



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

THE GRANGE, NUTHOLT LANE,
ELY, CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB7 4EE
Telephone: 01353 665555

MEETING: **OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**
TIME: 4.30pm
DATE: 15th November 2021
VENUE: Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely
ENQUIRIES REGARDING THIS AGENDA: Adrian Scaites-Stokes
DIRECT DIAL: (01353) 665555 EMAIL: adrian.scaites-stokes@eastcambs.gov.uk

Membership:

Conservative Members

Cllr Julia Huffer
(Vice Chairman)
Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith
Cllr David Ambrose Smith
Cllr Lis Every
Cllr Joshua Schumann
Cllr Jo Webber

Liberal Democrat Members

Cllr Mark Inskip
(Lead Member)
Cllr Alec Jones
Cllr John Trapp
Cllr Christine Whelan

Independent Member

Cllr Paola Trimarco
(Lead Member)

Substitutes:

Cllr Anna Bailey
Cllr Dan Schumann
Cllr Lisa Stubbs

Substitutes:

Cllr Matthew Downey
Cllr Simon Harries
Cllr Alison Whelan

Substitute:

Cllr Sue Austen

Lead Officers:

Jo Brooks, Director Operations

Quorum: 5 Members

A G E N D A

- 1. Public Question Time**
The meeting will commence with up to 15 minutes public question time
- 2. Election of Committee Chairman**
Following the resignation of the Chairman, to appoint a Chairman for the remainder of the municipal year
- 3. Apologies and Substitutions**

- 4. Declarations of Interest**
To receive declarations of interest from Members for any items on the Agenda in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct.
- 5. Minutes**
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2021
- 6. Chairman's Announcements**
- 7. Service Presentation – Housing & Community Safety**
- 8. Housing and Community Advice Service – Update on Impact of COVID-19**
- 9. 12 Month Review of Community Advice Service**
- 10. Presentation – Planning Service Update**
- 11. Budget Monitoring Report**
- 12. East Cambs Street Scene Accounts**
- 13. ECDC Environment Plan – Update and Renewable Energy Proposed Way Forward**
- 14. Review of Grant to Citizens Advice West Suffolk**
- 15. Review of Grant to Voluntary & Community Action East Cambridgeshire**
- 16. Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership Joint Committee Minutes**
To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 21st September 2021
- 17. Forward Agenda Plan**

NOTES:

1.	Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting. If you are visiting The Grange during normal working hours you should report to the main reception desk. If you come to an evening meeting please enter via the door in the glass atrium at the back of the building. Public Questions/Statements are welcomed on any topic related to the Committee's functions as long as there is no suspicion that it is improper (e.g. offensive, slanderous or might lead to disclosures of Exempt or Confidential information). Up to 15 minutes is allocated for this at the start of the meeting. Further details about the Public Question Time scheme are available at: https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/committees/public-question-time-scheme
2.	The Council has adopted a 'Purge on Plastics' strategy and is working towards the removal of all consumer single-use plastics in our workplace. Therefore, we do not provide disposable cups in our building or at our meetings and would ask members of the public to bring their own drink to the meeting if required.
3.	Fire instructions for meetings: If the fire alarm sounds please make your way out of the building by the nearest available exit i.e. the back staircase or the fire escape in the Chamber. Do not attempt to use the lifts. The fire assembly point is in the front staff car park by the exit barrier. The building has an auto-call system to the fire services so there is no need for anyone to call the fire services. The Committee Officer will sweep the area to ensure that everyone is out.
4.	Reports are attached for each agenda item unless marked "oral".
5.	If required all items on the agenda can be provided in different formats (e.g. large type, Braille or audio tape, or translated into other languages), on request, by calling Main Reception on (01353) 665555 or e-mail: translate@eastcambs.gov.uk
6.	If the Committee wishes to exclude the public and press from the meeting, a resolution in the following terms will need to be passed: "That the press and public be excluded during the consideration of the remaining item no(s). X because it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present during the item(s) there would be disclosure to them of exempt information of Category X of Part I Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."

AGENDA ITEM NO. 5

Minutes of a meeting of the Operational Services Committee
held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on
Monday 13th September 2021 at 4:30pm

P R E S E N T

Cllr Julia Huffer (Chairman)
Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith
Cllr Lis Every
Cllr Simon Harries (as a Substitute)
Cllr Mark Inskip
Cllr Joshua Schumann
Cllr Paola Trimarco
Cllr Jo Webber
Cllr Christine Whelan

OFFICERS

Lewis Bage – Communities & Partnerships Manager
Tracy Couper - Democratic Services Manager
Emma Grima – Director, Commercial
James Khan – Head of Street Scene
Liz Knox – Environmental Services Manager
Victor Le Grand – Senior Leisure Services Officer
Angela Parmenter – Housing & Community Safety Manager
Adrian Scaites-Stokes – Democratic Services Officer
Anne Wareham – Senior Accountant

OTHERS PRESENT

Carol Eagles – Citizens Advice West Suffolk
Granville Hawkes - Voluntary Community Action East
Cambridgeshire (VCAEC)

17. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

18. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Ambrose Smith and John Trapp. Councillor Simon Harries substituted for Councillor Trapp.

19. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Lis Every declared an interest in agenda item 8, as she was the Chairman of the VCAEC.

20. MINUTES

The Chairman pointed out that the three references to 'Sub-Committee' should read 'Committee' and it was agreed to amend the minutes accordingly.

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 14th June 2021, as amended, be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

21. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

22. **PARKING ENFORCEMENT**

The Chairman proposed that this Committee referred agenda item 6 'Parking Enforcement' up to full Council on 21 October for decision. This was duly seconded. The Chairman explained that this issue could affect each and every Members' wards and could have a significant impact on the Council's budget. Officers would be able to get the fullest information on this proposal, reflect on other options and better understand the practicalities of the Police Pilot Scheme to enable Members to take an informed decision. It, therefore, deserved the scrutiny of all Members.

Members were in support of the motion but a Member had submitted a number of questions relating to the report, prior to the meeting. The Chairman assured Members that those questions would be given due attention and the Director Operations would prepare responses in full.

It was resolved:

That agenda item 6 'Parking Enforcement' be referred up to full Council on 21 October for decision.

23. **CITIZENS ADVICE WEST SUFFOLK**

The Committee received a presentation by Carol Eagles, of Voluntary Citizens Advice West Suffolk (CAWS).

The Committee was advised that CAWS offered free advice to everybody on a wide range of topics and also empowered people to solve their own problems. It provided its service through an Advice Line, by an email service and via webchat. Face-to-face meetings were only held as needed. CAWS had a set of 70 volunteers, equating to nearly £70k worth of value.

Statistics from 1st September 2020 to 31st August this year gave a snapshot of the level of service provided and showed an increase in help given. The largest group of enquiries centred around benefits and tax credits, debts, employment and relationships.

The Service Level Agreement with this Council related to assisted advice and amongst the team of volunteers there was expertise in a number of areas, such as finance, benefits, employment, immigration, child maintenance and consumers. In addition to the core functions of CAWS there were a number of

funded projects, including supported advice for mental health, applying for Universal Credit, energy and multiple sclerosis.

The Newmarket branch of Citizens Advice had merged with West Suffolk 18 months ago. This had led to a bigger and more resilient workforce, more opportunities for staff to grow, more specialist advice available, the appointment of a trainer and greater access to future funding.

In answer to the Committee's questions, the Committee was informed that this Council funded CAWS for around £23k per year. This funding was under review, so future funding was uncertain. West Suffolk Council were also reviewing their funding, though funding from the Government lottery, for 2 years, and Suffolk County Council, for 1 year, had been secured. This uncertainty made it really difficult to run the business.

It had recently moved to Foley House and had committed to remaining there for 5 years. People could reach the service via the national or local Advice Lines, or could use emails or the website.

All East Cambridgeshire citizens could receive help from any Citizens Advice Bureau, as they all worked together. CAWS was heavily audited on leadership, client feedback, governance and the advice it provided. It had been graded as 'green' as the quality of the advice given was so good.

24. **VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY ACTION EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE UPDATE**

The Committee received a presentation by Mr Granville Hawkes, of Voluntary Community Action East Cambridgeshire (VCAEC).

The Committee was advised that VCAEC provided the infrastructure to support voluntary organisations in East Cambridgeshire. It helped run projects with volunteers, who were signposted to connect with people looking for help. The level of volunteers was currently in a state of flux, as many were supporting the National Health Service and its vaccination process due to the COVID pandemic, though some volunteers had been reluctant to get involved due to their concerns over COVID. The situation was fluid, as some volunteers were now returning to their work and were unavailable for volunteering. Post-COVID the intention was to re-build the numbers of volunteers, though it was accepted that some people would not be available after COVID. Interviews would be held with potential new volunteers and followed up so they were not lost.

The East Cambridgeshire Support Group consisted of 50 potential, irregular, volunteers and this database could be used when resources were needed and this would be promoted to other groups.

The car sharing scheme run by VCAEC was the largest in the county and the number of journeys and mileage were getting back to pre-COVID levels. There was a significant backlog, between 4 to 5 weeks, on the gardening scheme. VCAEC had offered community support, through the Parish Forum, for mutual aid to deal with COVID issues. It met regularly at the Forum with parish councils and community groups. This provided good feedback between VCAEC and the

various groups and aided the other projects in the district, such as Community Catalysts (a care project) and Primary Care Networks.

Memberships of VCAEC consisted of 145 member organisations, which was close to the pre-COVID figure, and an exercise would be undertaken to re-establish contact with the remaining groups. A website was being developed to encourage people to apply directly, but the timescale for its delivery had slipped due to some technical issues. It was hoped that it would be up and running by mid-October.

VCAEC would review what it did and how it could be done, to ensure the projects were sustainable. Scoping work would be done through the Parish Forum, followed by developing income streams to become more sustainable.

The new Service Level Agreement was currently out to tender.

25. **SERVICE PRESENTATION – COMMUNITIES & PARTNERSHIPS**

The Committee received a presentation by the Communities and Partnerships Manager on the work of the Council's Environmental Services.

The Communities & Partnerships Manager advised the Committee that the department was part of the Council's COVID recovery group. This group ensured that the Council remained engaged with the community using a number of different methods. This included maintenance of a webpage, offering referral pathways, providing local support grants, undertaking community surveys, and taking part in district-wide multi-agency events.

A Tourism Strategy and Action Plan had been developed to promote tourism, to establish and develop a district-wide brand and create a website. The Department monitored the mooring along Ely riverside and logged any issues discovered, to ensure the area was fit for purpose. It also worked alongside the Open Spaces Team on the Ely Country Park all year round, making sure the car park met visitor needs, to garner improvements and to gain accreditations. A Youth Strategy was also being developed and was in the process of being implemented. It focused on a number of areas and objectives to engage and empower young people. Service Level Agreements were in place with VCAEC and CAWS to ensure residents were supported.

Last August it became part of the Department's remit to become responsible for community safety. This involved engagement with parish councils and community organisations. Last year's Action Plan had finished, so now a new one was being developed to address current community issues and to seek accreditation. This included raising awareness of those issues in partnership with relevant organisations. The Department was also involved with Parish Council Conferences where relevant themes were discussed.

Community grants were managed by the Department and were available via the Community Fund, facilities improvements grants, Section 106 grants and local support grants. Assets of community value were managed alongside the

Planning Department to judge whether properties were suitable to go on the register, so their value to the community would be maintained.

In response to the Committee's questions, the Communities & Partnerships Manager revealed that the Department was in the process of getting some value from the conferences and would be looking at how climate change initiatives could be of value to parish councils. Some consideration on what time of day the conferences would be held, as some people could not attend during the daytime.

26. **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee considered a report, W648 previously circulated, which provided details of the financial position for services under the Operational Services Committee during the first quarter.

The Senior Accountant advised the Committee that the revenue budget variances mostly related to a re-charge in Community Infrastructure Levy income and increased Planning applications. Overall it was expected that the revenue budget would meet its planned budget.

The overspend on the travellers' sites was due to rent arrears, as the cash collections had been suspended because of the COVID situation. However, it was projected that the capital budget would meet its revised budget.

The recommendations within the report were proposed and duly seconded.

A set of questions had been provided prior to the meeting from Members and these, along with answers provided by officers, was set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

Members thought the financial position looked positive and some figures just related to a timing issue. Concern was expressed over the situation involving the Planning department and the Committee agreed to a request to receive a presentation, on the situation about staff retention and its effect on service delivery, at its November meeting. The Committee were also concerned about the lack of service plan updates, so it had lost track of how the departments were doing and whether they were under stress due to the current circumstances.

It was resolved:

- (i) That this Committee was not currently projecting an end of year revenue variance, when compared to its planned budget of £5,800,107 be noted;
- (ii) That the Committee had a projected capital programme outturn of £4,167,244, in line with its revised budget, be noted.

27. YOUTH ACTION PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE

The Committee considered a report, W65 previously circulated, which noted the progress made against Key Performance Indicators and targets set out in the East Cambridgeshire Youth Action Plan 2021-24.

The Communities & Partnerships Manager advised the Committee that the progress on the approved Youth Strategy against its key performance indicators was shown in the report. As COVID could affect the Strategy a consultation exercise had taken place to assess any changes. Appendix 1 to the report detailed the progress made with the Strategy. The current consultation demonstrated that the methods of engagement were appropriate, as this included use of the Youth Advisory Board (YAB). The Climate Change Partnership had been invited to join. Webpages were being developed working with the YAB. There was now a comprehensive database of youth clubs in the district, voluntary initiatives, transport, health facilities, signposting for jobs and financial support. This information was shared with parish councils.

The recommendations within the report were proposed and duly seconded.

A set of questions had been provided prior to the meeting from Members and these, along with answers provided by officers, was set out in Appendix 2 to these minutes.

In reply to the Committee's questions, it was revealed that the safeguarding training would depend on the role of the officers involved. Initial training was completed first, with three yearly refreshers and all training was recorded by Human Resources. This could change, as the officers were doing more so it could be better to refresh these yearly. Other free training was also available for all staff.

The website would pinpoint where young people could access help with mental health issues. This included relevant contacts and signposting to appropriate resources. Members thought the website should be easier to find and made more prominent, with a link to the Youth Strategy.

Members appreciated that the officers had undertaken a significant amount of work, particular the good work with parish councils. A Member seminar was scheduled for November, which could provide an insight into that work. There was now great support for youth provision and this could be enhanced through the County Council's co-ordinators, who worked with youth group to generate more ideas. All needed to work together so the district had suitable provision.

It was resolved:

That progress made against the Key Performance Indicators and targets set out in the East Cambridgeshire Youth Action Plan be noted.

28. **OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES & PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY**

The Committee considered a report, W66 previously circulated, suggesting the adoption of the principles arising for the Outdoor Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategy.

The Senior Leisure Services Officer advised the Committee that the review of relevant facilities had to be thorough, to reveal the current situation. The report captured the key points from the review and showed that most outdoor facilities were owned, managed and improved at a local level. This Council's role was to support those facilities and work with them to provide resources. It also could use the results of the audit carried out to help secure replicated facilities distributed across the district. This distribution had to make sense so that any gaps identified could be provided with suitable facilities.

The work undertaken had been scoped by Sport England and aimed to achieve a robust and sustainable outcome. Consultation had also been undertaken with sports bodies, organisations and clubs but the response had been uneven, so the information gathered was incomplete. The activities that would be suitable for the district as a whole had been considered, with some specific activities looked at separately. Overall the provision of relevant facilities approximately fitted in with requirements but potential growth had to be considered.

The Principles within the Strategy would allow engagement with partners, assist in formulating Section 106 agreements and would help inform and evaluate prospective new projects.

The recommendations within the report were proposed and duly seconded.

It was noted by the Committee that there were a number of errors in the report, so Members should be approached to review the report where it concerned their areas and advise of any minor amendments that needed correcting. There also appeared to be no consideration taken on how the facilities would impact carbon emissions nor on biodiversity issues.

It was explained that there had been a few oversights but this Strategy sought to establish the principles to be used when measuring the benefits of existing or future facilities, and would be used as a baseline.

Councillor Joshua Schumann proposed an additional recommendation: To circulate the Strategy to all Members and request any factual discrepancies or errors in the details of the report be changed by the Senior Leisure Services Officer in consultation with the Chairman/Vice Chairman. This was duly seconded and unanimously approved.

Councillor Mark Inskip then proposed a further additional recommendation: That the Council work with parish councils and local support organisations to develop local action plans based on the actions identified in the Outdoor Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies and to review and report back progress to the Operational Services Committee on an annual basis. There were a number of proposals in the Strategy and a few data shortfalls that would be useful to look

at annually in conjunction with parish councils and other relevant bodies to offer them support. This proposal was also duly seconded and unanimously approved.

Members considered the Strategy a useful exercise, although one or two areas were not quite accurate. The Strategy could be used to inform parish council policies and Section 106 agreements could be used to tackle the shortfalls in provision.

Upon the proposals, including the additions, being put to the vote:

It was resolved:

- (i) That the Outdoor Sports Facilities & Playing Pitch Strategy as outlined in Appendix 1 and 2 be noted;
- (ii) That the use of the Outdoor Sports Facilities & Playing Pitch Strategies be agreed as an evidence base for securing provision, improvement and maintenance of outdoor sport and playing pitches across the district;
- (iii) That circulate the Strategy to all Members and request any factual discrepancies or errors in the details of the report are changed by the Senior Leisure Services Officer in consultation with the Chairman/Vice Chairman;
- (iv) That the Council work with parish councils and local support organisations to develop local action plans based on the actions identified in the Outdoor Sports Facilities and Playing Pitch Strategies and to review and report back progress to Operational Services on an annual basis.

Councillor Joshua Schumann left the meeting at this point, 6:25pm.

29. **QUARTER 1, 2021/22 PERFORMANCE FOR THE WASTE AND STREET CLEANSING SERVICES**

The Committee considered a report, W67 previously circulated, which provided Quarter 1, April to June 2021, performance information for the delivery of the waste and street cleansing services by East Cambs Street Scene Ltd (ECSS).

The Head of Street Scene advised the Committee that COVID had heavily affected services, as there had been an increase in staff absences. All employees would be supported through the COVID situation. Despite this the service's targets had been achieved.

In addition to normal services, Street Scene had been involved with the 2021 University Boat Race and the Great British Spring Clean. Working with community groups had presented opportunities for future working and promotion of the service.

This year the service had worked with new key performance indicators, which had been substantially increased since last year. Unfortunately, some of the new targets had not been met, due to staff pressures. This would be addressed to help continue provision of all current services.

The recommendations within the report were proposed and duly seconded.

In response to the Committee's queries, it was revealed that there was a national shortage of heavy goods vehicle drivers (HGV) and it had been a struggle to retain drivers, as they were not the highest paid employees. Some drivers were coming to the end of their careers and Brexit and COVID had created other issues. A number of vacancies had not been filled, though they had been open for some time. Although the Company could not compete with other companies on salaries, the drivers tended to be very loyal and dedicated. To help tackle the shortfall, the Company had ramped up its driver training programme but this was also difficult as the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency was suffering backlogs. The Government was being lobbied to add HGV drivers to the essential workers list. The upcoming Careers Fair at Ely Cathedral would also be used to promote working for the Company.

Though some other local authorities had suspended some of their services, staff sickness and holidays were being managed to try and ensure that the best possible services were provided. This was monitored daily and, to help, driver allocations were programmed a fortnight in advance.

The Committee appreciated the difficulties the service was facing and for the frankness of the replies. It did not take for granted the efforts of the staff and stated that the Head of Street Scene should come back to the Committee if additional resources were required and to find practical solutions to the problems.

It was resolved:

That the performance of service delivery, for the first quarter of 2021/22 be noted.

30. **ANGLIA REVENUES JOINT COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Committee considered the minutes of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership (ARP) Joint Committee of 22nd June 2021.

The Director Commercial agreed to take back to the Council's representatives a question relating to the potential knock-on effects on Council Tax from the £20 reduction in Universal Credit.

31. **FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

The Committee received its forward agenda plan.

The meeting concluded at 6:46pm.

**AGENDA ITEM 10
BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

Question from Councillor Inskip

<p>The table on Appendix 1 provides the profiled budget for the first financial quarter of the current financial year for each cost centre. can you provide the profiled budget for all four financial quarters for the current year?</p>	<p>The Finance Manager is considering this request.</p>
<p>40.5% of the annual IT budget has been spent in the first quarter. Given the recent email related IT issues, do officers have good confidence that any additional measures needed to address these issues can be accommodated in the remainder of the planned expenditure for the year?</p>	<p>Quarter 1 includes the cost of a significant portion of the annual licences, including Microsoft Office 365.</p> <p>The solution to the recent email outage is in progress and it is not anticipated that this will place undue burden on the existing budgets. However, where there is any necessary spend that is not within the existing budget, this will be reported to Members through the monitoring reports.</p>
<p>Appendix 2 shows expenditure in the current financial year of £2m for new Refuse & Cleaning Vehicles. Will a report be coming to committee with details of the planned purchases and when is this report expected?</p>	<p>The amount of expenditure forecast matches the approved budget. Detailed plans are still being determined with regard to replacing the waste fleet.</p> <p>The Director Operations will consider what reports to bring to Members at the appropriate time.</p>
<p>Appendix 2 shows expenditure in the current financial year of £845,950 for the Depot. Will a report be coming to committee with details of the planned works and when is this report expected?</p>	<p>Officers are currently assessing the level of improvement work that needs to be undertaken at the Depot.</p> <p>As the Depot improvements are an asset matter, a report will be presented to the Finance & Assets Committee at the appropriate time.</p>

**AGENDA ITEM 11
YOUTH ACTION PLAN PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT**

Questions from Councillor Inskip

How do visitors to the ECDC website locate the Youth Strategy?	The Youth Strategy is currently available on the ECDC policies page with other strategies and will also be available via the ECDC Young People's webpages when they are live (scheduled for March 2022)
What engagement has there been online with the Youth Strategy, in particular how many unique visitors have viewed the strategy on the website?	ECDC's web team is in the process of gathering this information and a response will be provided to Members in writing by the end of this week.
How many users have returned to the website to view the Youth Strategy for a second or subsequent time?	ECDC's web team is in the process of gathering this information and a response will be provided to Members in writing by the end of this week.
How have users navigated to this page? For example, from another webpage on the ECDC website or from an external website, via a search engine or from social media?	ECDC's web team is in the process of gathering this information and a response will be provided to Members in writing by the end of this week.

Questions from Councillor Christine Whelan

The conclusions state that no financial implications arise from the report's recommendations. I am somewhat surprised at this as the report states that 100% of staff will be trained in safeguarding. P28. This training is carried out by professional staff and therefore will incur a cost for the training. If there is no cost to this as stated, then what level of training is being given?	<p>ECDC officers receive safeguarding training during their induction, then refresher training on a yearly basis rather than every 3 years.</p> <p>Free training courses are provided by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board. These are sent to Angela Parmenter who forwards them on to all ECDC staff.</p> <p>There may be opportunities for local organisations to provide training to local volunteers.</p>
What qualifications or certificates are being given for this?	All courses are run and certified by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board.

<p>How often is the training being given? (This should be done every 3 years with yearly updated training)</p>	<p>ECDC do this on a yearly basis as a refresher for staff, initial training is carried out at staff inductions</p>
<p>Is there a higher-level qualified person who is the designated Safeguarding person on the council and what level of training has this person had?</p>	<p>Angela Parmenter is the Council's lead safeguarding officer – lead training completed and refreshed by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board.</p>
<p>Who is the Youth Officer Champion for ECDC? Is this publicly known with the various outside bodies?</p>	<p>The Council's Youth Officer Champions are Sarah Burton, Housing Options Team Leader, and Stephanie Jones, Communities and Partnerships Support Officer.</p> <p>Stephanie is a member of the Community Safety Partnership's newly established Young People's Task and Finish Group and she attends meetings with the East Cambs Youth Advisory Board (YAB).</p> <p>Stephanie engages with the YAB on a variety of matters including inviting them to sign up to the ECDC Register of Consultees and the Climate Change Partnership.</p> <p>Stephanie engaged with the YAB on how to effectively conduct engagement with young people in order to better understand how the Council can effectively engage going forward and will work with them on the development of the emerging ECDC Young People's webpages.</p> <p>Stephanie is in correspondence with a variety of local organisations providing youth provision and will liaise with them when gathering information to inform the content of the ECDC youth webpages.</p> <p>Stephanie shared the Youth Strategy with partners and offered ECDC's support to working together to address common goals.</p> <p>Stephanie has attended multi-agency meetings to discuss the Youth Action Plan and how it links to other organisation's initiatives e.g. the Police's Children and Young Person's Team and Healthy Schools.</p> <p>Stephanie is leading the methods of engagement consultation with young people</p>

	<p>currently going on and will also lead on the next consultation exercise when reviewing the findings of the consultation that was carried out to inform the development of the youth strategy as well as understanding the impacts of COVID-19 on local young people.</p> <p>As the action plan is implemented further, there will be other opportunities for the Youth Officer Champions to raise their profile and work with outside bodies.</p>
<p>The promotion of Youth Clubs is a good idea but what is being done to ensure there will be trained staff/ volunteers to run these clubs? (p29)</p>	<p>ECDC do not provide youth workers or training for youth workers however the strategy highlights the needs of young people in East Cambs and has been shared with partner agencies that may be able to address to complement the work that ECDC is undertaking.</p>
<p>Have we the budget to keep their training up to date and to have paid staff to run the clubs?</p>	<p>ECDC do not provide youth workers or training for youth workers.</p>
<p>We know there are buildings available for use but staffing the clubs is a huge problem. Mapping on local youth provision in consultation with Parish Councils. Which councils were consulted and have we the details of the consultation?</p>	<p>Mapping was conducted using local information, secondary research and building on mapping carried out during the development of the Youth Strategy. The mapping findings were shared with all parish councils for them to advise of anything else that they were aware of and to check the accuracy of information relating to their parish. This will always be a work in progress with the database updated when new information becomes available. The information will be promoted on the ECDC Young People's webpages and prior to being published, the database content will be checked with the specific agencies featured within it.</p>

Housing and Community Advice Service- Update on Impact of COVID-19

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 15 November 2021

Author: Housing & Community Advice Manager

[W98]

1.0 **ISSUE**

1.1 To receive an update on the Housing and Community Advice Service and the impacts arising from COVID-19.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 Members are requested to note the update in this report.

