (National Non-Domestic Rates) relief, making this a more expensive management option, costs which may need to be passed onto the consumer.

In the early engagement work undertaken by Strategic Leisure Ltd in 2021, this option was the least preferred in a survey of public opinion.

b) Local Authority Trading (also known as Controlled) Company (LATC)

To carry out trading activities for profit, a local authority must establish a company, such that profits made by a wholly or partly owned company can be reinvested in

other council services. The company would be liable for VAT and Corporation Tax but would benefit from NNDR and VAT advantages similar to those of a charitable company. It remains in the control of the local authority and does not transfer all the risks in the same way as an outsourcing approach would do, as set out below.

Establishing such a company would take substantial time and resource.

c) Outsourced management

Outsourcing operational management and maintenance would transfer risk to the contractor. Ordinarily the contractor would meet all costs but retain revenue less a set contribution to a sinking fund for replacement and repair, but the contractual arrangements could include a management fee, contract subsidy, risk allocation and surplus share.

Providers are commonly Non-Profit Distributing Organisations (NPDOs) and as such may be able to gain NNDR and VAT benefits.

Soft market testing has revealed there could be interest in such a proposal, but feedback suggested this would be for an initial contract period (3-4 years maximum) with a view to extend if the facility prospered as anticipated. Further, the business model would need careful examination to understand whether full on-site management would be required as opposed to a more self-service style approach, in combination with input from local sports clubs and societies.

Given the fact that a short-term contract may be more attractive to the market in the first instance, this option could be treated as a short-term solution until more of the permanent buildings come forward, and reviewed within that later context, see option (d).

d) Council establishes a new social enterprise organisation.

The Council could establish a new social enterprise organisation such as a Community Interest Company (CIC) to hold the asset and use any profit generated for public good. This would require involvement of the local community and would take time and resource to establish.

This would put the asset entirely in the control of the new entity. The risks and responsibilities transfer to the new organisation, which would be financially independent of the Council. If the Council were to set this up, the resource requirement would fall to the Council as there is no mature organisation within Northstowe of this nature to take on the immediate operation of the facility.

This option was not recommended for further development in the revised Strategic Leisure Ltd report.

e) Hub and spoke model

With four permanent community buildings to be delivered by the Council over Phases 1 and 2, the Council could at a later date, either create a new social enterprise to manage all four public buildings (or a subset) to benefit from economies of scale and the ability for cross-subsidise facilities within the portfolio, or transfer the assets to a local, established social enterprise.

By setting back a decision for the longer-term governance solution, it would allow time for the emergence of a community driven social enterprise which could itself be considered to take on multiple buildings to be operated as a single entity.

It should be noted, however, that Strategic Leisure Ltd.'s report suggests that few private companies have emerged to operate the leisure, community and arts facilities that local authorities have divested themselves of as a combined service, instead "contracts tend to be operational management of sports facilities, possibly with sport/health development included, libraries on their own, arts (e.g. large-scale theatres/entertainment venues) on their own, or a combination of cultural services (arts, heritage and libraries). It would therefore appear unlikely that a social enterprise could successfully operate a portfolio of facilities that straddles these functions.

f) Asset Transfer

The district council may wish to consider transfer of the asset to a local organisation, with Northstowe Town Council identified in the SLL report as a possible candidate.

This would transfer the operating risk to a third party. In the case of the town council, also capable of generating any subsidy required longer term, through precept. The Council could make available a portion of the Management and Maintenance Contribution available through the s106 agreement, to assist with running costs in the short term.

The asset transfer, would likely be, as prescribed by the Council's Asset Transfer Policy, in the form of a long lease, but could be a short lease or licence to occupy (neither of which would fall under the Asset Transfer Policy). To comply with the policy any candidate organisation must convince the Council that it has the skills and necessary resources to take on the asset, with appropriate governance and operational management in place; that it has a plan to ensure long-term public access and is able to provide on-going financial support – any transfer would also come with a caveat that if the Council believed that there was a failure to manage the facility appropriately it would require the asset to be handed back. Therefore, it must be acknowledged that Asset Transfer under the adopted policy where the Council holds this fallback position it is not a risk-free proposal.

Strategic Leisure Ltd advises that “The success of a community asset transfer depends on its sustainability, which requires the local authority and the organisation taking on the facility to work together to formulate a robust business plan preferably with the involvement from the local community the facility will serve.”

Longer term, the town council, may wish, for example to establish a charity/trust to benefit from VAT and NNDR relief or outsource in a similar manner described in option (d).



- Accessway: L&Q management and maintenance responsibility
- Artificial turf pitch: management and maintenance of playing turf and fence, operator's responsibility (shock pads and sub-layers, SCDC maintenance responsibility)
- Bowling green, including fence, maintenance responsibility of Longsanton Bowls Club
- Car Park: general maintenance, cleaning and management, operator responsibility (EV charge points, relining and surface repairs, SCDC responsibility)
- Mini football pitches, rugby and football pitches: management and maintenance operator's responsibility
- Pavilion: full management and maintenance, internal and external, including hard and soft landscaping, operator's responsibility
- MUGA, including fence and adjacent shipping container (for equipment storage): management and maintenance operator's responsibility
- All other areas in the Western Park (bar the allotment and orchard land), maintenance responsibility of L&Q/Greenbelt

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