3.0 **UPDATE**

3.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the impacts of COVID-19 on the Housing & Community Advice Service since 23 March 2020 and to identify the challenges faced by the service for the foreseeable future.

Prevention

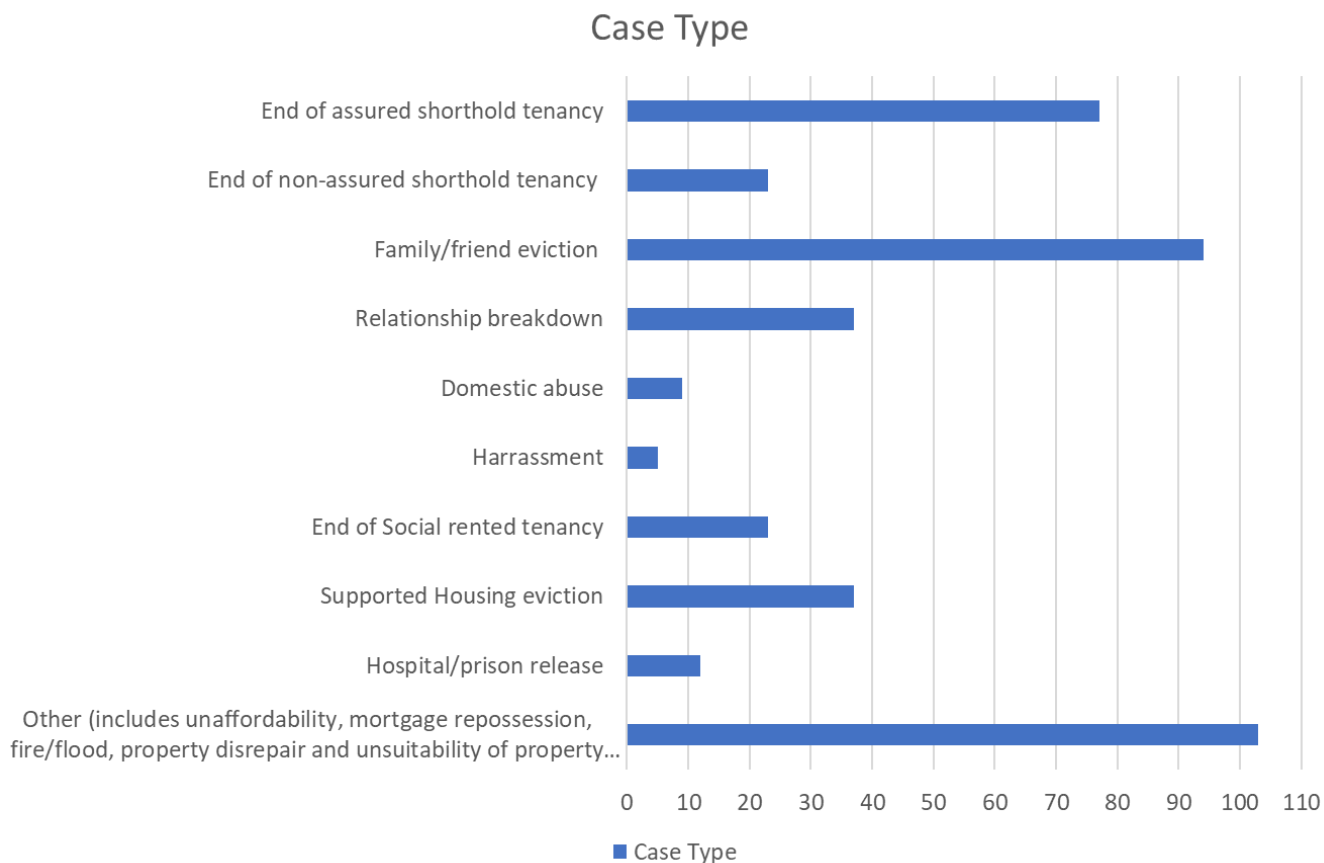
3.2 In the period running from 23 March 2020 until 1 October 2021 the service managed 420 prevention cases. The table below provides a summary of the nature of the cases.

Case Type	Amount
End of assured shorthold tenancy	77
End of non-assured shorthold tenancy	23
Family/friend eviction	94
Relationship breakdown	37
Domestic abuse	9
Harassment	5
End of social rented tenancy	23
Supported housing evictions	37
Hospital/prison release	12
Other (includes unaffordability, mortgage repossession, fire/flood, property disrepair and unsuitability of property due to ill health)	103

Of the 420 prevention cases, 43 prevention cases remained in their existing accommodation, 187 moved into alternative accommodation, 91 moved into the relief stage where homelessness couldn't be prevented, 11 lost contact and 88

either withdrew their applications or were not deemed homeless and/or eligible, but refused to cooperate.

The Service accepted a main full housing duty to 143 applicants.



Section 21 and Section 8 evictions have now come back in to force. It is difficult to predict the volume of cases that the Council is likely to be dealing with. The Housing & Community Advice Manager will be monitoring staff work programmes and caseloads very closely to ensure that the service can effectively respond to any increased demand.

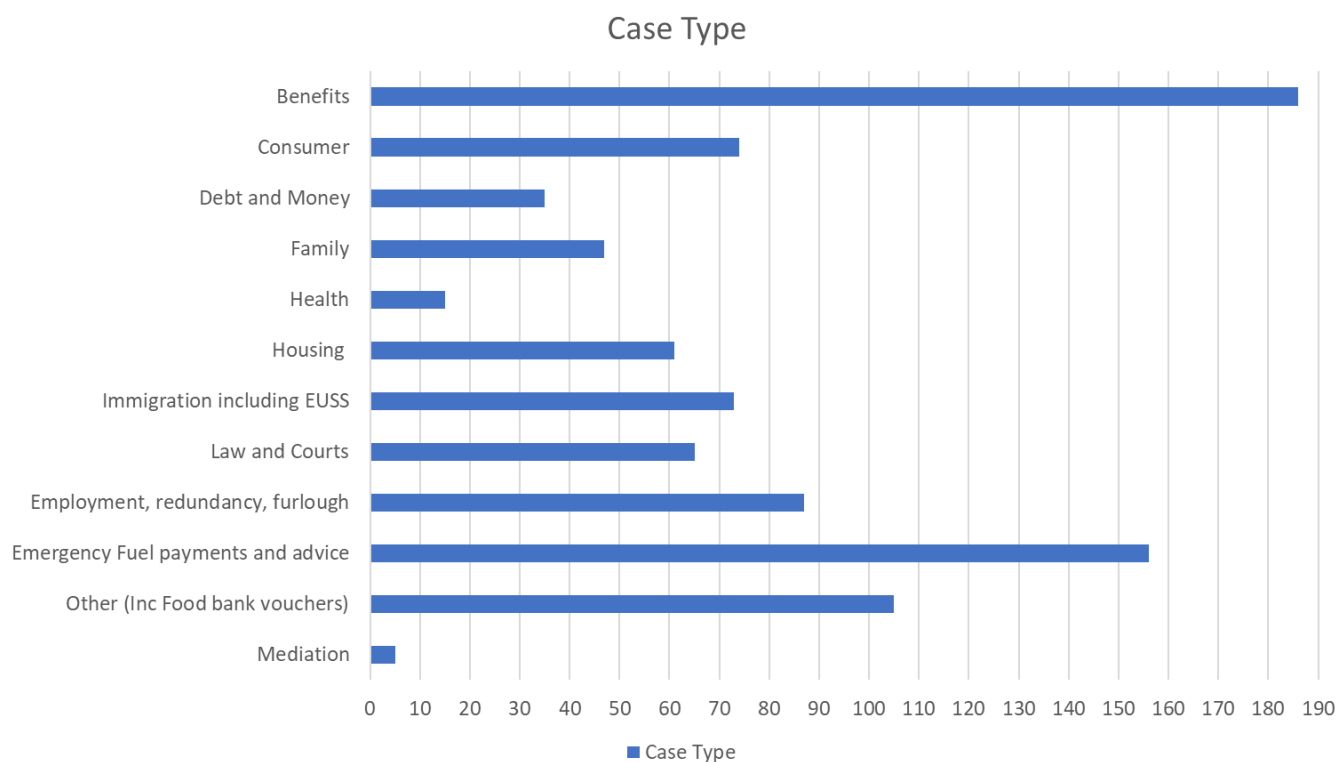
Since the courts resumed evictions the service has attended court and provided assistance to four applicants.

The Service has successfully recruited a full time Court Officer and this post is dedicated to assisting people in court and preparing defence paperwork to enable applicants to remain in their existing homes.

Community Advice

- 3.3 In the period running from 23 March 2020 until 1 October 2021 the Service dealt with 909 Community Service cases. The table below provides a summary of the nature of the cases.

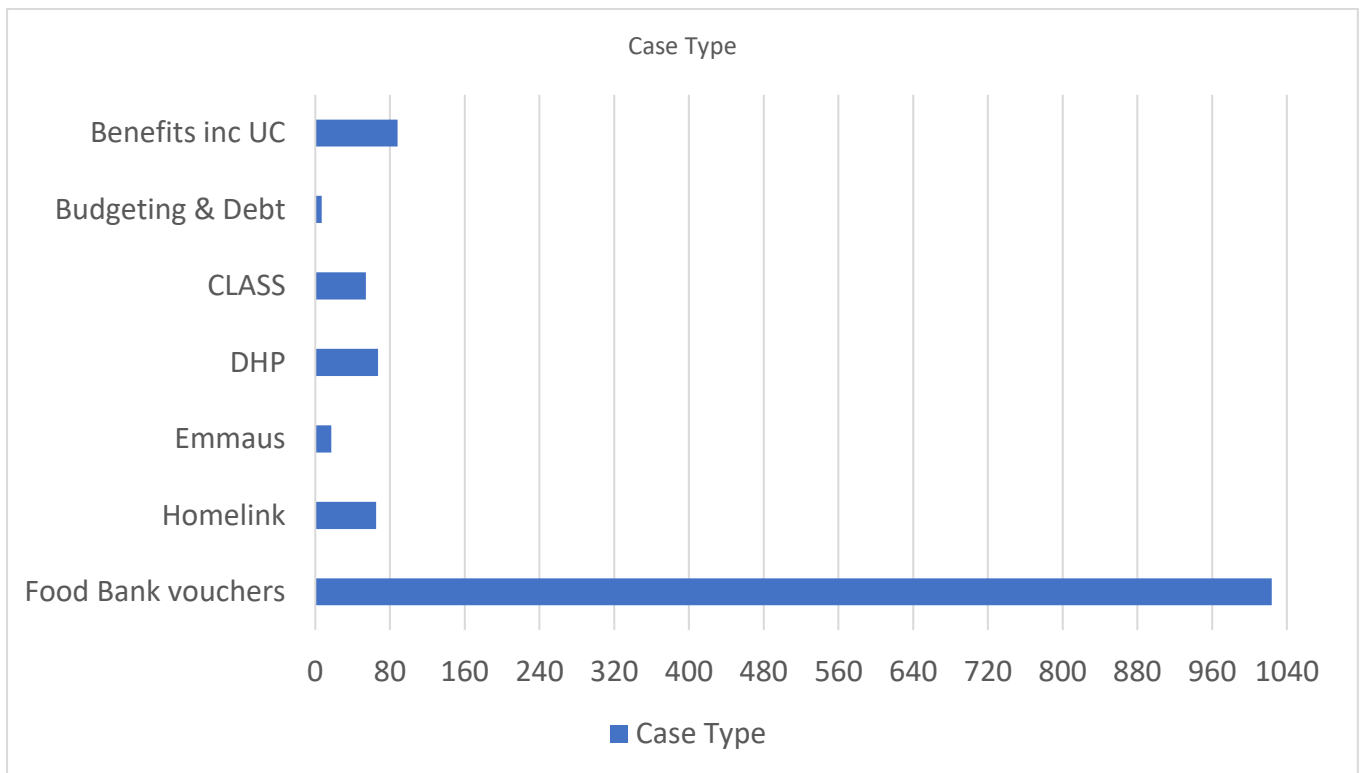
Case	Number
Benefits	186
Consumer	74
Debt and Money	35
Family	47
Health	15
Housing	61
Immigration including EUSS	73
Law and Courts	65
Employment, redundancy, furlough	87
Emergency Fuel payments and advice	156
Other (including food bank vouchers and translation)	105
Mediation	5



Tenancy Support

- 3.4 In the period running from 23 March 2020 until 1 October 2021 the service dealt with 1322 tenancy support cases. The table below identifies the nature of the cases.

Benefits including UC	88
Budgeting & Debt	7
CLASS	54
DHP	67
Emmaus	17
Homelink	65
Foodbank Vouchers	1024



It is clear from the statistics that the Community Advice and Tenancy Support Service has seen an increase in demand over the last 6 months. The service did prepare for the increase in advance and continues to be ready to meet further increases and provide the best possible service.

Officers continue to undertake training courses to ensure they can provide essential and necessary advice to clients.

General

- 3.5 The Council's Housing and Community Advice Service prides itself on being the leading voice in preventing homelessness and will continue to build and maintain the excellent working relationships with partners; both internal and

external, voluntary and statutory to prepare for any additional spike in requests for assistance. The recent experience and impact of COVID-19 has only strengthened this resolve.

The Council continues to be in a fortunate position in that it has not had to face many of the challenges that other local authorities have been dealing with, we have not had to accommodate any entrenched rough sleepers under COVID 'everyone in'. This places the Council in a stronger position than some, as the Council will not have to deal with trying to accommodate those in temporary accommodation as well as those facing possible evictions later.

As the Council does not own any housing stock we rely on data provided by Sanctuary Housing on properties becoming available. The availability of properties changes from week to week and therefore it is impossible to predict when properties will become available. Unfortunately, due to the COVID restrictions housing associations are taking much longer to turn around their void properties, we are hoping this will start to improve as we have moved into the recovery out of COVID.

There are currently 15 clients in the temporary accommodation units. There are currently 8 rooms void across our temporary accommodation units and this enables us to sub-let to other authorities and to have floating available in case of emergency homeless presentations.

EUSS

- 3.6 The Council is registered and authorised by the Home Office to act as one of their Centres to assist the EU citizens in applying for settled/pre-settled status. The service is free to users and the Council receives payment of £25 per completed appointment from the Home Office.

Currently there are 3 advisers registered and allowed to offer this limited Immigration Service. The deadline for applications was the end of June 2021, however late applications are still being accepted under certain circumstances. The Service has dealt with and completed 17 applications.

Debt Advice

- 3.7 The Community Advice Service is providing general debt advice. 7 of the housing team have passed part 1 and 2 of the level 3 Award in Generalist Debt Advice (Money Advice Service (MAS) Accredited. After obtaining sufficient debt management experience staff will be permitted to apply to undertake part 3 of the qualification. Part 3 must be completed and passed by December 2021 in order to gain the full accreditation, 2 officers now having passed Level 3.

The team will be undertaking training provided by the Institute of Money Advisors (IMA) which includes the Financial Conduct Authorities (FCA) Compliance and Quality of Advice. It should be noted that the training programme has been subject to disruption due to the COVID- 19 pandemic.

COVID-19

3.8 In addition, the Service continues with the following COVID-19 related duties:

- Assisting Environmental Health in carrying out door knocking in line with Track and Trace legislation.
- The Team are trained in vaccine hesitancy which will be very useful when Officers are out in the community or assisting with the vaccination bus as they can discuss vaccination hesitancy with concerned residents.
- Delivering emergency food parcels with the help of our local food banks. Officers are available to deliver these as and when needed across the district.
- With the additional funding obtained by the COVID-19 Recovery Group the Council has been able to offer £500 donations to all the food banks within our district.
- The Council has also been able to donate £25,000 to The Lighthouse Centre who have provided invaluable support delivering emergency food packages, meals and our SWEP (Severe weather provision) provision throughout the pandemic.
- The Team continues to administer the Discretionary £500 isolation payments and to date have assessed 451 applications; 160 of these were successful, 260 were not eligible and we still have 31 pending waiting further information. There has been a large increase in these applications which has had a significant impact on the team.
- The Team have been administering covid funding streams as follows:

Hardship fund - allocation of £24,000
remaining £11,566

Prevention fund - allocation of £24,000
remaining £16,899

Winter Support - allocation of £80,000
remaining £40,997

There is a further funding stream called the Household Support Fund, we do not have the full details currently.

We are confident we can fully support our residents through the winter months with the available funding.

Key Challenges

3.9 The key challenge in the coming months continues to be supporting the residents of the district in these ever changing times. The Team has undertaken a lot of training to prepare for (although already actively providing advice on) a number of areas related to the changing demand on the service. The key challenge areas include, but are not limited to:

- Furlough rules
- Debt management
- Universal credit
- Mental Health
- Employment
- Housing, including eviction
- Homelessness prevention

It is very clear that demand on the Housing and Advice Service continues to increase. When the community advice element of the service was brought in-house there was a commitment to carry out a review following the first 12 months of delivering the service. The review has been undertaken and has assessed whether there are any changes that need to be made to reflect the enhanced service that we now offer. The outcome of this review is being updated in a separate Agenda Item.

A key learning for the Service over the last 18 months has been that residents have experienced either social or digital isolation, and in some cases it has been both. Measures are now in place to overcome this and include:

- Re-instated drop-in service (face-to-face). Since 17 June 2021 Officers have seen 98 residents for community advice, 157 for housing advice and 38 for tenancy support.
- The Council has now launched the new Community Hub Bus which takes the Housing & Community Advice Service out on the road to reach out to all of our residents across the district, which includes our partner agencies. Residents can access the same level of advice and support on the community bus that they can in the offices at the Grange.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required.

5.3 Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) not required.

6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 None

Background Documents

None

Location

The Grange,
Ely

Contact Officer

Angela Parmenter
Housing & Community Advice
Manager
(01353) 616374
E-mail:
angela.parmenter@eastcambs.gov.uk

12 MONTH REVIEW OF COMMUNITY ADVICE SERVICE

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 15 November 2021

Author: Housing & Community Advice Manager

[W99]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To receive an update on the performance, ability and capacity of the Community Advice Service over a 12 month period.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 Members are requested to note the update provided in the report.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council is committed to ensuring that all residents have access to services that meet their needs. It is recognised that the district is evolving, and services and advice must be in place that reflect these needs.

3.2 The Council has a track record of delivering against the needs of its residents and this can be evidenced through its approach to multi-agency community hubs, drop-in services and the establishment of referral pathways. Strategies are in place to build resilience and embed effective engagement into Council services by widening the scope of advice and support services being provided by the Council.

3.3 On the 1 April 2020 the Council's Housing Advice Team expanded to provide a broader range of community advice to all residents.

4.0 REVIEW

4.1 This report focuses on the following areas:

- Enquiries and Officer Training
- Resources
- Future Planning

4.2 Officers are mindful that the Community Advice Services was launched during the COVID-19 pandemic. Officers are mindful that the demand on this service is likely to increase in the future and therefore the effectiveness of the Service and adapting the needs of residents is under continuous review. Further, it is worth noting that daily drop in services were not in place during the period of national lockdowns. However, telephone and virtual appointments were offered to all clients. Daily drop in with face to face appointments recommenced in June 2021.

Enquiries and Officer Training

4.3 From 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 the Community Advice Service assisted 535 individual residents. The table below identifies the types of enquiries:

Type of Enquiry	Amount
Benefits advice	97
Consumer advice	45
Debt & Money advice	11
Employment advice	65
Family/relationship advice	22
Health advice	12
Housing advice	44
Immigration/EUSS advice	30
Law and courts advice	43
Legal advice	4
Energy advice and grants	96
Foodbank vouchers	66



The Community Advice Service also received requests for assistance from outside of East Cambridgeshire.

The Council's Community Advice Service were the only centre within East Anglia that provided the EUSS application service and all of these appointments were held face to face throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The charts provided at Appendix 1 identify the geographical spread of the enquiries received.

In addition to the enquiries received by the Community Advice Service, the Customer Service Team has assisted 823 residents at first point of contact for resolution of Housing Benefit and Council Tax enquiries.

Training is undertaken to ensure that Officers are in a position to provide effective advice to offer the best possible service for all residents. A breakdown of the training that has been undertaken by Officers is provided at Appendix 2.

4.4 Resources

When the decision was taken to bring this element of Service 'In-House' an establishment of 4 new posts (1 FTE Team Leader, 2 FTE Support Officers and 1 FTE Administrative Officer) on a 2 year fixed term contract was approved.

As an update, the Service currently employs 2 full time staff on a 2-year fixed term contract and 1 full time position funded for 12 months by COVID-19 funding.

At this time the Service is adequately resourced based on the level of enquiries. The Housing & Community Advice Manager continuously reviews the level of personnel resources and will take the necessary actions to employ additional resources if this is deemed necessary.

4.5 Future Planning

Direct delivery of the Service enables the Council to act as a one-stop-shop for residents; providing a range of services and expertise that is readily available and expanding on the Council's proven ability to intervene and assist residents with the issues that they face in an ever-changing environment.

Business as usual services have now resumed and the daily drop in's have also been reinstated. The Council is still offering home appointments for residents if this is more convenient.

In addition, the Council has now launched the Community Hub Bus. During the pandemic it became very evident that some residents were facing social and digital isolation and couldn't access services they needed. The new Community Hub Bus will be travelling around the district offering the same advice and support that is available at the drop-in services at the Grange. This enables all residents to access services as and when they need it.

This latest addition enables the Council to increase its offer of service across the district.

The initial schedule of locations of the Community Bus is provided at Appendix 3. Members are advised that the schedule of locations is published on the Council's website.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The Community Advice Service is managing well with both the level and nature of enquiries that have been dealt with since the introduction of the Service in April 2020.

As mentioned above, the Community & Housing Advice Manager continuously reviews the Community Advice Service to ensure that that it is both fit-for-purpose and adequately resourced.

At this time there are no recommendations to make any changes to the Service or resources.

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this update report.

6.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) not required.

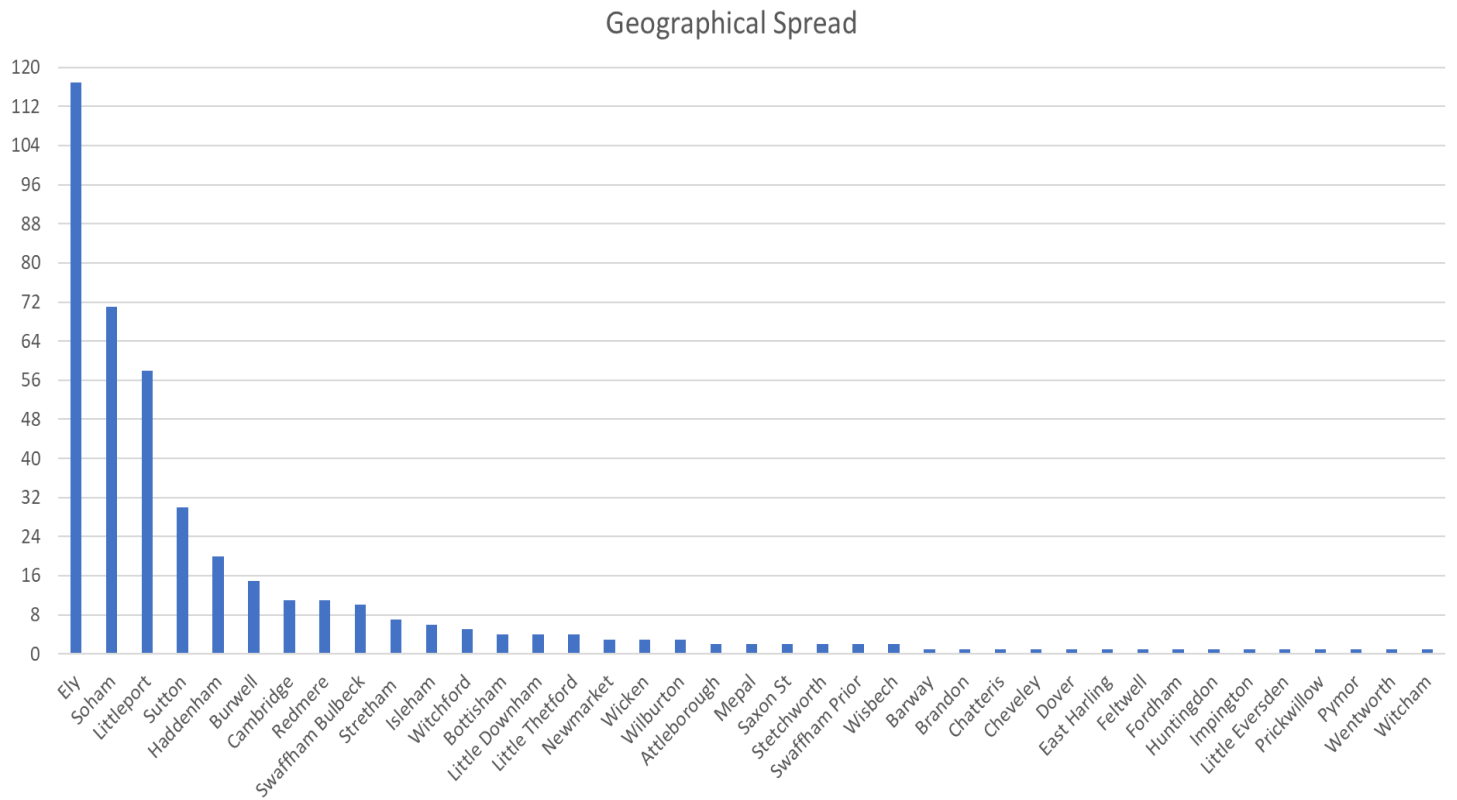
6.3 Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) not required.

7.0 APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix 1- Geographical Spread of Enquiries
Appendix 2- Training Schedule
Appendix 3- Community Bus Locations

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
None	The Grange, Ely	Angela Parmenter Housing & Community Advice Manager (01353) 616374 E-mail: angela.parmenter@eastcambs.gov.uk

Geographical spread of enquiries.



Training Schedule

Date	Course	Provider	Hours	Adviser
14/07/2021	Lvl 3 Generalist Debt Advice	CMA	6 Hours	Virginia Thomas
25/08/2021	Welfare Benefits	Benefits Training Co	6 Hours	Virginia Thomas
02/09/2021	Homelessness Law	Shelter	6 Hours	Virginia Thomas
08/09/2021	New Family Prac	BPP	6 Hours	Virginia Thomas
15/09/2021	Hoarding	Hoarding UK	6 Hours	Virginia Thomas
27/10/2021	SGO & Adoption	BPP	8 Hours	Virginia Thomas
13/11/2021	Family Law	BPP	12 Hours	Virginia Thomas
18/11/2021	Family Advocacy	BPP	6 Hours	Virginia Thomas
07/12/2021	PLO - Childrens	BPP	6 Hours	Virginia Thomas
19/04/2021	Employment Update	HMRC	1	Aneta Sharp
20/04/2021	Benefit Advice for Money Advisers	Institute of Money Advisers	6	Aneta Sharp
27/04/2021	DAHA		3	Aneta Sharp
04/05/2021	3rd Party Deductions	Institute of Money Advisers	6	Aneta Sharp
10/04/2021	Employment Law	ACAS	6	Aneta Sharp
12/05/2021	Benefit Updater	Benefit Training Co	1	Aneta Sharp
18/05/2021	Settled Status	Home Office	1	Aneta Sharp
19/05/2021	DAHA		3	Aneta Sharp
27/05/2021	EUSS & Criminality	Home Office	1	Aneta Sharp
01/06/2021	EUSS Alternative ID	Home Office	1	Aneta Sharp
07/06/2021	EUSS & Looked After Children	Home Office	1	Aneta Sharp

07/06/2021	Debt Advice Level 3	CMA	6	Aneta Sharp
10/06/2021	Family Law	BPP	6	Aneta Sharp
14/06/2021	Financial Capability	Shelter	3	Aneta Sharp
18/06/2021	Housing Costs in UC	Shelter	2	Aneta Sharp
22/06/2021	CCJ		2	Aneta Sharp
22/06/2021	DAHA		3	Aneta Sharp
23/06/2021	Benefits for Carers	Welfare Benefits	6	Aneta Sharp
30/06/2021	Homelessness Bitesize	NHASS	2	Aneta Sharp
01/07/2021	Dealing with Debt	Shelter	3	Aneta Sharp
08/07/2021	Housing Eligibility	NHASS	3	Aneta Sharp
14/07/2021	DAHA		3	Aneta Sharp
29/07/2021	Hybrid Working	ACAS	1	Aneta Sharp
12/08/2021	EUSS Late Applications	Home Office	1	Aneta Sharp
07/09/2021	statutory sick pay	HMRC	1	Aneta Sharp
15/09/2021	Hoarding	Hoarding UK	6	Aneta Sharp
16/09/2021	EUSS NRPF	ADASS	2	Aneta Sharp
30/09/2021	Benefit Updater	Benefit Training Co	1	Aneta Sharp
04/10/2021	Motivational Interviewing	NHASS	3	Aneta Sharp
13/10/2021	Minimum Wage	HMRC	1	Aneta Sharp
13/11/2021	Family Law	BPP	12	Aneta Sharp
22/11/2021	Maternity and Paternity Pay	HMRC	1	Aneta Sharp
31/03/2021	Mediation Phone Conversion Course	UK Mediation	6	Nick Wyatt
15/09/2021	Hoarding	Hoarding UK	6	Nick Wyatt
07/06/2021	Debt Advice Level 3	CMA	6	Nick Wyatt

Community Bus Locations

<u>LOCATION</u>
Ashley - Community Rooms, Silverley Way, CB8 9DY
Bottisham - Bottisham Community Sports and Social Club, 31 Downing Cl, Bottisham, Cambridge CB25 9DD
Burwell - Mandeville Hall, Tan House Lane (Off Reach Road), Burwell CB25 0AR
Fordham - Scotsdales, Market St, Fordham, Ely CB7 5LQ
Haddenham - Arkenstall Centre, 7 Station Rd, Haddenham, Ely CB6 3XD
Isleham – The Beeches, 32 Mill Street, Isleham, Cambridgeshire, CB7 5RY
Little Downham – Village Hall, Main St, Little Downham, Ely CB6 2ST
Littleport – St George's Medical Centre, NHS GP Practice at 2a Parsons Lane, Littleport, Cambridgeshire, CB6 1JU
Mepal – The Pavilion, Witcham Road, Mepal, Ely, CB6 2AG
Soham - Ross Peers Sports Centre, College Close, Soham, Ely CB7 5HP
Stretham - Pavillion, Short Road , Stretham, Ely CB6 3LS
Sutton - The Royal British Legion Brooklands Centre/The Brook, Ely CB6 2QQ
Swaffham Prior - Village Hall, High St, Swaffham Prior CB25 0LD
Westley Waterless - Village Hall, Main St, Westley Waterless, Newmarket CB8 0RG
Wicken - Village Hall , Mission Hall Green, High St, Wicken, Ely CB7 5XR
Witchford - Village Hall, Bedwell Hey Lane, Witchford, Ely, CB6 2JR

TITLE: BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 15th November 2021

Author: Finance Manager

[W100]

1. ISSUE

- 1.1 This report provides Members with details of the financial position for services under the Operational Services Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATION (S)

- 2.1 Members are requested to note that this Committee is currently projecting an underspend in the year of £157,500, when compared to its planned budget of £5,558,994.
- 2.2 Members are further requested to note that the Committee has a projected capital programme outturn of £1,321,294. This is £2,000,000 lower than its revised budget.

3. BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

- 3.1 Under Financial Regulations each policy committee is required to consider projections of financial performance against both its revenue and capital budget on a quarterly basis.
- 3.2 This is the second quarter report for the 2021/22 financial year and details actual expenditure incurred and income received as at 30th September 2021 and current projections as to the year-end position.

Revenue

- 3.3 The revenue budget for each service that falls under the stewardship of this Committee has been reviewed with appendix 1 detailing the current variance and forecast outturn for each service line.
- 3.4 The table below details the significant variances of actual spend compared to profiled budgeted spend at the end of September, these where no yearend variance is currently being predicted.

Service	Variance £	Explanation
Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)	(£3,615,864)	CIL transactions are treated as a revenue income or expense, but any balance on the account will be transferred to reserve at yearend.
Climate Change	(£19,545)	The profile currently allocates the budget equally over the year, but as spend is against specific projects, this is not consistent throughout the year. The budget holder believes that the full budget will be spent by yearend.
Community Projects & Grants	£35,728	Expenditure in relation to Section 106 projects will be provided with match funding at the end of the financial year. Also, the facilities improvement grants have not been released yet, but should be in the next quarter.
Community Safety	(£40,192)	Rolled forward income from 2020/21 (PCC & Community Safety) will be used to pay for the programme of activities in 2021/22.
Licencing	(£24,934)	An increased amount of income is showing to the end of September, although some of this relates to multi-year licences and will be rolled forward. For the remainder of the year we are expecting revenue to fall back to pre-covid levels.

3.5 The net revenue expenditure for this Committee at yearend is forecast to be £5,401,494. This reflects a forecast £157,500 underspend when compared to the approved budget. Within this there are several forecast variations on service lines, as detailed in the table below.

Service	Forecast Outturn Variance £	Explanation
Community Projects & Grants	(£20,000)	Local clubs, groups and venues are continuing to recover and get back to normal after COVID-19. Many groups have been using new and alternative ways to meet, such as over video platforms, therefore there has been reduced demand for facility improvements this year.
Customer Services	(£12,500)	The underspend is a result of a member of staff returning to work after maternity on reduced hours. This will be reviewed later in the year to determine whether the service needs to cover the additional hours. There are currently less face to face visitors than prior to Covid-19, however this may change in the coming months as restrictions continue to reduce.
Homelessness	(£25,000)	The current month end variance is the result of the roll forward of unspent Government grant from 2020/21. The yearend variance however, is the result of savings on hotel and hostel costs.
Planning	(£110,000)	We continue to receive an increased number of applications, some of which are higher fee earners, potentially as a result of the relaxation of Covid restriction. The department remained extremely busy throughout the Covid-19 period and continues to receive applications in numbers higher than experienced in recent years. The Council has a number of Public Inquiries and Appeal Hearings in the coming months and this may impact on the forecast currently being projected.

Travellers	£10,000	We are working with the DWP to resolve the universal credit rent problems which started during Covid-19, and are expecting to receive the outstanding rents later in this financial year. However, there will still be an overspend in site repairs on the traveller's site as expenditure in this area is well ahead of profile for the first six months of the year.
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Capital

- 3.6 The revised capital budget for Operational Services Committee stands at £3,321,294; including £398,101 of slippage brought forward from 2020/21 and additional Disability Facilities Grant (DFG) of £81,894.
- 3.7 While we await more details of the Government's Waste Strategy, capital spending on Waste vehicles has been delayed, and with the lead times between order and receipt of such vehicles around twelve months, it is now highly unlikely that any of the Waste vehicles capital money will be spent in 2021/22 and will instead need to be carried forward into 2022/23.
- 3.8 Further £1.1 million of CIL funding has been received and allocated against the historical Leisure Centre build costs in 2021/22, thus reducing the borrowing requirement for this scheme.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS / EQUALITY AND CARBON IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

- 4.1 The current forecast is that the Committee's net revenue expenditure will be £157,500 underspent at yearend.
- 4.2 An equality Impact Assessment (INRA) is not required.
- 4.3 A carbon Impact Assessment (CIA) is not required.

5. APPENDICES

- 5.1 Appendix 1 – Revenue budget monitoring report – 30th September 2021.
- 5.2 Appendix 2 – Capital budget monitoring report – 30th September 2021

Background Documents

Budget Monitoring Report
Preparation Documents

Location

Room 104
The Grange
Ely

Contact Officer

Ian Smith
Finance Manager
Tel: (01353) 616470
E-mail: ian.smith@eastcambs.gov.uk

OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - September 2021

Revenue	Total Budget 2021-22	Profiled Budget to 30 September 2021	Actual to 30 September 2021	Variance	Projected Outturn	Current variance between Total Budget & Projected Outturn	Variance between Total Budget & Projected Outturn - June
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Building Regulations	17,696	7,423	(1,476)	(8,899)	17,696		
CIL	--	--	(3,615,864)	(3,615,864)	--		
Civic Amenities Act	11,671	4,585	4,558	(27)	11,671		
Climate Change	100,000	50,000	30,455	(19,545)	100,000		
Community Projects & Grants	179,585	69,067	104,795	35,728	159,585	(20,000)	
Community Safety	57,002	26,866	(13,326)	(40,192)	57,002		
Cons.Area & Listed Buildings	60,967	30,484	32,754	2,270	60,967		
Customer Services	460,037	236,009	223,753	(12,256)	447,537	(12,500)	
Dog Warden Scheme	34,443	17,346	16,039	(1,307)	34,443		
Ely Markets	--	--	--	--	--		
Emergency Planning	28,374	3,958	11,196	7,238	28,374		
Environmental Issues	91,486	40,344	47,249	6,905	91,486		
Health - Admin. & Misc.	410,201	198,165	197,795	(370)	410,201		
Homelessness	343,080	2,674	(728,671)	(731,345)	318,080	(25,000)	(10,000)
IT	801,664	471,882	462,820	(9,062)	801,664		
Leisure Centre	(241,113)	6,500	1,097	(5,403)	(241,113)	--	--
Licencing	2,499	1,415	(23,519)	(24,934)	2,499		
Marketing & Grants	70,094	50,657	44,676	(5,981)	70,094		
Neighbourhood Panels	1,500	750	--	(750)	1,500		
Nuisance Investigation	75,315	37,657	40,066	2,409	75,315		
Performance Management	10,400	5,200	--	(5,200)	10,400		
Pest Control	9,341	4,670	4,522	(148)	9,341		
Planning	6,808	2,459	(133,946)	(136,405)	(103,192)	(110,000)	
Public Relations	75,917	37,959	28,952	(9,007)	75,917		
Refuse Recycling	1,006,700	518,350	519,558	1,208	1,006,700		
Refuse Collection	1,201,511	705,756	706,148	392	1,201,511		
Street Cleansing	703,258	351,629	351,629	--	703,258		
Street Naming & Numbering	6,841	3,420	7,737	4,317	6,841		
Travellers Sites	(22,000)	(31,266)	6,267	37,533	(12,000)	10,000	10,000
Tree Preservation	55,717	21,387	16,584	(4,803)	55,717		
Revenue Total	5,558,994	2,875,346	(1,658,152)	(4,533,498)	5,401,494	(157,500)	--

CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2021/22

Capital	Published Budget 2021-22 £	Slippage from 2020-21 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2021-22 £	Actual at 30th September 2021 £	Forecast Outturn £	Variance between Revised Budget & Forecast Outturn £
OPERATIONAL SERVICES							
Conservation Area Schemes - 2nd round		27,506		27,506		27,506	0
Refuse & Cleansing Vehicles	2,000,000			2,000,000		0	(2,000,000)
Waste - Wheelied Bins	40,000			40,000	29,317	40,000	0
Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants	697,299	370,595	81,894	1,149,788	(106,431)	1,149,788	0
Empty Properties, Discretionary DFGs, Minor Works, Home Repair Asst.	75,000			75,000	(29,578)	75,000	0
Vehicle Etc. Replacements	29,000			29,000	7,750	29,000	0
Leisure Centre				0	(188,038)	0	0
Total	2,841,299	398,101	81,894	3,321,294	(286,980)	1,321,294	(2,000,000)

SOURCES OF FINANCING	Published Budget 2021-22 £	Slippage from 2020-21 £	Approved Additions £	Revised Budget 2021-22 £	Variations £	Forecast Outturn £
Operational Services						
Grants / Contributions (DFG)	526,577		81,894	608,471	0	608,471
Capital Receipts	265,722	398,101		663,823	0	663,823
Borrowing	2,000,000	0	0	2,000,000	(3,100,000)	(1,100,000)
Section 106 / CIL	49,000			49,000	1,100,000	1,149,000
Capital Funding Total	2,841,299	398,101	81,894	3,321,294	(2,000,000)	1,321,294

TITLE: EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE ACCOUNTS 2020/21

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 15 November 2021

Author: Director Operations

[W101]

1.0 **ISSUE**

1.1 To receive the East Cambs Street Scene accounts 2020/21.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 Members are requested to note the East Cambs Street Scene accounts 2020/21 as set out in Appendix 1.

3.0 **BACKGROUND/OPTIONS**

3.1 East Cambs Street Scene (ECSS) auditors, Price Bailey, have issued an unqualified opinion on the statements, and confirmed that they give a true and fair view of the state of the ECSS's affairs as at 31 March 2021. They also confirm they have been prepared in accordance with the relevant laws and regulations.

3.2 The ECSS 2020/21 Accounts were approved by ECSS Board on 26 October 2021. These are now provided to the Operational Services committee, as shareholder committee, as stated in the Shareholder Agreement.

3.3 The statements show that ECSS made a profit after tax of £4,412 (£5,077 in 2019/2020 to bring the total asset value of the company to £8,934.

4.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

4.1 There are no financial implication arising from this report.

4.2 EIA not required.

5.0 **APPENDICIES**

5.1 Appendix 1- East Cambs Trading Company accounts 2020/21.

Background Documents

None

Location

Room 101B,
The Grange,
Ely

Contact Officer

Jo Brooks
Director Operations
(01353) 665555
E-mail: jo.brooks@eastcambs.gov.uk

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

**DIRECTORS' REPORT AND
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

COMPANY INFORMATION

Directors	P J Remington J Hill J E Brooks
Company secretary	E L Grima
Company number	11150811
Registered office	The Grange Nutholt Lane Ely Cambridgeshire CB7 4EE
Auditors	Price Bailey LLP Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors Tennyson House Cambridge Business Park Cambridge CB4 0WZ

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

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EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

DIRECTORS' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

The directors present their report and the audited financial statements of the company for the period ended 31 March 2021

Directors

The directors who served during the period were:

P J Remington
J Hill
J E Brooks

Statement of directors' responsibilities

The directors are responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial period. Under that law the directors have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the European Union. Under company law the directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit or loss for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Statement as to disclosure of information to auditors

So far as the directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the company's auditors are unaware, and each director has taken all the steps that he ought to have taken as a director in order to make himself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors

The auditors, Price Bailey LLP, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

DIRECTORS' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

Small companies note

In preparing this report, the directors have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

This report was approved by the board on and signed on its behalf.

J Hill
Director



EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT TO THE SHAREHOLDERS OF EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of East Cambs Street Scene Limited (the 'Company') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise The Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Changes in Equity, Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) as adopted by the European Union.

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of the profit for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with IFRSs as adopted by the European Union;
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the director's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The Directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT (CONTINUED) TO THE SHAREHOLDERS OF EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Director's Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the Director's Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Director's Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of Directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the Directors were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemptions in preparing the Director's Report and from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of Directors

As explained more fully in the Directors' Responsibilities Statement set out on page 1, the Directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Directors determine necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Directors are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Directors either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an Auditor's Report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT (CONTINUED) TO THE SHAREHOLDERS OF EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the company and the industry in which it operates and considered the risk of non-compliance with the applicable laws and regulations including fraud, in particular those that could have a material impact on the financial statements.

This included those regulations directly related to the financial statements, including financial reporting, tax legislation and distributable profits. In relation to the industry this included employment laws and health and safety.

The risks were discussed with the audit team and we remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit. We carried out specific procedures to address the risks identified. These included the following:

Reviewing minutes of Board meetings, correspondence with their regulators, agreeing the financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation, enquiries of management including those responsible for the key regulations for any instances of actual, suspected or alleged fraud or non-compliance.

To address the risk of management override of controls, we reviewed systems and procedures to identify potential areas of management override risk. In particular, we carried out testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, and evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions to identify large or unusual transactions. We reviewed key authorisation procedures and decision making processes for any unusual or one-off transactions. We also assessed management bias in relation to the accounting policies adopted and in determining significant accounting estimates.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Auditor's Report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in a Report of the Auditors and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Paul Cullen FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of Price Bailey LLP
Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors
Tennyson House
Cambridge Business Park
Cambridge
CB4 0WZ
Date:

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

REGISTERED NUMBER: 11150811

**STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
CONTINUING OPERATIONS			
Revenue from contracts		2,857,802	2,725,691
Revenue from recycling credits		418,265	371,732
Other income		128,141	137,599
		<u>3,404,208</u>	<u>3,235,022</u>
Cost of sales		(2,123,544)	(1,970,229)
Gross profit		<u>1,280,664</u>	<u>1,264,793</u>
Administrative expenses		(1,277,126)	(1,258,842)
Operating profit		<u>3,538</u>	<u>5,951</u>
Interest payable		-	-
Profit before taxation		<u>3,538</u>	<u>5,951</u>
Tax on profit	5	874	(874)
Profit/ (loss) and total comprehensive income for the period		<u><u>4,412</u></u>	<u><u>5,077</u></u>

There were no recognised gains and losses from 2021 or 2020 other than those included in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

The notes on pages 10 - 20 form part of these financial statements.

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

REGISTERED NUMBER: 11150811

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021	2020 £
Non-current assets			
Property, plant & equipment	6	28,026	32,030
Current assets			
Inventories	7	28,816	27,886
Trade and other receivables	8	154,530	140,731
Cash at bank and in hand	9	179,353	205,200
		362,699	373,817
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	10	(381,791)	(401,325)
		(19,092)	(27,508)
Net current assets			
		8,934	4,522
Net assets			
		8,934	4,522
Equity			
Called up share capital	12	1	1
Retained earnings		8,933	4,521
		8,934	4,522

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the board and were signed on its behalf by:

J Hill

Director

Date:

The notes on pages 10 – 20 form part of these financial statements.

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

	Share Capital £	Retained earnings £	Total equity £
Balance as at 31 March 2019	1	(556)	(555)
Profit for the period	-	5,077	5,077
Total comprehensive income	-	5,077	5,077
Balance as at 31 March 2020	1	4,521	4,522
Comprehensive income			
Profit for the period	-	4,412	4,412
Total comprehensive income	-	4,412	4,412
Balance as at 31 March 2021	1	8,933	8,934

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

**CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

		2021	2020
	Notes		
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities	15	(25,847)	64,825
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Net cash inflow from operating activities		(25,847)	64,825
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of fixed assets	6	-	(34,165)
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		(25,847)	30,660
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		205,200	174,540
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	9	<u>179,353</u>	<u>205,200</u>

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1. Accounting policies

1.1 Statutory information

East Cambs Street Scene Limited is a private company limited by shares incorporated and domiciled in England and Wales, United Kingdom. The address of the registered office is The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 4EE.

The Company is primarily involved in providing waste and street cleansing services to the residents of East Cambridgeshire.

The Financial Statements are presented in sterling which is the functional currency of the Company and rounded to the nearest £.

1.2 Going concern

The COVID-19 pandemic impacted staffing levels at various times during the financial year, with absences having to be covered by external agency staff. However, the Company was able to recover the additional costs incurred from East Cambridgeshire District Council.

The Directors have prepared cash flow forecasts for a period of 12 months from the year end which demonstrate that the cash reserves of the company will be sufficient for it to be able to continue as a going concern.

The financial statements do not contain any adjustments that would be required if the Company were not able to continue as a going concern.

1.3 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported for revenues and expenses during the year and the amounts reported for assets and liabilities at the statement of financial position date. However, the nature of estimation means that the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates.

1.4 Compliance with accounting standards

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards and IFRIC interpretations and with those parts of the Companies Act 2006 applicable to reporting entities under IFRS.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.5 Revenue recognition

Revenue from contracts with customers

Revenue is recognised at an amount that reflects the consideration to which the Company is expected to be entitled in exchange for transferring goods or services to a customer. For each contract with a customer, the Company: identifies the contract with a customer; identifies the performance obligations in the contract; determines the transaction price which takes into account the time value of money; allocates the transaction price to the separate performance obligations on the basis of the relative stand-alone selling price of each distinct good or service to be delivered; and recognises revenue when or as each performance obligation is satisfied in a manner that depicts the transfer to the customer of the goods promised. It also gives consideration to significant payment terms, obligations for returns and/or refunds.

The Company carries out waste collection and street cleansing service for and on behalf of East Cambridgeshire District Council. The contract value is agreed on an annual basis for the performance during the following financial year.

Recycling Credits are received upon meeting relevant criteria set by Cambridgeshire County Council in terms of recycling.

Sale of goods

The Company's other revenue mainly comprises the sale of recycling bins. Revenue is recognised at the point in time when the customer obtains control of the goods, which is generally at the time of delivery and the time when the performance obligation of the Company has been satisfied.

1.6 Property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and equipment is stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method.

The estimated useful lives range as follows:

Plant & Machinery	- 8 years
-------------------	-----------

The assets' residual values, useful lives and depreciation methods are reviewed, and adjusted prospectively if appropriate, or if there is an indication of a significant change since the last reporting date.

1.7 Trade and other receivables

Short term receivables are measured initially at transaction price, and are measured subsequently at amortised costs.

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.8 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours.

1.9 Operating profit

Operating profit is stated before investment income and finance costs.

1.10 Financial Instruments

Financial assets and liabilities are recognised on the statement of financial position when the Company becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

- Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash held at bank and short term deposits
- Trade payables are not interest bearing and are stated at their nominal value
- Trade receivables are measured initially at transaction price, and are measured subsequently at amortised costs.

1.11 Trade and other payables

Short term payables are measured fair value, and subsequently at amortised cost. Other financial liabilities, including bank loans, are measured initially at fair value, net of transaction costs, and are measured subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

1.12 Pensions

Defined contribution pension plan

The Company operates a defined contribution plan for its employees. A defined contribution plan is a pension plan under which the Company pays fixed contributions into a separate entity. Once the contributions have been paid the Company has no further payment obligations.

The contributions are recognised as an expense in the Statement of Comprehensive Income when they fall due. Amounts not paid are shown in accruals as a liability in the Statement of Financial Position. The assets of the plan are held separately from the Company in independently administered funds.

1.13 Taxation

Current taxes are based on the results shown in the financial statements and are calculated according to local tax rules, using tax rates enacted or substantially enacted by the statement of financial position date.

Deferred tax is recognised in respect of all timing differences that have originated but not reversed at the statement of financial position.

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

1. Accounting policies (continued)

1.14 New IFRS standards and interpretations not yet adopted

New Standards, Interpretations and Amendments that are not yet effective and have not been adopted early

The Company has adopted all of the new or amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the International Accounting Standards Board ('IASB') that are mandatory for the current reporting period.

The following new and revised Standards and Interpretations are relevant to the company but not yet effective for the year commencing 1 April 2020 and have not been applied in preparing these financial statements:

- IAS 1 Presentation of Financial Statements – classification of liabilities as current and non-current.
- IAS 1 Presentation of Financial Statements – disclosure of accounting policies
- IAS 8 Accounting Policies – definition of accounting estimates.

The Directors do not consider that the implementation of any of these new standards will have a material impact upon reported income or reported net assets.

1.15 Key sources of estimation uncertainty

The key assumptions about the future, and other key sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that may have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are detailed below.

Useful lives of depreciable assets

Estimates have been made in respect of useful economic lives of property, plant and equipment, which determine the amount of depreciation charged in profit or loss. Uncertainties in these estimates relate to the technological obsolescence that may change the utility of plant and machinery and could result in a material change to the amount of depreciation recognised. These estimates are reviewed annually at the reporting date based on the expected utility of the assets.

Further detail on useful life estimates is included in the accounting policy note 1.6.

2. Profit before tax is stated after charging

	2021	2020
	£	£
Rent – licence fee	35,000	30,100
Depreciation	4,004	2,135
Auditors' remuneration	15,000	12,500
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

3. Employees and directors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Wages and Salaries	1,537,288	1,391,140
Social security	120,439	115,752
Other pension costs	34,739	35,148
	<u>1,692,466</u>	<u>1,542,040</u>

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2021	2020
Directors	3	5
Direct labour	60	60
Administration	6	9
	<u>69</u>	<u>74</u>

4. Directors' remuneration

The Directors did not receive any remuneration from the Company as a result of their employment.

5. Income tax

	2021	2020
	£	£
Corporation tax		
Current tax on profit for the period	(874)	874
	<u>(874)</u>	<u>874</u>

Factors affecting the tax expense

The tax assessed for the year is lower than the standard rate of corporation tax in the UK. The difference is explained below:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Profit/ (loss) per accounts	<u>3,538</u>	<u>5,951</u>
Profit multiplied by the standard rate of corporation tax in the UK of 19%	672	1,131
Expenses not deductible for tax purposes, other than goodwill, amortisation and impairment	-	(257)
Group relief	(672)	-
Loss carry back	874	-
Tax expense	<u>(874)</u>	<u>874</u>

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

6. Property, plant and equipment

	Plant & Machinery	Total
Cost		
As at 1 April 2020	34,165	34,165
Additions		
Disposals		
As at 31 March 2021	<u>34,165</u>	<u>34,165</u>
Depreciation		
As at 1 April 2020	(2,135)	(2,135)
Charge for the year	(4,004)	(4,004)
Disposals		
As at 31 March 2020	<u>(6,139)</u>	<u>(6,139)</u>
Net Book Value		
As at 31 March 2021	<u>28,026</u>	<u>28,026</u>
As at 31 March 2020	<u>32,030</u>	<u>32,030</u>
Cost		
As at 1 April 2019	-	-
Additions	34,165	34,165
Disposals		
As at 31 March 2020	<u>34,165</u>	<u>34,165</u>
Depreciation		
As at 1 April 2019	-	-
Additions	(2,135)	(2,135)
Disposals		
As at 31 March 2020	<u>(2,135)</u>	<u>(2,135)</u>
Net Book Value		
As at 31 March 2020	<u>32,030</u>	<u>32,030</u>
As at 31 March 2019	=	=

7. Inventories

	2021 £	2020 £
Finished goods	<u>28,816</u>	<u>27,886</u>

Inventories recognised as an expense and included in cost of sales totalled £115,009 (£129,397).

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

8. Trade and other receivable		2021	2020
		£	£
Trade receivables		57,905	24,635
Prepayments and accrued income		96,625	116,096
		<u>154,530</u>	<u>140,731</u>
9. Cash and cash equivalents		2021	2020
		£	£
Cash at bank and in hand		179,353	205,200
		<u>179,353</u>	<u>205,200</u>
10. Trade and other payable		2021	2020
		£	£
Current			
Trade payables		114,025	202,100
Other taxation and social security		105,609	105,614
Other payables		29,321	27,198
Corporation tax		-	874
Accruals and deferred income		132,836	65,539
		<u>381,791</u>	<u>401,325</u>

11. Financial Instruments

Financial assets and liabilities

The carrying value of the company's financial assets and liabilities as recognised at the year end of the years under review may also be categorised as follows:

	Financial assets at amortised cost £	Financial liabilities at amortised cost £	Total balance sheet heading £
As 31 March 2020			
Cash and cash equivalents	205,200	-	205,200
Trade receivables	24,635	-	24,635
Other receivables	108,548	-	108,548
Trade payables	-	(202,100)	(202,100)
Other payables - current	-	(92,737)	(92,737)
	<u>338,383</u>	<u>(294,837)</u>	<u>43,546</u>

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

11. Financial Instruments (continued)

As 31 March 2020	Financial assets at amortised cost £	Financial liabilities at amortised cost £	Total balance sheet heading £
Cash and cash equivalents	179,353	-	179,353
Trade receivables	57,905	-	57,905
Other receivables	96,625	-	96,625
Trade payables	-	(114,025)	(114,025)
Other payables - current	-	(162,157)	(162,157)
Total	<u>333,883</u>	<u>(276,182)</u>	<u>57,701</u>

Financial risk management objectives and policies

The company's financial risk management policy seeks to ensure that adequate financial resources are available for the development of the company's business whilst managing its risks. The company does not engage in speculative transactions or hedging transactions.

The company's principal financial instruments consist of cash and cash equivalents and loans. The main purpose of these financial instruments is to finance the company's operations. The company has other financial instruments such as trade receivables and trade payables that arise directly from its operations.

The directors have overall responsibility for the establishment and oversight of the company's risk management and they recognise that financial risk management is an area in which they may need to develop specific policies should the company become exposed to further financial risks as the business develops. The directors currently ensure that the company has sufficient cash and cash equivalents to ensure there is sufficient reserves to support the business operations. The exposure to other financial instruments are limited to those generated through the operations and borrowings.

The main risks arising from the company's financial instruments are credit risk, interest rate risk and liquidity risk. The Board have also considered currency and market risk but do not believe these to be significant. This note presents information about the company's exposure to each of the main risks. The Board reviews and agrees policies for managing each of these risks as and when they arise. Further quantitative disclosures are included throughout the financial information.

There have not been any material changes in respect of the exposure to financial risks during the periods presented.

Credit risk

The company's exposure to credit risk is limited to the carrying amount of cash deposits and trade and other receivables recognised at the year end of £333,883. The risks associated with cash deposits are limited as the banks used are reputable. The principal credit risk therefore lies with trade receivables and in order to manage credit risk, limits are set for customers based upon a combination of payment history and third party credit references.

The company held cash and cash equivalents of £179,353 at 31 March 2021 (£205,200 at 31 March 2020). The cash and cash equivalents are held at NatWest Bank which is rated A- to A at leading credit rating agencies and so the company considers these to have a low credit risk.

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

11. Financial Instruments (continued)

Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the value of financial assets will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. The company's income and operating cash flows and the value of its financial assets are largely independent of changes in market interest rates. Low levels of surplus funds are invested in short term secured deposit accounts such that the company is not unduly exposed to market interest rate fluctuations.

Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the company will not be able to meet its financial obligations as they fall due. The company's policy throughout the year has been to ensure that it has adequate liquidity to meet its liabilities when due by careful management of its working capital.

	Less than one year £	More than one year £	Total £
2021			
Trade and other payables	381,791	-	381,791
	<u>381,791</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>381,791</u>
	Less than one year £	More than one year £	Total £
2020			
Trade and other payables	401,325	-	401,325
	<u>401,325</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>401,325</u>

Fair values

The carrying amounts of all financial assets and liabilities of the company as disclosed in the notes to the financial information are approximately their fair values.

Capital management

The company's objectives when managing capital are to safeguard the company's ability to continue as a going concern in order to provide returns for shareholders, benefits for other stakeholders and to maintain an optimal capital structure to reduce the cost of capital with an appropriate level of leverage for the size of the business so as to maintain investor, creditor and market confidence and to sustain future development of the business. In order to maintain or adjust the capital structure, the company may return capital to shareholders, issue new shares or sell assets to reduce debt.

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

12. Share capital

	2021	2020
	£	£
Share classified as equity		
Allotted, called up and fully paid		
1 Ordinary share of £1	1	1
	=	=

13. Related Party Transactions

In line with paragraph 25 of IAS24, the company has taken advantage of the exemption from the requirement to disclose transactions with East Cambridgeshire District Council (ECDC) and connected companies due to the control exercised by ECDC by virtue of it being the only shareholder.

All of the income categorised under revenue from contracts derives from the contract the company has with ECDC.

14. Details of Parent Undertaking

The Ultimate parent undertaking is East Cambridgeshire District Council, registered address The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 4EE.

15. Note to the cash flow statement

	2021	2020
	£	£
Profit (loss) before tax	3,538	5,077
Depreciation	4,004	2,135
	<u>7,542</u>	<u>7,212</u>
Decrease/(Increase) in inventories	(930)	(27,886)
Decrease/(Increase) in trade and other receivables	(13,799)	1,492
(Decrease)/Increase in trade and other payables	(18,660)	84,007
Net cash outflow from operating activities	<u>(25,847)</u>	<u>64,825</u>

The movements in above areas are entirely normal for the business and are down to timing differences at and around the year-end date.

16. Reserves

The following is a description of each of the reserve accounts that comprise equity shareholders' funds:

Share capital	The share capital comprises the issued ordinary shares of the company at par.
Retained earnings	Retained earnings comprise the company's cumulative accounting profits and losses since inception.

EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE LIMITED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

17. Events after the reporting period

No matter or circumstance has arisen since 31 March 2021 that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect the Company's operations, the results of those operations, or the Company's state of affairs in future financial years.

18. Contingent Liability

A company vehicle was involved in an RTA during the year. The company has not been subject to a third party claim to date and expects in the event of any liability to be covered fully by its insurance policy.

TITLE: ECDC ENVIRONMENT PLAN – UPDATE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 15 November 2021

Author: Richard Kay, Strategic Planning Manager

[W102]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 On 17 October 2019, Full Council passed a ‘climate change motion’, which declared a climate emergency and agreed a number of actions to take place. Subsequently, this Committee has agreed an Environment Plan in June 2020 and June 2021, both of which contain annual ‘Top 20 Actions’. A brief update on progress is given in this report on progress with those actions, with a particular focus on Action 8 of the 2021 Plan which relates to how ECDC could install its own renewable energy infrastructure.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 That the Committee:

- (A) Supports, in principle, the potential to install PV solar panels on the roof of E-Space North, and agrees that steps be taken to further investigate such potential, including, in due course, the seeking of quotes to implement such panels; and
- (B) Asks the findings of such an investigation to be reported to the appropriate Committee(s) and/or Full Council, in order to make a decision whether to proceed with such installation and to determine whether to make provision in our budgets for 2022/23 to do so.

3.0 BACKGROUND/OPTIONS

3.1 On 14 June 2021, this Committee approved the Council’s second Environment Plan, within which is a ‘Top 20’ set of actions the Council aims to undertake over the 12 month period to June 2022.

Action 8 - renewables

3.2 Action 8 of the 2021 Environment Plan states as follows:

“8. Before the end of 2021, report findings of a preliminary investigation into whether ECDC could operate its own renewable energy infrastructure, such as solar panels (PV) over one of its car parks. If feasible, progress implementation, with the target in future years of generating enough renewable energy to match the energy used by ECDC in its buildings, street lights and storage depots.”

- 3.3 To meet this action, the intention was to commission a consultant to undertake the preliminary investigation, and report back on the options and recommendations of that consultant to this Committee. Thereafter, the Council could decide whether and how to progress the installation of renewable energy infrastructure.
- 3.4 Following the preparation and issuing of a tender brief to undertake the preliminary investigation work, which included publishing the tender via our procurement routes and via direct issuing to companies we believed may be interested in the work, we were disappointed to receive no tender submission in return. This was unexpected, particularly as a few companies contacted the Council prior to the deadline date expressing verbally an interest.
- 3.5 After the closing date, we contacted a few companies to try to ascertain why they did not feel able or interested in sending the Council a quote. The response was mixed, but comments included: that the brief was too wide; that they were already too busy with other work; and that, in practice, such a 'preliminary investigation' was probably not the best way forward. Instead, it was suggested by them that the Council should determine a narrower focus for what it wants, and then go out to quote to deliver it. In effect, this would bypass the 'preliminary investigation' stage by consultants, with that stage being done in-house. Thereafter, it was suggested by the consultants, the Council then proceeds (if it sees fit to do so) with a tender brief for the actual installation of renewable energy infrastructure.
- 3.6 Helpfully, some of the consultants we contacted were happy to provide (and at no charge) guidance on typical pros, cons and costs of various renewable energy installation types, what land use and building types to look out for (or avoid) and what typical returns on investment might be.
- 3.7 Combined with this information, officers within the Council provided their own expertise on matters such as planning issues, ECDC land and property ownership (and any plans for upgrade or development on them) and our approach, in principle, to financial investments and returns.
- 3.8 Bringing all this information together, officers have concluded that the most suitable way to progress Action 8, and potentially go on to the provision of renewable energy infrastructure, was to test potential renewable energy installation options against the following:
- (a) Relative speed of installation
 - (b) Avoiding proposals which will inevitably have significant constraints or potential planning concerns to address
 - (c) Highest (or at least higher quartile) returns on investment made
 - (d) Lowest carbon impact to deliver (i.e. avoiding a proposal which itself would result in high levels of carbon emissions ('embodied carbon') during its construction and development) and
 - (e) Act as a trial for future scaling up, if successful.
- 3.9 Based on the above, it is evident that the quickest form of installation on a reasonable scale, combined with the likely highest return on investment, would be solar PV roof top installations on our own properties.

- 3.10 Other options, such as wind turbines or ground mounted solar PV (including solar PV over our car parks, which was initially seen as a potentially strong candidate) are recommended not to be taken forward, at least in the first instance, due to higher cost, wider constraints to overcome and in some instances higher embodied carbon arising from the installation.
- 3.11 On the basis that 'roof top installation' is the best way forward, a number of ECDC owned buildings were then considered for the installation of solar PV panels, taking account of:
- the roof structure (and its ability to easily fix panels to it)
 - the orientation of the roof (i.e. broadly south facing)
 - the size of roof
 - the pitch of the roof
 - the end user of the electricity generated (as well as the ability to feed excess into the grid) and
 - any likely planning constraints (eg on, or near, listed buildings or within a conservation area)
- 3.12 Two front runners emerged, namely E-Space North, at Littleport, and the ECSS Depot south of Littleport.
- 3.13 Of these, E-Space North appears to offer the greatest immediate opportunity and highest return on investment, especially in the short term, though the Depot certainly has potential, and even more so as and when the Council's fleet vehicles move towards being electric based over the next 5-10 years. However, preliminary investigations suggest that E-Space North has a high performing roof space (in terms of orientation, pitch, size and strength to install panels) and a good daytime match between energy generated and energy used on site.
- 3.14 Helped by some informal calculations by potential providers of such panels (with such calculations based on E-Space North, its roof space and orientation, and its current energy use), the following table provides a working assumption of the likely figures involved, should the Council proceed. It is important to note that these are **preliminary figures**, to be used as a guide only. More precise figures would be established through a formal tender process. That said, officers have scrutinised the provisional figures (and the assumptions behind them) in some detail, and are confident they offer a fair and reasonable working assumption:

Initial Capital Cost	Approx. £50k
CO2 saving	c15-20 tonnes CO2 per annum (aprx 2% of our current carbon footprint)
Lifespan of panels	25 years
Estimated payback of investment	6-8 years
Current Electricity Use for E-Space North	£10-14k pa (based on data from last 4 years - approx. 16p kwh). Aim for at least 60% cut via panels.

Excess PV electricity sold to grid	5-6p kwh (which would help offset the remaining 40% grid derived electricity cost)
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- 3.15 Based on the above, officers view is that there appears a sound (environmental and financial) basis for progressing this proposal to a more formal tender stage. Even if a number of ‘contingencies’ or ‘exceptionals’ are added to the costs (eg at set up stage, for annual maintenance, allowance for cloudy years etc), the payback period appears highly unlikely to exceed 10 years on a worst case basis. On a best case basis, it could be as little as 5 years payback, especially if electricity costs continue to rise over the coming years, which is expected (*electricity price rises would provide a double benefit for the project: first, it would mean every unit generated and used on site would have a greater £ saving than currently assumed; second, any excess energy sold to the grid would likely command a higher price than the 5-6p kwh presently assumed*).
- 3.16 Members are therefore asked to approve, in principle, that officers proceed with further detailed investigations for installing roof top PV panels on E-Space North, including the seeking of formal quotes.
- 3.17 For the avoidance of doubt, this Committee is not being asked to commit to the installation of such panels or commit funding towards any such installation. Instead, it is simply being asked to confirm that, in order to progress Action 8, that officers focus attention on the potential to install PV solar panels on the roof of E-Space North, and progress more detailed investigations (including quotes) for the delivery of such.
- 3.18 Committing expenditure (i.e. the c£50k) on such a proposal will be a matter for a future Council decision, in accordance with the constitution. This is likely, in the first instance, to be via Full Council’s budget setting report for 2022/23.
- 3.19 Finally, if Committee are supportive in principle to proceed as outlined in this report, officers will investigate, as a separate project, the potential to install electric vehicle charge points at E-Space North, with the potential being that such charge points source their electricity directly from the PV panels installed.

Wider Environment Plan Updates

- 3.20 In the four months or so since the June 2021 Environment Plan was agreed, progress on the Top 20 Actions are well underway. Below gives a brief summary of some of the highlights so far (figure in brackets refers to the Action number in the 2021 Environment Plan), though many other of the Top 20 Actions are also progressing:
- New part time temporary staff member now in place – Emma-Jane Danielsson is our new Environment Officer, to support the Strategic Planning Manager, and will take a lead on progressing some of the actions.
 - A successful ‘design a tree maze’ competition was run over the summer, and the winning designs will now be taken forward. 5,000 trees to build the maze have been ordered, and works on the ground are imminent. (3)
 - East Cambridgeshire Create an Orchard Programme launched w/c 1 November, offering free fruit trees to community groups and parish councils. (4)

- Work on a preliminary 'nature recovery strategy' for East Cambridgeshire is underway, which will feed into Cambridgeshire wide nature recovery actions and frameworks, and align to proposals in the Environment Bill. (6)
- Energy efficiency improvements on The Grange (window replacements, loft insulation and LED lighting) largely now completed and will be ready for delivering savings this winter. (7)
- The Combined Authority's Climate Change Independent Commission published its final recommendations in October 2021, and we are working closely with the Combined Authority to deliver coordinated action across the Combined Authority area. (17)

ECDC CO2e emission – latest data

- 3.21 We are still finalising the precise data for ECDC (as an organisation) CO2e emissions over 2020/21. As Committee will appreciate, it was a highly unusual year and different elements of our 'carbon footprint' will have been affected by the pandemic.
- 3.22 As Committee knows, our highest footprint arises from our fleet vehicles (waste collection vehicles, primarily). This continued to remain at a similar level throughout 2020/21, as our waste collection vehicles maintained services throughout the pandemic. Other aspects of our emissions dropped significantly (eg staff business miles), whilst other aspects that may reasonably assumed might have gone down, actually went up. For example, our gas consumption in our buildings actually went up slightly despite low staff attendance during lockdowns etc. However, for buildings such as The Grange, it was essential to maintain a reasonable temperature in the building at all times, to prevent other problems arising, and there was generally at least some staff presence at all times. On top of that, government guidance strongly urged windows to be kept open, even in winter, to ensure high fresh air circulation, which inevitably meant more gas usage to keep the building warm for those staff present.
- 3.23 Overall, it appears our final data will demonstrate around a 3-5% fall in emissions by the Council over 2020/21, compared with the year before. This means we have made some progress towards our first interim target of a 20-33% emissions cut by 2025/26 (as set out in the June 2021 Environment Plan).

4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The proposed way forward to deliver the intentions of Action 8 is deemed the most appropriate, and actually could deliver renewable energy infrastructure earlier than first envisaged.
- 4.2 Elsewhere in this report, a wider update on progress being made on the Environment Plan Actions is given, which hopefully is of interest to Members.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/ ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 There are no immediate direct financial implications arising from the recommendations. However, the recommendations are a step towards potential

significant capital expenditure (and revenue return for such investment), but such financial matters will be for a future decision.

- 5.2 Equality Impact Assessment has found no direct positive or negative impacts.
- 5.3 An Environmental Impact Assessment has found no direct negative or positive implications arising from the recommendations; but the recommendations, if agreed, are a step towards potentially significant reduction in net carbon emission of the Council (future steps will be subject to future decisions, which themselves will be subject to the EIA process).

6.0 APPENDICES

- 6.1 Nil

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
	Room 12, The Grange, Ely	Richard Kay Strategic Planning Manager (01353) 616458 E-mail: richard.kay@eastcambs.gov.uk

TITLE: Review of Grant to Citizens Advice West Suffolk

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 15th November 2021

Authors: Lewis Bage, Communities and Partnerships Manager
Kerrie Wall, COVID-19 Recovery Coordinator

[W103]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To consider the outcome of a review of the grant awarded to Citizens Advice West Suffolk (CAWS) for 2021/22 and determine whether the grant be awarded for 2022/23.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 Members are asked to:

- (i) Note the review findings
- (ii) Award a grant of £46,332.06 to CAWS for a Service Level Agreement from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2024

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council currently provides grant funding (through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to CAWS to provide free, confidential, impartial and independent advice to enable local residents to deal with a wide range of issues, including benefits, housing, money advice, employment, consumer, relationships, taxation and many more.

3.2 In 2021/22 a grant of £23,166.03 was awarded to CAWS.

3.3 The grant awarded for 2021/22 is not guaranteed to CAWS beyond 31st March 2022. A decision to award a grant is undertaken on an annual basis.

4.0 REVIEW

4.1 The Council is committed to ensuring that all residents have access to services that meet their needs. It is recognised that the district is evolving as well as dealing with the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and therefore it is essential that services are in place to effectively meet the needs of communities, in particular those that are most vulnerable. This review is to determine whether a future grant to CAWS will effectively meet the aims of the Council to deliver these required services and to ensure that the approach taken by the Council is the most cost effective and that best value is being achieved.

4.3 A full copy of the Review is located at Appendix 1 of this report.

5.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

Two options have been identified and presented in the format of an Options Appraisal (included in the Review at Appendix 1 of this report).

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 To ensure that all residents in the district receive the help and advice they need, and for the reasons set out in the Review (Appendix 1) and Option 1 of the Options Appraisal included in the Review, Members are recommended to enter into an SLA with CAWS from 1st April 2022 until 31st March 2024 using the existing SLA criteria.
- 6.2 The Council endeavours to further develop its outreach advice and support methods, which currently include home visits and community hubs. The Council is in the process of launching a district-wide outreach advice and support service that will be delivered through the Council's Community Advice vehicle. The vehicle will serve residents throughout the district, including the areas served by CAWS.
- 6.3 It is recommended that a review of the Service Level Agreement be carried out during 2023/24 which will consider the impacts of the Council's evolving outreach advice and support service.
- 6.4 The outputs of the 2021/22 Service Level Agreement are due to be provided to ECDC from CAWS in April 2022 as part of CAWS' performance monitoring requirements. Once these figures have been received, they will be added to the 2022-24 SLA and used as the baselines for 2022/23. Members are making a decision on the award of a grant to CAWS, and not signing off the SLA.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The SLA for 2022/23-2023/24 will cost £46,332.06 and will be funded from resources in the Communities & Partnerships budget.
- 7.2 Equality Impact Assessment attached at Appendix 2.
- 7.3 There are no positive or negative carbon impact implications arising.

8.0 APPENDICES

- 8.1 Appendix 1 - Review of SLA Provided to CAWS
Appendix 2 - Equality Impact Assessment

Background Documents

Location

Room F021,
The Grange

Contact Officer

Lewis Bage
Communities and Partnerships Manager
(01353) 665555
E-mail: lewis.bage@eastcambs.gov.uk
Kerrie Wall
COVID-19 Recovery Coordinator
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REVIEW OF GRANT PROVIDED TO CITIZENS ADVICE WEST SUFFOLK (CAWS)

AIM OF REVIEW

The Council is committed to ensuring that all residents have access to services that meet their needs. It is recognised that the district is evolving as well as dealing with the impacts of COVID-19 and therefore it is essential that services are in place to effectively meet the needs of communities, in particular those that are most vulnerable.

This review is to determine whether a future grant to CAWS is effectively meeting the aims of the Council to deliver these required services and to ensure that the approach taken by the Council is the most cost effective and that best value is being achieved.

BACKGROUND

The Council currently provides grant funding through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to CAWS to provide free, confidential, impartial and independent advice to enable local residents to deal with a wide range of issues, including benefits, housing, money advice, employment, consumer, relationships, taxation and many more. The nature of the assistance provided will depend on a client's needs.

In 2020/21 a grant of £23,166.03 was awarded to CAWS.

This grant is not guaranteed to CAWS beyond 2020/21. A decision to award a grant is undertaken on an annual basis.

REVIEW SCOPE

This review will:

- Identify services included in the SLA
- Identify similar or identical services to those listed within the SLA that are delivered by other organisations to East Cambridgeshire communities
- Assess volume and demand for services outlined in the SLA (using SLA monitoring information)
- Consider value for money based on SLA monitoring information
- Develop an options appraisal to outline the advantages and disadvantages of options available to the Council
- Identify funding to support delivery of best possible service to residents

SERVICES WITHIN THE CAWS SLA

The SLA requires CAWS to provide assisted information and general help (as defined by the Advice Quality Standard) on topics including consumer advice, money advice, welfare benefits, employment, housing, family and personal matters, taxes, immigration and nationality, health and education.

Assisted information is a service in which staff are available to help clients access information, and to identify where a client needs further information or advice. General help is diagnosing a client's problems, giving information and explaining options, identifying further action a client can take, and, giving basic assistance such as filling in forms, helping a client draft letters, and

contacting third parties to seek information on the client's behalf. Where necessary for a particular client, the service will also include contacting a third party to negotiate on the client's behalf.

The service covered by the SLA does not include casework as defined by the Advice Quality Standard i.e. with casework, the service provider takes responsibility for further action, whereas with a general help service, the client retains responsibility for the case. Casework also includes representing a client at appeal proceedings where necessary, which general help does not.

In addition to the above, the SLA monitors the following:

- Participation in local campaigns resulting in better outcomes for East Cambs residents
- Match ECDC funding pound for pound using ECDC core grant to lever in additional match funding from other sources
- Development of face-to-face outreach work outside of main office
- Recruitment and training of volunteers to provide service delivery
- Research and campaigning work influencing local and national policies
- Provision of a number of methods of engagement including face-to-face, email, letter, telephone and digital engagement platforms.

SIMILAR SERVICES PROVIDED BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The majority of services provided by CAWS in East Cambs as part of the SLA are also provided by the Council. In recent years, the Council has evolved to meet the changing needs of residents in order to provide full, holistic services. In April 2020, the Council's Housing department was rebranded as Housing and Community Advice as the Council recognised the significant changes that the department had made over a number of years.

The Council's Housing and Advice service currently includes five officers who have completed parts 1 and 2 of the Community Money Advice (CMA) Level 3 Award in Generalist Debt Advice, and while local authorities are excluded from the legal requirement to be authorised for most credit-related regulated activities, including credit broking, debt counselling and debt adjusting, the entire Housing and Community Advice team is scheduled to complete the Financial Conduct Authority Compliance Course provided by the Institute of Money Advisors (IMA), however due to COVID-19 this training has been delayed.

The Council's Housing and Advice team is made up of officers possessing both basic and specialist knowledge on a number of topics and are fully equipped to deliver varying levels of advice. Any clients seeking support beyond the team's current remit are signposted to appropriate agencies, examples may include specialist pension advice and complex legal or education related matters. The team employs officers who have specific knowledge to assist with specialist matters such as settled status, small claims, fuel debts and mediation. The team also provide mediation services including: workplace, tenancy, medical, commercial, neighbourhood, family relationship, team and complaints mediation.

The following list outlines the breadth of advice topics dealt with by the Housing and Advice team:

- Debt such as council tax arrears, water supply arrears and fuel debts, it is able to carry out income and expenditure assessments and devise personal budget plans
- Taxes

- Family and personal matters such as parental evictions, child maintenance and support payments, relationship advice, mediation and divorce
- Education related advice such as school issues, grants and loans, free school meal entitlement, admissions and appeals and transport to school
- Benefits advice such as help filling in forms, housing benefit, Personal Independence Payments enquiries, income support, allowances, budgeting support and advice for Universal Credit applications and Digital assistance
- Employment such as contracts, grievances, terms and conditions of employment, tribunals and redundancies
- Consumer advice such as issues relating to buying goods or services, building repairs and improvements, faulty goods, complaints, fraud, scams and private sales
- Legal such as drafting letters on behalf of residents, boundary disputes, small claims, personal injury and legal advice relating to housing issues under housing law
- Limited immigration advice including rights to reside and settled status, Brexit related matters and immigration housing rights and eligibility
- Health matters including referrals into residential care homes, enquiries relating to residential care homes, mental health, counselling and private health care
- Pension advice including general pension advice (such as options available and advising when people can take their pension), personal pensions, tax implications and assistance with complaints
- Financial Skills such as budgeting and money management, advice regarding loans and debt management companies, and financial capability advice
- Housing including rent arrears, recovery of deposits, right to buy, homelessness, planning issues, landlord issues, anti-social behavior, illegal evictions)

The Council has a track record for delivering against the needs of its residents and this can be evidenced through its approach to multi-agency community hubs, drop-in services and the establishment of referral pathways. The Council's Housing and Advice webpages are frequently updated providing live links to a range of both internal and external support available to residents.

During 2020/21, the Council's Housing and Community Advice service assisted 1,358 customers with Housing and Housing Benefit related queries. Housing Benefit queries included copying documents, providing explanation letters and dealing with payment enquiries. The Council provided digital assistance residents and assisted residents with Council Tax queries, Housing Benefit queries, UC applications and PIP applications.

The Council has led on the establishment and development of community hubs in Ely, Littleport, Stretham and Earith Traveller Site. In addition to the community hubs, the Housing and Community Advice team has now obtained a Community Hub vehicle that will bring the resources and support of the team and external partners into the community every day.

The Council works jointly with organisations that provide specific support such as CGL (drug and alcohol) and P3 (floating support). The Council's Energy Efficiency Officer (part-time) works closely with the Housing & Community Advice Team; this enables advice and support to be provided to those in need. The Council participates in local campaigns (such as Eyes and Ears, Scams Awareness, Prevent and White Ribbon) and attracts external funding into the district.

During the first year of the Council's Housing service formally becoming the Housing and Community Advice team on 1st April 2020, residents from 24 parishes were assisted. Benefits, employment and housing related matters were the most common issues dealt with.

Most people accessing the service were from Ely, Littleport and Soham. The majority of CAWS's East Cambs clients came from Woodditton, Burwell, Fordham and Isleham.

This table compares the number of people provided with advice by CAWS and the Council's Housing and Community Advice service during 2020/21 from the wards most served by CAWS.

Ward	No. of unique clients provided with advice by CAWS in 2020/21	No. of unique clients provided with advice by ECDC's Housing and Community Advice department in 2020/21
Burwell	72	25
Fordham & Isleham	75	37
Woodditton	80	5

PERFORMANCE, VOLUME AND DEMAND FOR SERVICES

In 2020/21, CAWS provided advice on a wide range of topics to 312 unique clients. The most common issues dealt with were benefits, debt and employment. In 2020/21, government restrictions imposed in response to COVID-19 meant that how CAWS engaged with clients changed from the previous year: 98% of people engaged with the service by telephone, letter or email compared to 42% the previous year.

In 2020/21, there were 66 volunteers supporting the service with an economic value of volunteering of £165,873. This is the amount it would have cost CAWS to employ the volunteers. Training was provided to volunteers on a range of advice topics.

A survey conducted by CAWS during 2019/20 found that 93% of clients were likely to recommend the service and 77% noted that the service helped them find a way forward. During 2020/21, 91% of CAWS clients stated that they were helped to find a way forward and 86.5% advised that they had ease of access to the service.

In 2020/21, 277 debt issues were dealt with. 42 clients were provided with general advice on debt incorporating financial capability services and 11 clients were given advice at specialist level.

150 clients had a welfare benefit issue connected with their enquiry in 2019/20. In 2020/21, this number reduced to 81. CAWS advised that this was due to benefit reviews being paused during COVID-19, and some organisations were not chasing debt payments during the pandemic and people were generally spending less, therefore there was less demand for the services.

In 2019/20, 17 of these clients required some in depth support, however this significantly increased to 43 in 2020/21. CAWS advised that this was due to a specific project that took place focusing on this that was funded by Suffolk County Council.

In 2019/20, 45 clients were supported at specialist level. This reduced to 22 in 2020/21, which CAWS advised was due to benefit reviews being paused during COVID-19 leading to less demand for the service. 13 clients were supported with rent arrears and 1 client was supported with mortgage arrears in both 2019/20 and 2020/21. In 2019/21, 6 clients were supported with council tax arrears at specialist level, which increased to 7 in 2020/21.

In 2019/20, £58,631 in income was gained for Council residents through CAWS work which could be reinvested into the local economy.

CAWS obtained funding from other sources such as MS Project, Universal Credit Help to Claim, Realising Ambitions and Lottery Community Fund to add value to the grant made by ECDC.

CAWS participated in local campaigns and in 2019/20 participated in Scams Awareness fortnight and the Big Energy Savings Week. In 2020/21, CAWS's financial capability adviser has continued to join virtual meetings of local groups to advise about energy issues in particular, as well as scams.

Client numbers show an increase in Universal Credit, employment advice and general welfare benefits issues. The majority of East Cambs clients came from Woodditton, Burwell, Fordham and Isleham.

CAWS provided support to people experiencing issues arising from Brexit including providing help to apply for pre-settled or settled status online and supported those experiencing immigration issues. From December 2020, pre-settled or settled status is needed to prove that someone has the legal right to be in the UK and are eligible to work, use the NHS and rent a home.

In addition to general help and assisted information funded by the SLA, CAWS also provide casework to East Cambs residents on matters such as benefits, debt, employment, consumer and immigration. CAWS has four Debt Relief Order (DROs) intermediaries who can submit application and also help clients when eligible to apply for charitable support to pay for bankruptcies and DROs. CAWS has a Consumer Specialist and also a Child Maintenance Support Specialist who helps clients negotiate their payments and deal with the Child Support Agency. They also have a specialist who is able to help clients with Settled Status applications. 115 debt prevention issues were dealt with in 2019/20 and 24 clients were assisted. This was 37 more issues than the previous year. In 2019/20, 17 clients were given advice at specialist level, with £151,251 of debt written off through bankruptcies and Debt Relief Orders. In 2020/21, the number of clients receiving debt advice at specialist level fell to 11, with a debt of £27,259 being managed. CAWS outlined that this reduction was due to debt collection being paused during COVID-19, so there was less demand for assistance.

CAWS offer a wide range of volunteering roles including reception work, general administration, advising, specialist case worker and trustee. They fit the volunteer role to the skill set and requirements of the individual. Each role receives full training and support throughout their time with CAWS.

Volunteers benefit from working as part of a team as it reduces social isolation and gives them a sense of belonging. Volunteers gain satisfaction from knowing that they are making a difference, giving back to society and keeping them mentally active. CAWS help to improve IT, phone, customer service, research, administration and interviewing skills. Many volunteers use the experience gained from volunteering with CAWS to demonstrate they meet the person specification on job application forms.

Some volunteers stay with CAWS for 20 years whilst others use the short-term volunteering opportunity as a stepping stone to employment. CAWS volunteers can be: students working towards their first job; mothers returning to work; law students; people looking for a career change or retired people. The majority of CAWS paid staff were originally CAWS volunteers who gained the skills and experience for their paid roles whilst volunteering.

OPTIONS APPRAISAL

This review has enabled officers to develop an options appraisal which outlines the advantages and disadvantages of options available to the Council.

Option 1: Enter into a two-year SLA with CAWS	
<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impartial and independent advice service • Minimal disruption to services • CAWS services complement and adds value to other advice services provided by ECDC and other organisations. • A two-year SLA provides CAWS the stability to explore other income streams and provides ECDC sufficient time to embed and evaluate the effectiveness of its enhanced outreach advice services • No reputational damage to ECDC • Fixed cost of £46,332.06 • We are yet to see the full economic impacts of COVID-19 (e.g. furlough scheme coming to an end), therefore demand for CAWS services are expected to increase. • The location of CAWS ensures that a service is available to residents located in the south of the District where the Council's Housing and Community Advice service has not yet been fully established and therefore cannot be effectively evaluated. It remains the intention of the Council that provision will be established in the areas supported by CAWS. 	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigid performance targets reduce opportunities for flexible and innovative ways of working • There is some known duplication of services being provided by other organisations including ECDC, however due to COVID-19, planned Council provision is yet to be established and therefore their effectiveness cannot be evaluated.
Option 2: Do not enter into a SLA with CAWS	
<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other organisations such as ECDC are known to provide similar services 	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the time of writing, the Council's full outreach Community and Advice service is yet to be fully established and the Council's new Community Advice vehicle is yet to be launched, therefore the effectiveness of the bus cannot be evaluated at this time. • In 2020/21, of the areas where most CAWS East Cambs' clients came from, CAWS assisted more residents than

	<p>ECDC's Housing and Advice department.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Due to COVID-19, demand for advice services are expected to increase.• Advice provided by other organisations may not be perceived as independent.
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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) FORM

Name of Policy:	Review of Grant Provided to Citizens Advice West Suffolk (CAWS)
Lead Officer (responsible for assessment):	Lewis Bage, Communities and Partnerships Manager Kerrie Wall, COVID-19 Recovery Coordinator
Department:	Communities and Partnerships
Others Involved in the Assessment (i.e. peer review, external challenge):	
Date EIA Completed:	20 th September 2021

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

As part of any effective policy development process, it is important to consider any potential risks to those who will be affected by the policy's aims or by its implementation. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process helps us to assess the implications of our decisions on the whole community, to eliminate discrimination, tackle inequality, develop a better understanding of the community we serve, target resources efficiently, and adhere to the transparency and accountability element of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The word 'policy', in this context, includes the different things that the Council does. It includes any policy, procedure or practice - both in employment and service delivery. It also includes proposals for restructuring, redundancies and changes to service provision.

- (a) **What is the policy trying to achieve?** i.e. What is the aim/purpose of the policy? Is it affected by external drivers for change? What outcomes do we want to achieve from the policy? How will the policy be put into practice?

This review is to determine whether a future grant to CAWS will effectively meet the aims of the Council to deliver required services and to ensure that the approach taken by the Council is the most cost effective and that best value is being achieved.

- (b) **Who are its main beneficiaries?** i.e. who will be affected by the policy?

Vulnerable residents and the wider community especially in areas located close to Newmarket.

- (c) **Is the EIA informed by any information or background data (quantitative or qualitative)?** i.e. consultations, complaints, applications received, allocations/take-up, satisfaction rates, performance indicators, access audits, census data, benchmarking, workforce profile etc.

Performance information illustrating demand and use of services has been obtained to inform the proposal.

- (d) **Does this policy have the potential to cause a positive or negative impact on different groups in the community, on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics?** (please tick all that apply)

Ethnicity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Religion and Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Caring Responsibilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please explain any impact identified: i.e. What do you already know about equality impact or need? Is there any evidence that there is a higher or lower take-up by particular groups? Have there been any demographic changes or trends locally? Are there any barriers to accessing the policy or service?

Performance information illustrating demand for services is outlined at Appendix 1 and impacts are detailed at Option 1 of Options Appraisal at Appendix 1.

- | | |
|---|------------------|
| (e) Does the policy have a differential impact on different groups? | YES/NO/Na |
| (f) Is the impact <i>adverse</i> (i.e. less favourable)? | YES/NO/Na |
| (g) Does it have the potential to disadvantage or discriminate unfairly against any of the groups in a way that is unlawful? | YES/NO/Na |
- (h) How have you engaged stakeholders in gathering evidence or testing the policy proposals?** Who was involved, how and when where they engaged? Does the evidence show potential for differential impact? How will you mitigate any negative impacts? Where there is the potential for an adverse impact that cannot be addressed immediately, these should be highlighted in your recommendations and objectives at the end of the EIA.

Review findings have been shared and CAWS have had the opportunity to feedback and comment. As part of the Service Level Agreement, CAWS is required to provide performance monitoring data which is used to evidence of the level of demand for services. The Council’s Housing and Community Advice team that also provide similar services has been consulted on the review findings and recommendation.

* The Consultation Register is available to assist staff in consulting with the Council’s stakeholders.

(i) Summarise the findings of your research and/or consultation (please use a separate sheet if necessary).

Findings detailed at Appendix 1

(j) What are the risks associated with the policy in relation to differential impact and unmet needs/requirements? i.e. reputation, financial, breach of legislation, service exclusion, lack of resources, lack of cooperation, insufficient budget etc.

Details included within Options Appraisal at Appendix 1

(k) Use the information gathered in the earlier stages of your EIA to make a judgement on whether there is the potential for the policy to result in unlawful discrimination or a less favourable impact on any group in the community, and what changes (if any) need to be made to the policy.

Option 1:	No major change - the evidence shows that the policy is robust and no potential for discrimination.	x
Option 2:	Adjust the policy - to remove barriers or to better promote equality.	
Option 3:	Continue the policy - despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunity to promote equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not unlawfully discriminate.	
Option 4:	Stop and remove the policy – if the policy shows adverse effects that cannot be justified.	

(I) Where you have identified the potential for adverse impact, what action can be taken to remove or mitigate against the potential for the policy to unlawfully discriminate or impact less favourably on one or more communities in a way that cannot be justified? Include key activities that are likely to have the greatest impact (max. 6). Identified actions should be specified in detail for the first year but there may be further longer term actions which need to be considered. To ensure that your actions are more than just a list of good intentions, include for each: the person responsible for its completion, a timescale for completion, any cost implications and how these will be addressed. It is essential that you incorporate these actions into your service plans.

The recommendation ensures that services remain in place at a time and place where required, as outlined at Appendix 1.

This completed EIA will need to be countersigned by your Head of Service. **Please forward completed and signed forms to the Principal HR Officer.**

All completed EIAs will need to be scrutinised and verified by the Council’s Equal Opportunities Working Group (EOWG) and published on the Council’s Intranet to demonstrate to local people that the Council is actively engaged in tackling potential discrimination and improving its practices in relation to equalities. Please be aware that you may be asked to attend a half-an-hour session to summarise the findings of the EIA to the Scrutiny and Verification panel.

Signatures:

Completing Officer:	Lewis Bage Kerrie Wall	Date:	20.09.2021 20.09.2021
Head of Service:	_____	Date:	_____

TITLE: Review of Grant to Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire

Committee: Operational Services Committee

Date: 15th November 2021

Author: Lewis Bage, Communities and Partnerships Manager
Kerrie Wall, COVID-19 Recovery Coordinator

[W104]

1.0 ISSUE

1.1 To consider the outcome of a review of the grant awarded to Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire (VCAEC) and the outcome of a procurement exercise for the provision of Voluntary Sector Support Services.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i) Note the review findings
- ii) Note the findings of a procurement exercise for the provision of Voluntary Sector Support Services
- iii) Award a grant to VCAEC for a Service Level Agreement from 1st April 2022 until 31st March 2024 as set out at 6.0 and 7.0.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Council currently provides grant funding through a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to VCAEC to provide a 'one stop shop' which delivers quality services, through volunteers, to local people; and advice and information to voluntary and community groups and volunteers. It is an umbrella organisation providing generic infrastructure support to voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations within East Cambridgeshire.

3.2 In 2021/22 a grant of £19,928 was awarded to VCAEC.

3.3 This grant is not guaranteed to VCAEC beyond 2021/22. A decision to award a grant is undertaken on an annual basis.

3.4 A review of the grant awarded to VCAEC was carried out during 2020/21 and was shared with this committee in November 2020. The review highlighted the performance of VCAEC over a period of time.

4.0 REVIEW

4.1 The Council is committed to ensuring that all residents have access to services that meet their needs. It is recognised that the district is evolving as well as dealing with the impacts of COVID-19 therefore it is essential that services are in place to effectively meet the needs of communities, in particular those that are most vulnerable. A further review has been undertaken to establish whether a future grant to VCAEC will

effectively meet the aims of the Council to deliver the required services and to ensure that best value is being achieved.

- 4.3 A full copy of the Review undertaken during 2021/22 is located at Appendix 1 of this report.
- 4.4 The Council conducted a procurement exercise during 2021/22 where quotations were sought for the delivery of generic infrastructure support to voluntary and community sector organisations within East Cambridgeshire and to provide a 'one stop shop' which delivers quality services (including the delivery of a social car scheme and volunteer gardening scheme), through volunteers, to local people; and advice and information to voluntary and community groups and volunteers.
- 4.5 The services sought through the procurement exercise are detailed below:
- Providing networking and training opportunities through the delivery of training and networking events
 - Supporting voluntary and community groups through assistance with matters such as account management, policies, procedures, governance and safeguarding; and through the sharing of relevant information
 - Supporting new groups
 - Promotion of services and the sector
 - Responding to consultations on behalf of the sector and having input into policies on behalf of the sector
 - Assisting groups with funding queries, searches and applications
 - Responding to volunteer enquiries and seek to find suitable placements for prospective volunteers
 - Attending multi-agency meetings representing the voice of the sector
 - Conducting surveys of clients to inform service delivery and carry out research into unmet social needs
 - Providing volunteering opportunities for local people through the delivery of a social car scheme and gardening programme
 - Providing support to Think Communities approaches and initiatives
 - Providing support to COVID-19 recovery efforts
- 4.6 One response to the procurement exercise was received, from VCAEC, who scored 82 out of 100.

5.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

Two options have been identified and presented in the format of an Options Appraisal (Appendix 2).

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 For the reasons set out in the 2021/22 Review (Appendix 1) and Option 1 of the Options Appraisal (Appendix 2), Members are recommended to enter into an SLA with VCAEC from 1st April 2022 until 31st March 2024. For information, a copy of the SLA is located at Appendix 3. The SLA will include measures for reporting against performance including presentations from VCAEC to the Council's Operational Services Committee three times a year and quarterly meetings between VCAEC, Director of Operations and the Communities and Partnerships Manager to benchmark performance against the SLA.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The new SLA will cost £39,530 and is funded from resources in the Communities & Partnerships budget.

7.1 Equality Impact Assessment attached at Appendix 4.

7.2 There are no positive or negative carbon impacts or implications arising.

8.0 APPENDICES

- 8.1 Appendix 1 – VCAEC SLA Review 2021-22
Appendix 2 – Options Appraisal
Appendix 3 – Service Level Agreement 2022-24
Appendix 4 – Equality Impact Assessment

<u>Background Documents</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
	The Grange	Lewis Bage Communities and Partnerships Manager (01353) 665555 E-mail: lewis.bage@eastcambs.gov.uk Kerrie Wall COVID-19 Recovery Coordinator (01353) 665555 E-mail: kerrie.wall@eastcambs.gov.uk

REVIEW OF GRANT PROVIDED TO VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ACTION EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE (VCAEC)

AIM OF REVIEW

The Council is committed to ensuring that all residents have access to services that meet their needs. It is recognised that the district is evolving as well as dealing with the impacts of COVID-19 while moving through the recovery phase of the pandemic. Therefore, it is essential that services are in place to effectively meet the needs of communities, in particular those that are most vulnerable.

This review is to determine whether a future grant to VCAEC would effectively meet the aims of the Council to deliver these required services and to ensure that the approach taken by the Council is the most cost-effective and that best value is being achieved.

BACKGROUND

The Council currently provides grant funding, through a Service Level Agreement (SLA), to VCAEC to provide a 'one stop shop' which delivers quality services to local people through volunteers and advice and information to voluntary and community groups and volunteers. It is an umbrella organisation providing generic infrastructure support to voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations within East Cambridgeshire.

In 2021/22 a grant of £19,928 was awarded to VCAEC.

This grant is not guaranteed to VCAEC beyond 2021/22. A decision to award a grant is undertaken on an annual basis.

A review of the grant awarded to VCAEC was carried out during 2020/21 and was shared with this committee in November 2020. The review highlighted the performance of VCAEC over a period of time.

REVIEW SCOPE

This review will:

- Identify the services included in the SLA
- Identify similar or identical services to those listed within the SLA that are delivered by other organisations to East Cambridgeshire communities
- Assess volume and demand for services outlined in the SLA
- Evaluate performance and the quality of services provided by VCAEC
- Develop an options appraisal to outline the advantages and disadvantages of options available to the Council
- Identify funding to support delivery of best possible service to residents

SERVICES WITHIN THE VCAEC SLA

The SLA includes the following services:

- Providing networking and training opportunities through the delivery of training and networking events
- Supporting voluntary and community groups through assistance with matters such as account management, policies, procedures, governance and safeguarding; and through the sharing of relevant information
- Supporting new groups
- Promotion of VCAEC services and the sector

- Responding to consultations on behalf of the sector and having input into policies on behalf of the sector
- Assisting groups with funding queries, searches and applications
- Responding to volunteer enquiries and seek to find suitable placements for prospective volunteers
- Attending multi-agency meetings representing the voice of the sector
- Conducting surveys of clients to inform service delivery and carry out research into unmet social needs
- Providing volunteering opportunities for local people through the delivery of a social car scheme and gardening programme
- Providing support to Cambridgeshire Local approaches and initiatives
- Providing support to COVID-19 recovery efforts

SIMILAR SERVICES PROVIDED BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS

In September 2016, CCC began commissioning Support Cambridgeshire to provide CVS infrastructure support throughout the county, including East Cambs. Some of these services overlap with VCAEC's including training and networking; support and advice to CVS organisations; as well as representation and voice. Support Cambridgeshire also provide volunteer services however not in the way VCAEC do (who will seek to match a volunteer up with a role and provide them advice and information). Support Cambridgeshire promote alternative methods of volunteering, such as Timebanks. They provide factsheets, toolkits and training courses. There are also national organisations that advertise volunteering opportunities online such as Do-It, Reach Volunteering and Charity Job. There are a variety of social car schemes operating locally in East Cambs that cover specific villages that use volunteer drivers and receive a subsidy from CCC, such as The Three Rivers Car Scheme and the Burwell Village Help Scheme, however these are specific to certain parishes and not district wide. Community transport schemes operating in East Cambs such as ESACT (part of FACT) are not operated by local volunteers and use paid drivers. Local Timebanks may provide opportunities for individuals to assist others in the community with tasks such as gardening however coverage is limited to the area where schemes are operating. The Council do not receive performance monitoring information from these organisations therefore this review cannot comment on the volume or quality of services.

PERFORMANCE, VOLUME AND DEMAND FOR SERVICES

During 2020/2021, VCAEC's activity levels and demand for services were severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. VCAEC continued to offer a basic level of service but many voluntary organisations that VCAEC support were closed. VCAEC provided a community car service throughout lockdown periods and the Helping Hands gardening scheme operated outside of the first and second lockdown.

When comparing end of year performance monitoring data between the years of 2016/2017 and 2020/21, there has been some decrease in CVS infrastructure services provided by VCAEC, as illustrated in the table below:

Function	2016/17 Output	2019/20 Output	2020/21 Output
General CVS enquiries dealt with	122	108	87
Training courses provided	4	3	1
Groups that were assisted with development work	43	29	14

requiring longer term engagement			
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The decreases between the years of 2016/17 and 2019/20 may be due to the fact that CCC commissioned other organisations via the Support Cambridgeshire contract to deliver similar CVS support services in East Cambridgeshire. VCAEC have recognised that there has been a decrease in CVS infrastructure related enquiries to assist with and since 2019/20 has been proactively seeking to engage with community groups in other ways, an example of this is through the delivery of parish council surgeries. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, VCAEC were not able to implement this as planned. There are 140 voluntary and community groups that are members of VCAEC, which is a decrease of 5 compared to 2016/17 and 2019/20. In 2016, VCAEC also stopped receiving funding from CCC and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) (which equated to approximately 50% of VCAEC's core funding received from external agencies). At the time, VCAEC informed ECDC that they would still be able to provide all of the services within the SLA and did not envisage a reduction in service delivery. In 2020, VCAEC advised that while they have been able to continue providing all of the services outlined in the SLA, such a considerable reduction in funding and resources (including staff) has meant a slight decrease in volume of some services. The decrease in performance was highlighted to Members in the 2020/21 review.

VCAEC undertook a survey amongst its membership during 2020 that was aimed at understanding how local voluntary and community sector organisations have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and to identify what support they are likely to need from VCAEC in the future.

When comparing end of year performance monitoring data between the years of 2016/17 and 2020/21, there was a decrease in the number of Do-It (volunteering) website enquiries dealt with. However, in 2019/20, VCAEC dealt with 172 volunteer enquiries which may indicate that volunteers are accessing other volunteer information services in other ways; in fact, there was an increase of 14 known volunteer placements when comparing the two years. In 2020, VCAEC advised that the Do-It website was receiving less traffic than in 2016 which they advise is due to less investment and promotion. They also advised that many, especially larger, organisations are increasingly advertising volunteer opportunities directly through other means, such as via their own websites. VCAEC advised that as less people are using the Do-It website, then their volunteer support services have become more important and valuable to the sector. There were further reductions in the number of volunteer services provided by VCAEC during 2020/21 which VCAEC advised was as a result of the impacts of COVID-19. For example, in 2020/21 there were 117 volunteer enquiries responded to and 85 Do-It enquiries handled. Despite this, VCAEC were able to successfully place 52 known volunteers into placements.

Due to VCAEC no longer receiving funding from CCC or the CCG, they have had to focus on ensuring the financial sustainability of all of their services to maintain their existing services and be resilient in the event of any future loss of third-party funding. VCAEC is able to generate some income via their projects delivered by local volunteers (CCC provide a 13p for every mile driven by the social car scheme and end users of the Helping Hands gardening scheme are asked to contribute a suggested voluntary donation of £25 per hour). The gardening scheme costs approximately £30,000 per annum to run and, without voluntary, donations it would not be viable. Although VCAEC suggest that users of the scheme pay a voluntary contribution, they assess all gardening jobs on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the circumstances of the service user thus resulting in some service users not contributing any voluntary donation, some paying a proportion of the suggested amount and others happy to pay the full voluntary donation. In August 2020, VCAEC advised ECDC that larger jobs that require considerable time and resources may not be able to be carried out without any voluntary donation from the recipient of the service, although in these circumstances VCAEC advised that a part job may be able to be arranged.

Demand for these services increased between the years 2016/17 and 2019/20, as the figures below illustrate:

Scheme	Measure	2016/17 Output	2019/20 Output	2020/21 Output
Social Car Scheme	Number of car scheme journeys	3,471	7,342	2,704
	No of volunteer driver hours	7,409	8,890	2,942
Helping Hands Gardening Scheme	No of volunteer hours worked	6,565	7,224	1,896
	No of referrals/customers	209	276	83
	No of tasks completed	303	327	133

The additional demand for services between the years of 2016/17 and 2019/20 resulted in more volunteer hours being provided, which led to an increase in social return on investment (£12 x number of volunteer hours provided). In September 2020, VCAEC advised that approximately 25,000 volunteer hours are provided each year through the delivery of their services (through office-based volunteers, volunteer drivers, volunteer gardeners and trustees) equating to a £300,000 social return on investment.

2019/20's surveys of the car scheme and gardening scheme, also suggested that the services remained in high demand and are valued by end users. The car scheme survey identified that almost all users thought the service was either 'vital' or 'important', that the scheme provided respite for carers, and that users saw it as a cheaper alternative to other methods of transport. The car scheme is aimed at East Cambs residents that are elderly, frail, disabled, isolated or experiencing financial hardship.

The Helping Hands survey stated that more resources were required to expand the scope of the service and increase equipment for the team. All respondents advised that the service was either 'vital' or 'important' and 95% indicated that they would use the service again. The gardening service is aimed at people who are unable to tend to their gardens themselves due to age, illness or disability. The popularity of these schemes is evidenced by the rise in usage of the services. The gardening scheme has the resources to deal with heavy-duty jobs where gardens that may have been left unmaintained long-term over long periods of time.

Not only do the car scheme and gardening scheme benefit the end users, there are many benefits to the volunteers providing these services including enhancing confidence, employability skills, communication skills and giving them a sense of purpose. Many of VCAEC's volunteers are long-term unemployed, socially excluded or have mental health issues.

The 2020/21 review outlined that there are other organisations providing similar services in East Cambs, however, despite this, VCAEC's services provided by volunteers remain in increasingly high demand and are valued by users.

The 2020/21 review highlighted that VCAEC had anticipated that the transport and gardening services would continue to remain in high demand however the 2020/21 end-of-year performance monitoring report by VCAEC detailed a reduction in output across both the transport and gardening services due to other work streams being prioritised in response to COVID-19, less volunteers being available and also due to there being a significant reduction in face to face medical appointments during this time, especially as approximately 80% of appointments for the car scheme are medical related.

In October 2020, VCAEC advised that they could potentially redeploy some of their volunteers to respond to COVID-19 demands if called upon and assist with requests such as medication and shopping. VCAEC advised that are currently exploring longer term opportunities to assist local communities with the coordination of volunteers to assist during COVID-19 and beyond. They advised that they aspire to recruit a local bank of volunteers that could be called upon to assist with

local initiatives and events. In addition to their regular activities, VCAEC has assisted in local COVID-19 efforts by issuing calls to action to volunteers, providing guidance and safeguarding advice to local mutual aid groups, and assisting with the delivery of the East Cambs COVID-19 Hub magazines using local volunteers. VCAEC has advised the Council that they have had to adapt their priorities in response to COVID-19. Examples of VCAEC's areas of focus now include supporting people to get to vaccination appointments, managing finances to ensure the long-term sustainability of VCAEC and recruiting and supporting new volunteers. VCAEC, in response to the pandemic, increased their online activity to remain in contact with groups and now have over 750 followers across their social media platforms.

Additionally, in September 2021 VCAEC proactively engaged with mutual aid groups, parish councils and the district council by attending the Parish and Community Forum to discuss the future of VCAEC. Likewise, VCAEC proactively approached the Council to offer support in the form of their transport scheme at a local vaccination event.

OPTIONS APPRAISAL

This review has enabled officers to develop an options appraisal which outlines the advantages and disadvantages of options available to the Council.

Option 1: Enter into a two-year SLA with VCAEC	
<p>Advantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that there are voluntary support services in place to support communities including the most vulnerable. • A two-year agreement provides VCAEC the stability to explore other income streams. • No reputational damage to ECDC. • Fixed cost of £39,530. • No impacts on VCAEC's member groups, volunteers and end users reliant on VCAEC services. • Currently more than one organisation for East Cambs community and voluntary sector groups and volunteers to access the support they require. • The SLA incorporates support towards COVID-19 recovery efforts and Think Communities approaches to add value to efforts in these areas. • The SLA includes reporting measures that provide opportunities for the Council and VCAEC to work together to understand any matters arising, especially relating to the impacts of COVID-19 on the community and voluntary sector. • The market has been tested and a procurement process has been conducted with VCAEC being the only organisation to submit a bid. 	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some duplication of services as other organisations are delivering similar services. • Rigid performance targets may limit opportunities for flexible and innovative ways of working. • Over the past 5 years, there has been a decrease in the volume of VCAEC's infrastructure and volunteer support activity, as outlined in recent reviews. Most recently, services have been impacted by COVID-19.
Option 2: Do not enter into a SLA with VCAEC	
<p>Advantages:</p>	<p>Disadvantages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no guarantee that other providers can match the services provided by VCAEC. • Reputational damage to ECDC. • May impact VCAEC member groups, local community and voluntary sector, volunteers and end users reliant on VCAEC services.

**SERVICE LEVEL
AGREEMENT**

Between

East Cambridgeshire District Council

&

Voluntary and Community Action East Cambs

Commencing on 1 April 2022 for a period of 2 YEARS

DRAFT

The Council agrees funding for the provision of core services by Voluntary & Community Action East Cambs as set out in this agreement.

INTRODUCTION

This Service Level Agreement requires Voluntary & Community Action East Cambs to:

- Provide ‘a ‘one stop shop’ which delivers quality services (including the delivery of a social car scheme and volunteer gardening scheme) through volunteers, to local people; and advice and information to voluntary and community groups and volunteers’.
- Act as an umbrella organisation providing generic infrastructure support to voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations within East Cambridgeshire.

The targets funded by this agreement are set out at Appendix 1.

Further information can be found in Voluntary & Community Action East Cambs’s latest Annual Report.

A formal review of this Agreement will take place during 2023/24.

PART 1 – GENERAL CONDITIONS

1.1 PARTIES

This is an agreement between the East Cambs District Council (hereinafter called “the council”) and Voluntary & Community Action East Cambs (hereinafter called “VCAEC”).

1.2 OBJECT OF AGREEMENT

The council wishes to support the services of VCAEC for the purpose of providing an information and advice service for community and voluntary groups and as part of this, provide advice and information to volunteers within the District.

1.3 PERIOD OF THE AGREEMENT

The agreement will commence on 1st April 2022 and shall cease to have effect on 31st March 2024 unless terminated by either party giving twelve weeks’ notice in writing (or less by mutual agreement), where one or other party is unable to carry out the terms of this agreement.

The council reserves the right to terminate the agreement or amend the amounts payable in 3.1 if the SLA funded targets set out in Appendix 1 are not being achieved.

1.4 THE PARTIES’ OBLIGATIONS

VCAEC agrees to provide the services specified in Part 2 of this agreement (Service Objectives and Specifications) and comply with the monitoring arrangements in Part 4 of this agreement (Monitoring Arrangements)

The council agrees to make the grant payments specified in Part 3 of this agreement (Financial and Resourcing arrangements) subject to attainment of the SLA funded targets set out in Appendix 1.

These services will be subject to a formal review to respond to changing needs in the community, in accordance with Clause 1.15. A review of this Agreement will take place during 2023/24.

1.5 STATUS OF AGREEMENT

It is not the intention of either party that this agreement shall be legally binding and therefore neither party shall have any liability to the other for any failure to observe the terms of this agreement.

1.6 STATUS OF SERVICE PROVIDER

In carrying out this agreement, VCAEC is acting in its own right as an independent organisation, and not as an agent of the Council. Any specifically contracted project work will be negotiated separately and will not operate under the specific conditions of this agreement.

1.7 MANAGEMENT

Responsibility for the management of VCAEC is vested in the Board of Trustees of the Charity, the membership and operation of which is laid down by a constitution.

1.8 PARTIES' REPRESENTATIVES

The council and VCAEC will each appoint a contact officer.

The role of the council's contact officer is to:

- Be the initial point of contact within the council for VCAEC
- Inform VCAEC of any issues which may have an effect on the implementation of the service provision in this agreement
- Provide information, advice and support to VCAEC as reasonably required
- Set up monitoring meetings with VCAEC's contact officer to consider the information set out in Part 4 of this agreement
- Inform VCAEC of any change in the council's contact officer.

The role of VCAEC contact officer is to provide the information required in Part 4 of this agreement and to inform the council's contact officer, in writing, if there is:

- a proposal by VCAEC to change or reduce the core services set out in Part 2 of this agreement;
- any amount to be taken into account under section 3.2 (this must be notified by 1st November for the following financial year)
- a major change to VCAEC's financial budget;
- a change to VCAEC's constitution; or
- a change in VCAEC's contact officer.

The parties' contact officers will be NAME OF INDIVIDUAL, JOB TITLE of the Council and NAME OF INDIVIDUAL, JOB TITLE, VCAEC.

1.9 CONFIDENTIALITY

The Council accepts that the VCAEC offers a confidential service and that all matters raised by individual clients are kept confidential, in line with Data Protection and GDPR requirements.

1.10 STAFFING

Paid and volunteer staff will be recruited and selected with full regard to an equal opportunities policy and procedures approved by VCAEC.

Paid staff will be employed and remunerated with full regard to VCAEC guidelines.

1.11 QUALITY ASSURANCE

VCAEC undertakes to operate the quality assurance systems described in Part 2 of this agreement.

1.12 HEALTH AND SAFETY

VCAEC shall have regard to the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (as amended) and any other Acts, Regulations, Directives or Orders etc as applicable about health and safety.

1.13 INSURANCES

VCAEC will arrange adequate insurances to cover such liabilities as may arise in the course of VCAEC's work. VCAEC will provide evidence of what insurance policy they have in place before entering into an agreement with the Council, ensuring this is adequate for the work they will undertake.

1.14 DISPUTE RESOLUTION

If either party considers the other to be in breach of their duties under this agreement or has a grievance about some aspect of the agreement's operation, the parties shall make every effort to resolve the issue through joint discussions. Where this fails:

- the party wishing to make the complaint should provide the other with written details, including proposals for resolving it;
- a written response should be sent to the initiating party within 14 days;
- if the response is not considered to resolve the issue, the initiating party may request in writing to the contact officer a meeting of the authorised signatories (or their successor);
- where possible the meeting should be held within 14 days of the contact officer receiving the request;
- where the meeting does not resolve the complaint, the issue should be considered by VCAEC's Board of Trustees or the relevant council committee as a confidential item. Any submissions should be sent in advance to the other party and representation permitted;
- If either party is dissatisfied with the outcome as notified to it in writing within seven days of the meeting, arbitration can be requested and this will take place with a mutually acceptable external party.

1.15 REVIEW

This agreement may require amendments in the light of experience of implementing its terms.

A formal review of this Agreement will take place during 2023/24. Any amendment to the service specification under this SLA will need to be negotiated and agreed in writing by both parties.

1.16 RENEWAL

This entire agreement will be subject to a formal review during 2023/24.

1.17 TERMINATION

The agreement can be terminated by either party giving the other party twelve weeks' notice in writing (or less by mutual agreement). Notice can be served if delivered, posted or emailed to the contact officer.

PART 2 – SERVICE OBJECTIVES AND SPECIFICATIONS

2.1 AIMS OF THE SERVICE

This vision is:-

‘VCAEC will be widely respected as a force for good at the heart of the community, providing a ‘one stop shop’ which delivers quality services, through volunteers, to local people; and advice and information to voluntary and community groups and volunteers.’

To support delivery of this vision the Trustees have agreed the following as headings for “strategic aims”:

- A Effective Management of VCAEC
- B Direct Services
- C Brokerage
- D Marketing Volunteering
- E Develop Good Practice in Volunteering
- F Develop Volunteering Opportunities
- G Policy Response and Campaigning
- H Strategic Development of Volunteering
- J Development of Voluntary Services
- K Liaison
- L Enabling Representation
- M Strategic Partnerships

Within each strategic aim VCAEC has a set of areas of focus that have been identified in order for the overall aim to be achieved.

2.2 PRINCIPLES UNDER WHICH THE SERVICES ARE PROVIDED

VCAEC will provide an information and advice service which is:

- impartial
- Open to all regardless of race, religion, age, gender, sexuality or disability.

2.3 CORE SERVICES FUNDED UNDER THIS AGREEMENT

The service (to which the funding arrangements in Part 3 relate) offered by VCAEC is as follows:

Capacity Building – helping member organisations ensure that they have the skills, knowledge, structures and resources to realise their full potential. VCAEC will offer training as identified by its membership to support this work.

Leverage/fundraising – through providing fund raising advice to member organisations it is anticipated that considerably greater sums of money will be generated for the VCS across the District.

Performance Management - increasingly the sector will be measured on outcomes. It is acknowledged VCS organisations need to have effective monitoring and evaluation systems to record their performance.

Strategic - ensuring the voluntary sector is effectively represented through local partnerships such as the East Cambs Parish and Community Forum and relevant strategic groups.

Representational - the local VCS needs to be structured in such a way that its voice is heard to respond to major consultations, to influence policy, and to consistently raise the profile of the sector to represent the quality, quantity and effectiveness of service delivery undertaken by the sector. Forums e.g. VITAL forum (Voluntary Sector, Information, Training and Liaison), e-mails, networks and newsletters will be used to support this process.

Development - the process of research into unmet or emerging social needs in the area, and the promotion of action to meet them.

Volunteer Centre services within VCAEC – the promotion of the ‘idea’ of volunteering and best practice within all aspects of volunteering, including the delivery of a social car scheme and gardening scheme using local volunteers

VCAEC will provide support to Think Communities approaches and initiatives.

VCAEC will provide support to Covid-19 recovery efforts.

The monitoring arrangements are set out at Part 4 of this agreement and the SLA funded targets are set out at Appendix 1.

2.4 MEANS OF ACCESSING THE SERVICE

The core service shall be available:

By letter, email and to personal callers on a drop-in basis at:

Insert address here

Hours of opening:- Monday-Friday 09:00am to 14:00

*By face-to-face appointments for general help: Monday-Friday 09:00am to 14:00
(Must be a minimum of 20 hours per week)*

*For all enquiries relating to volunteering: Monday-Friday 09:00am to 14:00
(Must be a minimum of 20 hours per week)*

*For transport enquiries: Monday-Friday 09:00am to 14:00
(Must be a minimum of 12 hours per week)*

**Appointments out of these hours can be made by arrangement*.*

By telephone

General enquiries:- 01353 666166

Volunteering enquiries:- 01353 666556

Social Car Scheme:- 01353 666553

Volunteer gardening service:- 01353 666556

By Email

General enquiries:- info@VCAEC.org.uk

Volunteering enquiries:- volunteers@VCAEC.org.uk

Website:
www.VCAEC .org.uk

All these services shall be clearly advertised in the following ways:

- Yellow Pages,
- Local press, plus publishing relevant articles.
- Parish magazines and relevant local directories,
- Locally, e.g. Library, Job Centre, Citizens Advice service, G.P surgeries, Hospitals, Health Centres/Clinics/Dentist/Chiropodist, Day-Centres, Schools and Colleges, Youth Centres, Churches etc.
- At Outreach points, AGM, funding fayres and relevant promotional venues.

2.5 QUALITY ASSURANCE

VCAEC operates the core service to the requirements of a quality standard.

All staff, both paid and voluntary, are required to undergo relevant training in order to achieve their competence level to a standard acceptable to the Board of Trustees, and compatible with the aims, principles, and membership standards of VCAEC.

2.6 SERVICE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVEMENT

VCAEC has an annual strategic plan, the monitoring of which and the results of audits lead to innovation and improvements in its service.

VCAEC will work to secure additional funding in order to meet unmet needs for advice amongst the diverse local communities.

VCAEC will make use of clients' experiences to inform and influence the policy and delivery of other local services, and will inform the council of relevant issues.

2.7 USER FEEDBACK AND INVOLVEMENT

VCAEC will operate a procedure for representations and complaints about the service in accordance with VCAEC guidelines and shall take all reasonable steps to bring this to the attention of the users of VCAEC.

VCAEC will undertake an annual client satisfaction survey which it will make available upon request.

VCAEC will consult both clients and potential clients about service provision and opening hours.

2.8 MANAGEMENT OF THE SERVICES

The Board of Trustees is to be constituted in such a way as to encourage representation from as wide a range of local organisations as possible.

The Manager reports to the Board of Trustees at regular meetings, which are held not less than three times per year.

VCAEC will not be held responsible for any interruption in or disruption to the core services due to circumstances beyond its control.

PART 3 – FINANCIAL AND RESOURCING ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 AMOUNTS PAYABLE

The Council has agreed that the total of grants and in-kind contributions to be paid to VCAEC for the period of this agreement shall be £39,530.00

This shall be paid in four instalments: £9,882.50 paid in April 2022 (or following sign off of SLA), £9,882.50 paid in October 2022, £9,882.50 paid in April 2023 and the remainder paid in October 2023, upon receipt of all required monitoring information.

These payments will be subject to full compliance with the terms of Part 4 of this agreement and achieving the SLA funded targets set out in Appendix 1 by VCAEC. If VCAEC do not meet the SLA funded targets set out in Appendix 1, the amounts payable may be formally reviewed by the Council and the Council may amend the next payment instalment.

3.2 FUTURE AGREEMENTS

In considering extensions to this agreement, following a formal review, the only adjustments which will be made to the amount given in 3.1 are to reflect any changes made as a result of an amendment to the specified service after a formal review under 1.15.

These grants shall be construed as being sufficient to fund those core services referred to in Part 2 of this agreement, and for the purposes of this agreement are deemed to form part of VCAECs 'core funding.'

3.3 ADDITIONAL SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

Service developments and additional services over and above those supported by the core funding and described in Part 2 of this agreement, can be considered for additional funding by the Council on the understanding that the Council can offer no commitment to fund. If the Council does fund these developments or additions, such funding will not affect the core funding arrangements and shall not be taken into account when calculating the core funding grants in subsequent years.

3.4 VAT

All payments to be made under this agreement are exclusive of VAT. In the event of becoming liable for VAT during the period of the operation of this agreement, the council will enter into discussions with VCAEC with the aim of reaching a mutually acceptable outcome.

3.5 FUNDING CHANGES – NON COUNCIL FUNDING

3.5.1 VCAEC agrees to submit, to the council as part of this agreement, a copy of its approved accounts, within the meaning of the Charities Act, 1992 and 1993.

3.5.2 Where VCAEC gains a surplus of income from grants, fundraising or other sources in any one year, the council will not seek repayment of any part of the grant. VCAEC will maintain a level of reserves appropriate to meet its financial responsibilities.

3.5.3 Users of the volunteer gardening scheme can contribute a voluntary donation (and an advertised recommended voluntary hourly donation is acceptable) however the provider must ensure that all gardening jobs are assessed on a case by case basis (taking into consideration the customer's financial situation and individual circumstances) to ensure that everybody can access the service. This may result in some service users not contributing any voluntary donation, some paying a proportion of the suggested amount and others paying to the full voluntary donation.

Larger gardening jobs that require considerable time and resources may not be able to be carried out without any voluntary donation from the recipient of the service, although in these circumstances, a part job may be able to be arranged.

Users of the social car scheme can be charged to contribute towards the costs of the service received (a cost per mile is acceptable). Costs are to cover volunteer expenses such as petrol, insurance and depreciation of vehicle.

A nominal charge may be made for specialist outsourced training.

VCAEC may request a one-off membership fee.

3.5.4 The services set out at Appendix 1 funded via this SLA shall be provided free of charge to users, other than the arrangements detailed at 3.5.3.

PART 4 – MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 VCAEC should monitor and evaluate its services in accordance with the quality assurance procedures set out in 2.5 – 2.7
- 4.2 VCAEC may be subject to annual external audits on behalf of the council.
- 4.3 VCAEC will provide a copy of its Annual Report and Accounts to the council and an invitation for the council's contact officer to its Annual General Meeting.
- 4.4 VCAEC will provide a six-monthly summary of current and developing issues for the sector and its members.
- 4.5 VCAEC will attend the Council's Operational Services Committee three times per year to provide a slide show presentation to report on progress made against the 2022/24 SLA.
- 4.6 VCAEC will attend quarterly meetings with JOB TITLE and JOB TITLE to benchmark performance against the SLA funded targets at which or following which the SLA funded targets set out in Appendix 1 and payments set out in 3.1 may be revised by the Council and any amendments to this Agreement shall be noted in writing, signed on behalf of the parties and shall operate as variations to this Agreement.
- 4.7 VCAEC will provide to the Council six monthly monitoring information (see Appendix 1) and attend monitoring meetings with the Council's contact officer.
- 4.8 The timetable for these during 2022/24 will be:
 - April 2022 – agree SLA targets informed using previous year's figures as baseline measures
 - April 2022 – 1st invoice due
 - 18th October 2022 – Half Year Performance Monitoring reports due

- End of October 2022 – Annual Report and Annual Audited for the previous financial year (2021/22) and final invoice due
- End of October 2022 – release of 2nd payment upon receipt of all required information and documentation
- April 2023 – End of Year Performance Monitoring reports due
- End of April 2023 – Release of 3rd payment upon receipt of all required information and documentation and attainment of the SLA funded targets set out in Appendix 1 to the Council's satisfaction.
- 18th October 2023 – Half Year Performance Monitoring reports due
- End of October 2023 – Annual Report and Annual Audited for the previous financial year (2022/23) and final invoice due
- End of October 2023 – Release of 4th payment upon receipt of all required information and documentation and attainment of the SLA funded targets set out in Appendix 1 to the Council's satisfaction.
- 18th April 2024 - End of Year Performance Monitoring reports due.

4.9 VCAEC produces an annual business and development plan, which the Board of Trustees reviews annually, and monitors progress bi-monthly. The plan includes, amongst other things:

- a strategy for promoting VCAEC within the community
- a funding strategy; and
- an equality policy.

4.10 VCAEC will provide information reasonably required by the council, subject to those requirements not being in breach of clients' confidentiality. Information will not be required more frequently than at quarterly intervals.

4.11 These monitoring arrangements can be amended by agreement between the council and VCAEC to reflect changes in service practice, for example data collection.

4.12 The Council can carry out mystery shopper exercises to evaluate the quality of services provided by VCAEC that are funded by the Council.

PART 5 – SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

5.1 It is important for VCAEC to be able to develop services to meet new needs and demands in the East Cambridgeshire area. However, any new initiative will depend upon the appropriate level of resources being in place.

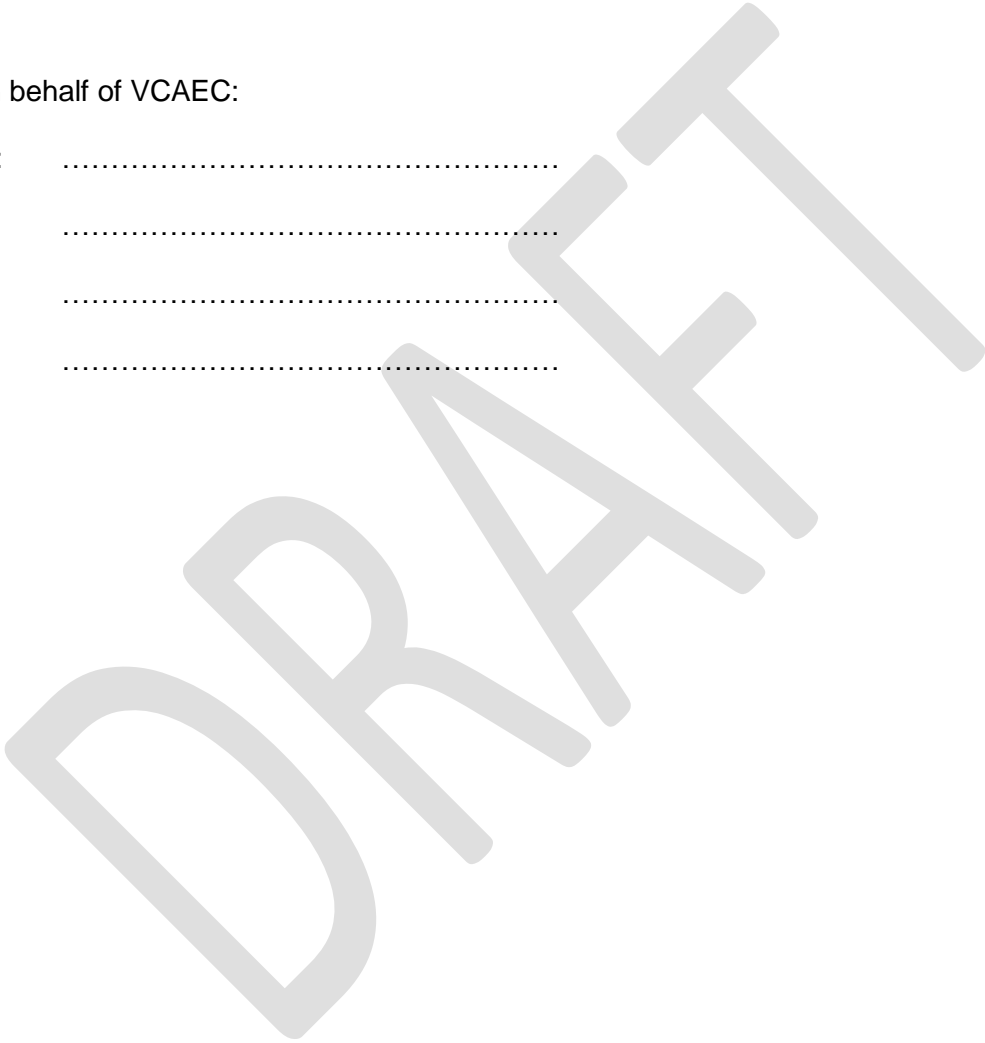
5.2 At formal review, the amounts payable in 3.1 and the service development targets shown in Appendix 1 will be evaluated and assessed and revised payments and targets agreed as appropriate for any agreement for the following year.

Signed on behalf of East Cambridgeshire District Council:

Signature:
Name:
Position:
Date:

Signed on behalf of VCAEC:

Signature:
Name:
Position:
Date:



Appendix 1 of SLA

Function	Area of Focus		SLA Funded Target Output for 2022/23	Actual
Networking and Training Opportunities	Training courses or themed events provided for member organisations	No of training courses or themed events delivered	3	
		Topics covered		
Supporting Voluntary and Community Groups		Details of demand for topics covered		
		No of organisations in attendance		
Promotion of Services and the Sector		No of individual attendees at each event		
		Third sector forums	No of third sector forums provided (e.g. VITAL lunches)	1
		Topics covered		
		Details of demand for topics covered		
		No of voluntary organisations in attendance and names of organisations		
		No of individual attendees at each third sector forum	32	
		No of general Community and Voluntary Sector enquiries dealt with	108	

Appendix 3

No of groups assisted with development work requiring longer term engagement with groups e.g. meeting with group, interviews		29	
Number of consultations responded to on behalf of the sector with examples		4	
Details of any policies informed or influenced		1	
E-bulletins/funding alert etc		27	
Support to new groups	No of new groups supported	12	
	Details provided about what support was provided		
Number of organisations assisted with performance management		4	
Publicity/displays		10	
Press articles released		2	
Newsletters circulated to member organisations (number of months)		12	
Volunteering banners up		10	

	Promotional literature and leaflets distributed		550	
Development	Details of research into unmet or emerging social needs in the area, and the promotion of action to meet them			
Representation	Details of partnership meetings attended representing the sector			
Think Communities	Details of support provided towards Think Communities initiatives and approaches	Details of support provided towards Think Communities initiatives and approaches		
Covid-19 Recovery	Details of support towards Covid-19 Recovery efforts	No of groups assisted that are providing local Covid-19 support (e.g. funding advice to mutual aid groups, guidance provided to volunteers)		
		Details of support provided to groups assisting with local Covid-19 response and recovery efforts (e.g. funding advice to mutual aid groups, guidance provided to volunteers)		
		Details of proactive attempts to engage with local groups providing Covid-19 support e.g. mutual aid groups, volunteers		
		Details of research undertaken to understand the impacts of Covid-19 on the local sector		

		Details of Covid-19 volunteer support, recruitment and retention		
		Any other details of Covid-19 related work supporting the sector and communities		
Cumulative membership			145	
Summary of current and developing issues for the sector and its members provided to ECDC				
Leverage /fundraising	No of groups assisted with funding searches and applications		27	
	External Funding brought into East Cambridgeshire		£62,000	
Increasing Volunteering Opportunities	No of volunteer enquiries/ general information	172		
	No of website enquiries handled	135		

	No of volunteers interviewed	80		
	No of known volunteer placements	76		
	Social Return on Investment	£292,808		
Volunteering Projects	Social Car Scheme			
	No of journeys		7,342	
	No of miles		121,510	
	No of volunteer driver hours		8,890	
	No of drivers		29	

	Social Return on Investment		£106,680	
	Volunteer Gardening Scheme			
	No of vol hours worked		7,224	
	No of referrals/customers		276	
	No of tasks completed		327	
	Social return on investment		£86,688	
Annual client satisfaction survey undertaken and provided to ECDC	All member organisations to be surveyed annually	Surveys completed		
Details of AGM sent to ECDC		Provided		
Annual Report and Accounts submitted to ECDC		Provided		

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) FORM

Name of Policy:	Review of Grant to Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire
Lead Officer (responsible for assessment):	Lewis Bage, Communities and Partnerships Manager Kerrie Wall, COVID-19 Recovery Coordinator
Department:	Communities and Partnerships
Others Involved in the Assessment (i.e. peer review, external challenge):	
Date EIA Completed:	06.10.2021

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

As part of any effective policy development process, it is important to consider any potential risks to those who will be affected by the policy's aims or by its implementation. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process helps us to assess the implications of our decisions on the whole community, to eliminate discrimination, tackle inequality, develop a better understanding of the community we serve, target resources efficiently, and adhere to the transparency and accountability element of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The word 'policy', in this context, includes the different things that the Council does. It includes any policy, procedure or practice - both in employment and service delivery. It also includes proposals for restructuring, redundancies and changes to service provision.

- (a) **What is the policy trying to achieve?** i.e. What is the aim/purpose of the policy? Is it affected by external drivers for change? What outcomes do we want to achieve from the policy? How will the policy be put into practice?

A review has been undertaken to establish whether a future grant to VCAEC will effectively meet the aims of the Council to deliver the required services and to ensure that best value is being achieved.

- (b) **Who are its main beneficiaries?** i.e. who will be affected by the policy?

Vulnerable residents, community and voluntary sector organisations, volunteers

- (c) **Is the EIA informed by any information or background data (quantitative or qualitative)?** i.e. consultations, complaints, applications received, allocations/take-up, satisfaction rates, performance indicators, access audits, census data, benchmarking, workforce profile etc.

SLA monitoring data, VCAEC survey findings, procurement submission documents

- (d) **Does this policy have the potential to cause a positive or negative impact on different groups in the community, on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics?** (please tick all that apply)

Ethnicity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Religion and Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Caring Responsibilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please explain any impact identified: i.e. What do you already know about equality impact or need? Is there any evidence that there is a higher or lower take-up by particular groups? Have there been any demographic changes or trends locally? Are there any barriers to accessing the policy or service?

Recommendation to support CVS infrastructure services potentially benefitting a wide range of communities. Users of the car and gardening schemes may include people with disabilities and the elderly.

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| (e) Does the policy have a differential impact on different groups? | YES/NO/Na |
| (f) Is the impact <i>adverse</i> (i.e. less favourable)? | YES/NO/Na |
| (g) Does it have the potential to disadvantage or discriminate unfairly against any of the groups in a way that is unlawful? | YES/NO/Na |

(h) How have you engaged stakeholders in gathering evidence or testing the policy proposals? Who was involved, how and when where they engaged? Does the evidence show potential for differential impact? How will you mitigate any negative impacts? Where there is the potential for an adverse impact that cannot be addressed immediately, these should be highlighted in your recommendations and objectives at the end of the EIA.

SLA performance monitoring data supplied by VCAEC provides information on the uptake of VCAEC services. Engagement with other organisations to identify similar services has been carried out. Engagement with local COVID-19 support groups has identified needs for support e.g. advice on safeguarding and volunteering.

* The Consultation Register is available to assist staff in consulting with the Council's stakeholders.

(i) Summarise the findings of your research and/or consultation (please use a separate sheet if necessary).

Findings detailed at Appendix 1

(j) What are the risks associated with the policy in relation to differential impact and unmet needs/requirements? i.e. reputation, financial, breach of legislation, service exclusion, lack of resources, lack of cooperation, insufficient budget etc.

Details set out in Options Appraisal at Appendix 2

(k) Use the information gathered in the earlier stages of your EIA to make a judgement on whether there is the potential for the policy to result in unlawful discrimination or a less favourable impact on any group in the community, and what changes (if any) need to be made to the policy.

Option 1:	No major change - the evidence shows that the policy is robust and no potential for discrimination.	x
Option 2:	Adjust the policy - to remove barriers or to better promote equality.	
Option 3:	Continue the policy - despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunity to promote equality, provided you have satisfied yourself that it does not unlawfully discriminate.	
Option 4:	Stop and remove the policy – if the policy shows adverse effects that cannot be justified.	

(I) Where you have identified the potential for adverse impact, what action can be taken to remove or mitigate against the potential for the policy to unlawfully discriminate or impact less favourably on one or more communities in a way that cannot be justified? Include key activities that are likely to have the greatest impact (max. 6). Identified actions should be specified in detail for the first year but there may be further longer term actions which need to be considered. To ensure that your actions are more than just a list of good intentions, include for each: the person responsible for its completion, a timescale for completion, any cost implications and how these will be addressed. It is essential that you incorporate these actions into your service plans.

The recommended option ensures that the provision of services is in place as outlined at Option 1 of the Options Appraisal in Appendix 2.

This completed EIA will need to be countersigned by your Head of Service. **Please forward completed and signed forms to the Principal HR Officer.**

All completed EIAs will need to be scrutinised and verified by the Council’s Equal Opportunities Working Group (EOWG) and published on the Council’s Intranet to demonstrate to local people that the Council is actively engaged in tackling potential discrimination and improving its practices in relation to equalities. Please be aware that you may be asked to attend a half-an-hour session to summarise the findings of the EIA to the Scrutiny and Verification panel.

Signatures:

Completing Officer:	Lewis Bage Kerrie Wall	Date: 06.10.2021
Head of Service:		Date:

BRECKLAND COUNCIL
EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
EAST SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL
FENLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL
WEST SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

At a Meeting of the

ANGLIA REVENUES AND BENEFITS PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE

**Held on Tuesday, 21 September 2021 at 11.00 am in the
Level 5 Meeting Room, at Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford. IP24 1BT**

PRESENT

Cllr David Ambrose-Smith (Chairman)	Cllr Maurice Cook
Cllr Jan French (Vice-Chairman)	Cllr Paul Claussen (Substitute Member)
Cllr Sarah Broughton	

In Attendance

Paul Corney	- Head of ARP
Sam Anthony	- Head of HR & OD (Fenland)
Alison Chubbock	- Assistant Director Finance (Section 151 Officer) (BDC)
Lorraine King	- Operations Manager (Benefits & Billing) ARP
Rachael Mann	- Assistant Director (Resources & Performance) (West Suffolk)
Brian Mew	- Chief Finance Officer & S151 Officer (East Suffolk)
Adrian Mills	- Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (Revenues & Benefits) ARP
Matthew Waite-Wright	- Head of NNDR Recovery & Enforcement (ARP)
Ian Smith	- Finance Manager & S151 Officer (East Cambs)
Julie Britton	- Democratic Services Officer

Chairman's Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed Lorraine King and Matthew Waite-Wright to their very first ARP Joint Committee meeting.

26/21 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

27/21 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Phil Cowen. Councillor Paul Claussen was in attendance as his substitute.

28/21 URGENT BUSINESS (AGENDA ITEM 3)

None.

Action By

29/21 DECLARATIONS (AGENDA ITEM 4)

None declared.

30/21 PERFORMANCE REPORT (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 5)

Adrian Mills, the Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (ARP) presented the report.

He was pleased to announce that all target areas were green and was a great improvement since the last meeting.

Demand for Council Tax billing continued at very high levels due to the pandemic and in particular due to the high number of people moving taking advantage of the extended stamp duty holiday. Since April 2021 there had been a 60% increase in people moving home Compared to last year and higher than during 2019.

Further recovery of Council Tax arrears was £167,441 more than for the same point last year.

Parking cases for West Suffolk and East Suffolk were now coming through the enforcement process with positive results on collection. Overall, the Enforcement Team had collected £338,262 thus far compared to £227,543 at the same point last year.

The Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (ARP) felt that this was a very positive report in terms of performance.

Councillor French asked for an update on the discussions that were being had with Cambridgeshire County Council in respect of a business case for a County fraud hub.

Members were informed that there had been significant progress on this matter and a subsequent report had already been submitted. ARP had submitted a counter proposal to use National Fraud Initiative (NFI) data and was progressing well.

Paul Corney, the Head of ARP advised that this had been agreed in principle and it was hoped that all would in place by 1 April 2022.

Ian Smith, the Finance Manager & S151 Officer (East Cambs) pointed out that there had been a few meetings and progress had been made on this matter but there were a few more 'tweaks' to be made to the Business Case.

The report was otherwise noted.

31/21 WELFARE REFORM UPDATE (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 6)

Adrian Mills, the Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (ARP) presented the report.

He drew Members' attention to section 2.1.9 of the report and provided an update on this matter. He explained that DWP had announced a future support offer from April 2022 in terms of providing telephony and digital support to help people to claim and maintain their Universal Credit claim;

DWP intended to bring face-to-face support back in house from Citizen's Advice. Further discussions would be had with the Operational Improvement Board following this Joint Committee meeting.

In response to a question as to whether the contract awarded to Citizen's Advice Bureau by the DWP had been a failure, Members were informed that a DWP report on this matter was still awaited.

Councillor Cook believed that the CAB had been doing a sterling job and had not been told otherwise at the Cabinet meetings that he had attended.

The Chairman stated that East Cambridgeshire Council was not supporting the CAB.

The report was otherwise noted.

32/21 ARP FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE 2021-22 (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 7)

Alison Chubbock, Assistant Director of fiancé & S151 officer for Breckland Council presented the report.

The figures had been based on information as of 31 July 2021 and the forecast that this stage of the year showed a small underspend against budget of £55k for the whole of ARP; however, enforcement income remained a risk to the Partnership.

It was noted that local authorities would not be able to claim any further grant payments for income lost due to the pandemic in respect of sales fees and charges as the extension to the scheme had ended in July 2021.

The report was otherwise noted.

33/21 FORTHCOMING ISSUES (STANDING ITEM) (AGENDA ITEM 8)

Councillor French thanked the Head of Benefits & Council Tax Billing (ARP) for attending Fenland District Council's recent Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting and asked if any date had been set for the suggested Joint Leaders and Chief Executives meeting.

Members were informed that the next OIB meeting would be discussing the agenda and when this meeting should take place as it was proving difficult to find a date that was suitable for everyone including IOB members.

The meeting would be to discuss the future strategic direction of the ARP to inform a four-year business plan to commence April 2022.

34/21 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 9)

The arrangements for the next meeting on Tuesday, 7 December 2021 at 11am in Level 5 meeting room at Breckland House, St Nicholas Street, Thetford were noted.

The meeting closed at 11.25 am

CHAIRMAN

OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Lead Officer: Jo Brooks, Director, Operations

FORWARD AGENDA PLAN

Democratic Services Officer: Adrian Scaites-Stokes

21st March 2022 4:30pm		To be confirmed June 2022 4:30pm		To be confirmed July 2022 4:30pm	
Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed	Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed	Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed
Report Deadline:	9 th March 2021	Report Deadline:	9 th March 2021	Report Deadline:	To be agreed
Progress Report on the Youth Strategy Action Plan	Lewis Bage (Communities & Partnership) Angela Parmenter (Housing & Community Safety Manager) Liz Knox (Environmental Services Manager)				
VCAEC -Service Level Agreement Update	VCAEC (presentation)				
Service Presentation – Customer Services	Annette Wade (Customer Services Manager)				
Budget Monitoring Report	Anne Wareham			Budget Monitoring Report	Anne Wareham
Quarter 3 – Waste Performance	James Khan (Head of Street Scene)	Quarter 4 – Waste Performance	James Khan (Head of Street Scene)		
ARP Joint Committee Minutes	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)	ARP Joint Committee Minutes	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)	ARP Joint Committee Minutes	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)
Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)	Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)	Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)

These meetings are not open to the public.

OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

Lead Officer: Jo Brooks, Director, Operations

FORWARD AGENDA PLAN

Democratic Services Officer: Adrian Scaites-Stokes

To be confirmed September 2022 4:30pm		To be confirmed November 2022 4:30pm		TBC 4:30pm	
Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed	Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed	Agenda Planning Meeting #	To be agreed
Report Deadline:	To be agreed	Report Deadline:	To be agreed	Report Deadline:	To be agreed
Outdoor Sports Facilities & Playing Pitch Strategies Annual report	Victor Le Grand (Senior Leisure Services Officer)	VCAEC -Service Level Agreement Update	VCAEC (presentation)		
		Review of Parking Enforcement Activity	?		
Quarter 1 – Waste Performance	James Khan (Head of Street Scene)	Quarter 2 – Waste Performance	James Khan (Head of Street Scene)		
Budget Monitoring Report	Anne Wareham				
ARP Joint Committee Minutes	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)	ARP Joint Committee Minutes	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)	ARP Joint Committee Minutes	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)
Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)	Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)	Forward Agenda Plan	A Scaites-Stokes (Demo. Services Officer)

To be programmed:

- Memorandum of Understanding – East Cambs Street Scene

These meetings are not open to the public.

AGENDA ITEM NO.

Minutes of a meeting of the Operational Services Committee
held in the Council Chamber, The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely on
Monday 15th November 2021 at 4:30pm

P R E S E N T

Cllr Julia Huffer (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Christine Ambrose Smith
Cllr David Ambrose Smith
Cllr Lis Every
Cllr Mark Inskip
Cllr Alec Jones
Cllr Joshua Schumann
Cllr John Trapp
Cllr Paola Trimarco
Cllr Jo Webber
Cllr Christine Whelan

OFFICERS

Lewis Bage – Communities & Partnerships Manager
Tracy Couper - Democratic Services Manager
Emma Grima – Director, Commercial
Richard Kay – Strategic Planning Manager
James Khan – Head of Street Scene
Angela Parmenter – Housing & Community Safety Manager
Rebecca Saunt – Planning Manager
Anne Wareham – Senior Accountant
Kerrie Wall – Covid-19 Recovery Co-Ordinator

I N A T T E N D A N C E

Nigel Ankers – Finance Manager, East Cambs Street Scene

32. **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no public questions.

33. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Following the resignation of the Chairman, nominations were invited for Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the Municipal year. Councillor Julia Huffer was duly proposed and seconded and there being no other nominations,

It was resolved:

That Councillor Julia Huffer be appointed as Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the Municipal year.

34. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

Following the appointment of the current Vice-Chairman as Chairman of the Committee, there was now a vacancy for Vice-Chairman of the Committee. Therefore, under Section 100B 4(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman stated that she was willing to take Election of Vice-Chairman as an urgent item of business, on the grounds that the vacancy should be filled as quickly as possible, to ensure that there was a Vice-Chairman able to act in that capacity.

Nominations were invited for Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the Municipal year. Councillor David Ambrose Smith was duly proposed and seconded and there being no other nominations,

It was resolved:

That Councillor David Ambrose-Smith be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the Municipal year.

35. **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

There were no apologies or substitutions.

36. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Lis Every declared an interest in agenda item 15, as she was the Chairman of Trustees of the VCAEC.

37. **MINUTES**

It was resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

38. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

39. **SERVICE PRESENTATION – HOUSING ADVICE SERVICE**

The Committee received a presentation by the Housing and Community Advice Manager on the work of the Housing Advice Team, a copy of which has been circulated to Members of the Committee.

The presentation covered the following areas:

- Roles within the Team
- Reasons why people approach the service
- Owing a main duty
- Joint working partner agencies

- Projects
- Covid-19
- Interdepartmental working
- Community Advice Service
- Two case studies

Members commended the range of services provided by the Team and welcomed the launch of the new Community Hub Bus. In response to a question by a Member, Ms Parmenter explained proposed arrangements for supported accommodation for people with drug/alcohol issues in collaboration with a HMO provider.

The Chairman thanked Ms Parmenter for her presentation.

40. **HOUSING & COMMUNITY ADVICE SERVICE – UPDATE ON IMPACT OF COVID-19**

The Committee considered a report, W98 previously circulated, which provided an update on the impacts arising from Covid-19 on the Housing & Community Advice Service for the period 23 March 2020 to 1 October 2021.

The Housing and Community Advice Manager highlighted that the Courts had been re-opened to allowing S21 eviction notices, but as yet the service had not seen a significant increase in clients needing support as a result of this. However, longer void times on social housing properties was being experienced due to the backlog of repairs. Ms Parmenter highlighted leaflets giving details of the times of the new Community Hub Bus visits to particular Town/Village locations, tabled at the meeting. A schedule also was included on the Council's website.

A number of questions relating to this item had been provided prior to the meeting from Members and these, along with answers provided by officers, were set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

A Member highlighted the issues experienced both locally and nationally to recruit people to vacancies following lockdown/furlough and asked if the service worked with private sector agencies to try to place vulnerable people requiring employment. Ms Parmenter stated that staff worked closely with the Job Centre and would be looking to work with the private sector moving forward Post-Covid.

A Member queried the reasons for the refusal of 160 out of 260 applications for discretionary Covid isolation payments detailed in the report and Ms Parmenter explained that these were not eligible, usually due to substantial savings or not actually having received a reduction in salary, but that she would circulate a breakdown to Committee Members.

A member commented that the BAME community only constituted a third of protected characteristics and queried how other groups had been impacted by Covid-19. The Housing and Community Advice Manager stated that this was being investigated in conjunction with the Communities & Partnerships Manager.

A Member commended the report and the fact that this Council had no people in temporary B&B accommodation, but queried the position on the Council offering accommodation to refugees/asylum seekers from Afghanistan. Ms Parmenter reported that Cambridge City Council was acting a Lead Authority for this County on re-settlement and that this Council was working with them following approaches from 2 private landlords to provide housing units for refugees.

In response to questions on void properties, the Housing and Community Advice Manager asked Members to forward her details of any properties vacant for prolonged periods and she would raise them with the Social Housing provider.

Councillor Webber referred to the fact that herself and Councillor Every were representatives on Sanctuary HA and stated that the HA was prioritising repairs on void properties in the greatest demand. Sanctuary also had offered to undertake a Member Seminar in the New Year and this should be timetabled by officers. A Member queried the properties that were harder to let and it was reported that specialist older people's properties tended to be in less demand in this District. Another Member commented that these could be actively advertised to older people in family-sized properties, to encourage them to be released to house local families.

It was resolved:

That the update report be noted.

41. **12 MONTH REVIEW OF COMMUNITY ADVICE SERVICE**

The Committee considered a report, W99 previously circulated, which contained the annual update on the performance and capacity of the Community Advice Service.

The Housing and Community Advice Manager highlighted two particular cases where the Team had assisted a man over 65 with complex issues referred to them by the Lighthouse Centre and a woman with children suffering abuse. The Chairman and Members of the Committee commended the commitment of the Team to solving such complex cases.

A number of questions relating to this item had been provided prior to the meeting from Members and these, along with answers provided by officers, were set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

Members commended the introduction of the Community Hub Bus but commented that the schedule was difficult to find on the Council's website and requested that this be located in a prominent location on the Home Page. The Director Commercial agreed to investigate. Members also referred to the need to widely circulate the leaflets in the community, as many vulnerable groups did not have ready access to the internet. A Member suggested that details could be included in the Council Tax bills and the Director Commercial agreed to raise this with the relevant parties. A Member also suggested that the colour scheme of the leaflet be reviewed in relation to colour-blindness.

In response to a point raised by a Member, the Housing and Community Advice Manager agreed to provide Members of the Committee with a summary of the Customer Satisfaction Survey results.

It was resolved:

That the annual update report be noted.

42. **SERVICE PRESENTATION – PLANNING SERVICE**

The Committee received a presentation by the Planning Manager giving an update on the work of the Planning Team, a copy of which has been circulated to Members of the Committee.

The presentation covered the following areas:

- Staffing
- Applications statistics & trends

The Planning Manger highlighted that, although the Team had been fully staffed since 1 December 2019, one officer was leaving in the forthcoming week and another had been recruited, but with a lower level of experience.

The level of Planning applications had been high in 2021 compared to the 2 preceding years and the Planning Manager was examining caseloads and patterns of applications to help with assessing resourcing requirements.

A Member stated that they had a number of statistical questions that they would submit to the Planning Manager and asked for the responses to be circulated to Members of the Committee.

In response to a question by a Member regarding tree works applications, the Planning Manager explained the process and criteria for action.

A Member raised a question on the qualifications required by Planning Officers, the current issues with recruitment nationally due to a shortage of qualified/experienced officers and asked whether the Council still had a programme to 'grow its own' staff. Ms Saunt stated that there still was a rolling programme of training and 2 Officers in the Team were currently doing their Masters, but that the recruitment issues nationally were focussed on the middle management level of Senior and Team Leader posts. Therefore, the position was kept under review and alternatives such as agency workers were considered, where necessary, to fill vacancies and meet resourcing requirements.

The Chairman thanked Ms Saunt for her presentation

43. **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

The Committee considered a report, W100 previously circulated, which provided details of the financial position for services under the remit of the Operational Services Committee.

Councillor Alison Whelan left the meeting at 5.48pm

The Senior Accountant advised the Committee that the projected underspending on the revenue budget was £157,500.

A number of questions relating to this item had been provided prior to the meeting from Members and these, along with answers provided by officers, were set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

In response to a follow-up question by Councillor Inskip to that listed in Appendix 1, it was reported that the Depot had been transferred to Finance & Assets Committee since it was a physical building and so constituted an asset, as compared to refuse vehicles which were operational plant and equipment related to the delivery of the service.

It was resolved:

- ii) That the Committee's projected yearend underspend of £157,500 when compared to its approved revenue budget of £5,558,994, be noted.
- ii) That the Committee's overall position on Capital as a projected outturn of £1,321,294, which is £2,000,000 lower than its revised budget, be noted.

Councillor Alison Whelan returned to the meeting at 5.50pm

44. **EAST CAMBS STREET SCENE (ECSS) ACCOUNTS 2020/21**

The Committee considered a report, W101 previously circulated, containing the East Cambs Street Scene Ltd (ECSS) Accounts for 2020/21.

A number of questions relating to this item had been provided prior to the meeting from Members and these, along with answers provided by officers, were set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

In response to a follow-up question by Councillors Trapp and Inskip to question 1 on this item listed in Appendix 1, the Director Commercial agreed to clarify the position regarding the treatment of refuse vehicles for accounting purposes and provide a written response to Members of the Committee.

It was resolved:

That the East Cambs Street Scene (ECSS) accounts 2020/21, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be noted.

45. **ECDC ENVIRONMENT PLAN – UPDATE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY PROPOSED WAY FORWARD**

The Committee considered a report, W102 previously circulated, detailing progress on the 'Top 20' actions in the Council's Environment Plan and a proposed approach in relation to Action 8 relating to renewables.

The Strategic Planning Manager explained the outcome of investigations into the possible installation of solar panels on Council-owned assets. These had concluded that the quickest form of installation on a reasonable scale, combined with the likely highest return on investment, would be solar PV roof top installations on our own properties. The two most suitable properties identified were E-Space North, at Littleport, and the ECSS Depot south of Littleport. Of these, E-Space North was considered to offer the best option in terms of return on investment/payback period.

A number of questions relating to this item had been provided prior to the meeting from Members and these, along with answers provided by officers, were set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

In response to a follow-up question by Councillor Inskip to question 1 listed in Appendix 1 regarding the level and type of provision, financing and charging arrangements for Electric Vehicle Charging Points (ECVPs) in car parks, the Strategic Planning Manager reported that Nick Lancaster was leading on this action, so Councillor Inskip was asked to set out the detailed questions and direct them to the Infrastructure and Strategy Manager to obtain a response which would be provided to all Members of the Committee. A Member commented that car parks were not necessarily the best location for EVCPs and suggested other locations such as town centres and leisure centres. However, other Members highlighted the need for a balance approach to EVCP provision and locations and that the County Council had been commended for its policy of installing them in car parks at the Park and Ride sites.

With regard to question 4 in Appendix 1, Councillor Inskip queried the target for home working by Council staff. The Strategic Planning Manager reported that no specific target had been set, but that the Council's policy now allowed for a greater level and more flexible arrangements for home working. In response to a request, the Director Commercial agreed to provide details of the number and type of Council staff homeworking applications.

In response to a follow-up question by Councillor Inskip to question 5 listed in Appendix 1 regarding inclusion of requirements in Neighbourhood Plans for energy efficiency measures on new building developments, the Strategic Planning Manager reported that it was still intended to encourage this approach when Neighbourhood Plans were being prepared/reviewed.

A Member commented that the Council still had a long way to go to reach its targets on reducing emissions.

It was resolved (unanimously):

- i. To support, in principle, the potential to install PV solar panels on the roof of E-Space North, and agree that steps be taken to further investigate such potential, including, in due course, the seeking of quotes to implement such panels.
- ii. That the findings of such an investigation be reported to the appropriate Committee(s) and/or full Council, in order to make a decision on whether to proceed with such installation and to determine whether to make provision in our budgets for 2022/23 to do so.

46. **REVIEW OF GRANT TO CITIZENS ADVICE WEST SUFFOLK (CAWS)**

The Committee considered a report, W103 previously circulated, detailing the outcome of a review of the grant awarded to Citizens Advice West Suffolk (CAWS) for 2021/22 and determine whether the grant be awarded for 2022/23.

The Communities & Partnerships Manager highlighted that the recommendation to award a grant for a 2 year period would give stability to the organisation in the post-Covid recovery period.

A number of questions relating to this item had been provided prior to the meeting from Members and these, along with answers provided by officers, were set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

In response to questions by Members regarding the review process in 2 years time, the Communities & Partnerships Manager stated that this was likely to follow the same process and a grant was never guaranteed to any organisation.

A Member questioned why CAWS was subject to a grant review process, whilst VCAEC, referred to in the next item, was subject to a tender process. Mr Bage reported that this was due to the fact that there was greater duplication of services being offered by other organisations similar to those delivered by VCAEC.

Members expressed their support for the award of a 2 year grant in the light of the current position with regard to Covid.

It was resolved (unanimously):

- i. That the findings of the review be noted.
- ii. That a grant of £46,332.06 be awarded to CAWS for a Service Level Agreement from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2024.

47. **REVIEW OF GRANT TO VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY ACTION EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE (VCAEC)**

Councillor Every took no part in the discussions and voting on this item.

The Committee considered a report, W104 previously circulated, detailing the outcome of a review of the grant awarded to Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire (VCAEC) and a procurement exercise for the provision of Voluntary Sector Support Services.

Members expressed their support for the work of the organisation which provided a good range of services covering the District.

It was resolved:

- i That the findings of the review and procurement exercise be noted.
- ii That £39,530 be awarded to VCAEC for a new Service Level Agreement from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2024.

48. **ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP JOINT COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The Committee considered the minutes of the Anglia Revenues and Benefits Partnership (ARP) Joint Committee of 21 September 2021.

A number of questions/comments relating to this item had been provided prior to the meeting from Members and these, along with answers provided by officers, were set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes.

It was resolved:

That the Minutes of the ARP Joint Committee meeting held on 21 September 2021 be noted.

49. **FORWARD AGENDA PLAN**

The Committee received its Forward Agenda Plan. Members were reminded of the cancellation of the 17 January 2022 Committee meeting and transfer of the items to the 21 March meeting, following a Member Seminar on the Youth Strategy on 10 March.

A query had been received relating to this item prior to the meeting and it was confirmed that there was a typographical error which would be corrected.

It was resolved:

That the Forward Agenda Plan and cancellation of 17 January 2022 Committee meeting be noted.

The meeting concluded at 6:47pm.

**OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
15 NOVEMBER 2021
QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE**

Item 8 – Housing and Community Service – Update on Impact of COVID-19

Questions Councillor Inskip:

<p>1. Are all seven members of staff who have passed parts 1 and 2 of the level 3 Award in Generalist Debt Advice (MAS Accredited) on track to complete part 3 and achieve full accreditation by December 2021?</p>	<p>Four Officers have successfully passed Level 3. One Officer is waiting to take the Level 3 exam.</p> <p>All Community Advice Service Officers will be Part 3 qualified.</p>
<p>2. On what grounds were the 260 applicants who were refused discretionary £500 isolation payments (out of 451 applications) deemed not eligible?</p>	<p>This is a discretionary fund for extreme financial hardship for applicants that do not meet the criteria for the national scheme.</p> <p>Financial hardships include not being able to afford rent, food or utility bill payments.</p> <p>Applications can be refused where they have not provided all the requested documents, for having sufficient funds and where there is no reduction in income from their employers.</p>
<p>3. Given the very high number of unsuccessful applications for discretionary £500 isolation payments, has a review been conducted to determine whether eligibility criteria are being appropriately applied or could be adjusted?</p>	<p>The criteria is set by government.</p>
<p>4. Has the impact of the £20 weekly reduction in Universal Credit been seen yet in approaches to the Advice Service?</p>	<p>The Service has not been approached by affected individuals.</p> <p>ARP included Community Advice contact details and drop in times in the letters that were sent to all affected residents.</p>

Comments/Questions Councillor Trapp:

<p>1. Page 1, table and associated comments: would have been more informative if the data on outcomes (at the bottom of the page) were broken down for each case type according to outcome? Is there a pattern in that some case types have a majority of outcomes?</p>	<p>This will be considered for future reporting.</p>
<p>2. Page 4, paragraph below bar chart: no data given to back up assertion that there is an increase in demand over the last 6 months.</p>	<p>This report reflects the demand on the service from 23 March 2020.</p>
<p>3. Page 6: unallocated funds seem to be quite high; what will happen to the remaining money?</p>	<p>The Service continues to support residents in need and will do so throughout the winter months.</p>
<p>4. Page 7: no financial implications, EIA, CIA? On page 7 of the report you mention . . . over the last 18 months has been that residents have experienced either social or digital isolation, and in some cases it has been both . . . so one would imagine that Equality or Inequality does play a part; furthermore the Community Hub bus must have a carbon impact, either for the good or bad. The unallocated funds have financial implications, as does the possibility of more evictions.</p>	<p>EIA and CIA assessments are not required for noting reports. These are required where the committee is making decisions.</p>

Questions/comments Councillor Christine Whelan:

<p>Page 7- It is stated that there was no equality impact assessment was not required for this report.</p>	<p>EIA's are not required for noting reports. An EIA is only required where the committee is making a decision.</p>
<p>Do we know what impact Covid has had on the protected characteristics?</p>	<p>The COVID Recovery Group conducted BAME and older people surveys and one is currently being carried out for young people.</p>
<p>The impact of Covid, especially on the LGBT community has been high as I am aware that this particular protected group has struggled with the Covid situation and in many cases were not able to remain in the places where they were living.</p>	<p>VCAEC are also carrying out a survey for all community groups registered to them</p>

<p>The operation of this service varies tremendously with the different protected characteristics so therefore I am somewhat surprised that the EIA has not been included in the report.</p>	<p>to better understand the impacts of COVID.</p>
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Item 9 – 12 Month Review of Community Advice Service

Questions Councillor Inskip:

<p>1. What KPIs or other objective metrics are available to support the conclusion in paragraph 5.1 of the report that the Community Advice Service is managing well both the level and nature of enquiries?</p>	<p>100% of enquiries are dealt with. Where it is not possible to deal with at first point of contact, Officers continue to work with clients until issue(s) are resolved.</p>
<p>2. What is the average waiting time from a resident contacting the Advice Service and how has this changed over the past year?</p>	<p>Face to face appointments (via drop in)- No more than 10 minutes.</p> <p>Phone calls are transferred directly to the relevant officer, if the Officer is not available at the time of the call then there is a same day call back.</p> <p>Prior to reception reopening residents would have contact immediately or a call back the same day.</p>
<p>3. What is the average time to resolve issues being handled by the Advice Service and how has this changed over the past year?</p>	<p>Average first appointments are a minimum of 1 hour depending on the issue(s). This has not changed over the past year. The same advice is provided whether it is face-to-face or on the phone.</p>
<p>4. What customer satisfaction metrics are collected from users of the service and can that data be shared?</p>	<p>There is a customer satisfaction survey and regular case studies.</p> <p>This can be shared via email with Members of the Committee.</p>
<p>5. How frequently does the Community Bus visit each of the locations listed in Appendix 3?</p>	<p>The schedule is available on the Council's website</p>
<p>6. Are there plans to add any additional locations for the bus to serve communities geographically remote from the existing locations?</p>	<p>There will be a 6 month review on the demand, location and frequency of locations and any changes can be made at that point.</p>

7. How are the visits of the Community Bus publicised by the council?	Communications Team- Social Media Posts. Posters and leaflets sent to all locations for local advertising.
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Comments/Questions Councillor Trapp:

1. Page 2 table: do we have any data on the types of enquiry that CAB provided?	ECDC does not hold CAB data. This can be requested.
2. Page 2 penultimate paragraph: how many requests from outside of East Cambs?	40 requests from outside of East Cambridgeshire including settled status and issues arising from when clients were previously residents of East Cambridgeshire.
3. Page 3: we have had more than one month of operation of the Community Hub Bus; any data on take up, and type of resident? Not easy to find the schedule on the Council web-site, but then the search engine is not very good. I think that we ought to have a report on how many have used the Community Hub Bus at each Operational Services Committee meeting, as it is a new venture.	Data is being collected from every location which will inform the 6 months review.
4. Page 4: no financial implications, EIA, CIA? Again	EIA and CIA assessments are not required for noting reports. These are required where the committee is making decisions.
5. Appendix 1: would be interesting to have data on number of enquiries per 100 residents (for ECDC residents only) to show which parishes are in more need of advice, and for this to be reflected in the frequency of the Community Bus to those parishes.	This will be considered for future reporting.

Questions/comments Councillor Christine Whelan:

No equality impact assessment provided on this report.	EIA not required for a noting report. EIA is required when the committee is making a decision.
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With the launch of the community bus hub there needs to be one.	
What provision is there for those people requiring advice with limited or no mobility to access the bus?	The Community Bus has a wheelchair lift. If clients cannot access the Community Bus or Drop in Service then home visits are conducted.
What privacy (soundproof cubicles) has been provided for people with protected characteristics to discuss their issues without giving away their personal situations where they do not want their personal details known to other people in the near vicinity of them?	All clients are spoken to in private and in complete confidence. Home visits can be conducted.
Why is there not a Carbon impact assessment? What impact is the bus having on this?	CIA not required for a noting report. CIA is required when the committee is making a decision.
Does the bus vary its times and days that it goes to the locations stated in Appendix 3?	The schedule is available on the Council's website and paper copies can be made available on request.
How are these advertised and are these locations accessible to everyone who needs to access it?	Social media posts. Local Communities and Parish Council's all have literature to promote the Community Bus.

Item 11 – Budget Monitoring Report

Questions Councillor Inskip:

1. In Appendix 2 why is the £845,950 previously listed for the Depot no longer included?	This is now being treated as an assets issue and has been moved to Finance and Assets Committee.
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Comments/Questions Councillor Trapp:

1. Point 2.2 on page 1 (also taken up in point 5 below): This seems brilliant, but it is only because the revised budget still included the capital for refuse and cleaning vehicle replacement.	Yes, as detailed in 3.7 this is a delay in spending as opposed to a reduction in spending.
2. Planning on page 3: increased number of applications, but has there been an increase in Planning Officers to match? The default email reply from Rebecca Saunt is	The Planning Team is currently fully staffed and has an additional agency worker to try to assist with the large workload.

<p>Thank you for your email. I am currently unavailable. Please note we are currently experiencing high volumes of work and this may have an impact on the time taken to respond.</p> <p>I know of one case where a pre-app has had a reply a couple of days shy of three months, instead of the three weeks that it is supposed to be; reasons cited for delay were 'we are currently experiencing high volumes of work', and the email outage in the summer.</p>	<p>Auto replies and messages are on the website to manage customer expectations.</p>
<p>3. Page 6: table has new entry (compared to previous budget) of Leisure Centre with a receipt of £241,113, and no explanation.</p>	<p>The Leisure Centre has been moved from Finance and Assets Committee to the Operational Services Committee.</p>
<p>4. Page 6: the line for Tree Preservation, and many others, mystifies me; I have picked on this line as it is easiest to see. The budget is £55,717; the profiled budget is £21,387 and I would have said that it should be half, i.e. £27,857; so far £16,584 has been spent, so the forecast spend at year end should be double that, i.e. £33,168. There are no notes why the projected outturn should be that given in the budget column. What am I missing?</p>	<p>The profiled budget is calculated on individual spend lines, you are correct that salaries are split equally throughout the year, but in this example, much of the tree management work is done in the winter months, so the profile reflects this, i.e. more expenditure being expected in the second half of the year.</p> <p>The current underspend relates to a creditor that has not yet been paid, which is expected to be resolved by yearend. Thus the yearend forecast is that costs will come in in-line with the original budget.</p>
<p>5. Page 7: I find this kind of accounting very strange; a revised budget that mirrors the actual forecast expenditure, except that £2M for vehicles is left in, and all indication that it won't be spent. Hence showing an underspend on capital.</p>	<p>The budget is only changed where approved, so the revised budget remains the same as that in the budget report. Spend in 2021/22 is now forecast to be zero, hence the underspend. Although as acknowledged earlier this is a delay in spending, as opposed to a reduction in spending.</p>

Questions/comments Councillor Christine Whelan:

<p>How or why is there a saving on this? Are there less people who are now homeless or are there less people now using hotels or hostels? How many do we currently have who are being homed in hostels and hotels and how many have been permanently homed?</p>	<p>This is the result of savings on the use of hotel and hostel costs. We have had a saving on these for a number of years, but the lines are kept within the budget as a contingency, in case any requirement is identified during the year.</p> <p>We permanently re-housed 278 applicants and 43 remained in their existing homes.</p> <p>We currently have 16 applicants in temporary accommodation, no applicants in B&B or hotel accommodation.</p>
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Agenda Item 12 – ECSS Accounts

Comments/Questions Councillor Trapp:

<p>1. Note 6 on page 15 of accounts: rubbish lorries are not considered part of the plant and equipment; are they owned by ECDC, and lent out for free to ECSS?</p>	<p>All refuse vehicles are owned by ECDC. A charge is levied by ECDC to cover the cost of the vehicles.</p>
<p>2. Item 3 on page 14: Wages and salaries have increased by £150,442, but two directors and three administrators have been shed.</p>	<p>The increase is caused by a combination of a cost of living increase for staff plus any increases for staff moving up a point on their salary scale. There was also a £54k accrual for unused holiday pay at the end of the financial year.</p> <p>The Directors who resigned did not receive any remuneration from the Company for their employment.</p> <p>The figure of 9 staff in administration included 3 staff who are actually employed by ECDC and seconded to ECSS and so there were not included in this year's calculation.</p>
<p>3. Pages 16 and 17: one of the As 31 March 2020 should be As 31 March 2021?</p>	<p>Thank you, yes. The heading at the top of page 17 should read 31 March 2021. We will have this amended on the version that is filed at Companies House.</p>

Questions from Councillor Trimarco and responses from Richard Kay, Strategic Planning Manager:

<p>1. You are asking the committee to agree to ‘steps to be taken to further investigate such potential, including in due course, the seeking of quotes to implement such panels...’. Yet it appears as though from sections 3.5 and 3.6 that the investigations have already taken place and that we could move on to getting quotes. What other ‘investigations’ are you referring to in the recommendations (2.1. a)?</p>	<p>1. I agree we have done quite a lot of preliminary investigation already. The main two steps to take are (a) getting formal quotes and (b) interrogating those quotes to be sure not only of value for money etc, but to be certain that E-Space N infrastructure is suitable for installing the equipment. So far, the investigations have been mostly desktop and analysing electrical demands of the building. We haven’t done much on-the-ground investigations to make sure physically the equipment can be installed (not just the panels, but all the associated equipment). There’s no known reason why it shouldn’t, but we need to check...and check if any additional costs arise as a result.</p>
<p>2. Could you please provide us with a timeframe for the delivery of this renewable energy infrastructure? (You mention in 4.1 that it is going to be delivered earlier than envisaged.)</p>	<p>2. Very provisionally, we are putting finances in place to actually deliver this in 2022/23 (subject to member approval, of course). I’d hope to have power being generated from 1 April 2023 at the latest, but there’s quite a few steps to go yet, and capacity of suppliers is an issue (there’s a big demand for panels worldwide!). Overall, I’m targeting what Ctee agreed in June as its first interim target: <i>“A 20-33% reduction in our net CO2e emissions by year 2025/26. That will be achieved via: reduced energy use in our buildings; a lower carbon conversion factor for the energy we do use, due to the broader national decarbonisation of the electricity grid; maximising the efficiency and performance of our existing fleet vehicles;</i></p>

	<i>investment in our own renewable energy infrastructure; and minimising the use of business miles of our staff.”</i>
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Questions Councillor Inskip and responses from Richard Kay, Strategic Planning Manager:

<p>1.What progress has been made on the action to deliver of Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCPs) and is it still expected that the EVCPs will be installed in at least one of the council’s car parks before the end of the financial year?</p>	<p>Yes, it is. We are working with BP Pulse on a number of car park sites, and our expectation is that these will commence deployment on the ground in Q1 2022, and will be operational late Q1. Subject to final feasibility work during 2021, we expect such operational sites to be between one and six, and we are hopeful of it being to the upper end of that range.</p>
<p>2. What progress has been made on the action to establish a programme of engagement activities with schools together with ECSS?</p>	<p>Our new Environment Officer – Emma-Jane Danielsson – has now commenced, and this is one of her key tasks. To date, Emma-Jane is exploring an accreditation scheme for schools to join, with the intention of engaging schools from the new year, and seeking schools to ‘sign up’. ECDC would help with both the sign up process and subsequent programme. The accreditation scheme has a pick-and-choose set of options for schools to become more eco-friendly. Separately, schools are being encouraged to apply for free apple trees as part of our recently launched Community Orchard Programme.</p>
<p>3. What progress has been made to improve the council’s ‘Carbon Impact Assessment’ procedure?</p>	<p>Updated ECDC guidance and CIA template forms circulated to all service leads in June 2021. Moving forward, we are working with CPCA* and partners on Recommendation 2 of the Climate Commission report, which recommends: <i>“A climate change assessment should be undertaken and taken into account for every CPCA and Council policy, development, procurement, action”</i> Ideally, a consistent assessment procedure across Cambridgeshire would be ideal, but in the meantime we continue to use the ECDC June 2021 version.</p>

	<i>*CPCA – Cambridgeshire-Peterborough Combined Authority</i>
4. What progress has been to encourage more home working (to reduce commuting) and reduce business travel (e.g. for site visits)?	In July 2021, the Council’s staff ‘remote working policy’ was updated, which enables staff to apply for permanent or occasional home working. Individual applications from staff are considered by service leads to accommodate these requests where possible whilst ensuring the needs of each individual service are met. We are still very much learning from the pandemic experience of what works well or not so well from working from home. It is clearly evident that a significant number of staff still undertake at least some work from home (and to a degree much greater than pre-pandemic). This has been aided by the considerable IT investment. Business miles over 2020/21 were around 50% down on 2019/20, and staff are encouraged to maintain such behaviour where possible. This is being monitored through 2021/22, though so far this financial year there has only been a margin increase in staff business miles compared with 2020/21, and it remains significantly less compared with 2019/20.
5. What progress has been made in establishing an active role in encouraging /lobbying for the highest energy efficiency standards in new developments?	ECDCs response (Oct 2021) to Government’s Oxford-Cambridge Arc Spatial Strategy made a number of requests for such a strategy to have a strong emphasis on energy efficiency and boosting nature, and sought such energy efficiency standards in the Arc to go beyond Building Regulations. In addition, one of the talks due at the Parish Council conference on 1 November 2021 was in relation to the role Neighbourhood Plans could take on requiring energy efficiency measures in new builds – unfortunately, due to covid-restrictions, the conference has been delayed to (probably) the new year.

Item 14 – Review of Grant to Citizens Advice West Suffolk

Questions Councillor Inskip:

<p>Is it the council's long-term goal of the expansion of the Housing and Community Advice Service in the south of the district to complement or to replace the service provided by Citizens Advice West Suffolk?</p>	<p>As stated at 6.3, a review of the Service Level Agreement is to be carried out during 2023/24 which will also consider the impacts of the Council's evolving outreach advice and support service.</p> <p>Once the 2023/24 review has been undertaken, the findings of it will be presented to Members along with a recommendation.</p>
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Agenda Item 16 – ARP Minutes

Comments/Questions Councillor Trapp:

<p>30/21: interesting that they collect parking cases for West and East Suffolk. 31/21: disappointing to note that ECDC is not supporting CAB, even though Cllr Cook believed that they were doing a sterling job. 32/21: Good to see that Breckland have a Director of finance. 33/21: What is meant by OIB and IOB?</p>	<p>OIB is Operational Improvement Board, (IOB, I think is a typo)</p>
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Agenda Item 17 – Forward Agenda Plan

Comments/Questions Councillor Trapp:

<p>Report Deadline for June 2022 meeting to be three months in advance?</p>	<p>This is a typo and will be amended in the next draft.</p>
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OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – 15 NOVEMBER 2021 – DECISION LIST

ITEM NO.	Ref.	ITEM	ISSUE	DECISION	ACTION BY
2.	-	Election of Chairman	Following the resignation of the Chairman, to elect a Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the Municipal year.	It was resolved: That Councillor Julia Huffer be appointed as Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the Municipal year.	Democratic Services Officer
2a	-	Election of Vice-Chairman	Following the appointment of the current Vice-Chairman as Chairman of the Committee, to elect a Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the Municipal year.	It was resolved: That Councillor David Ambrose-Smith be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the Municipal year.	Democratic Services Officer
8.	W98	Housing & Community Advice Service – Update on Impact of Covid-19	To receive an update on the impacts arising from Covid-19 on the Housing & Community Advice Service.	It was resolved: That the update report be noted.	Housing & Community Advice Manager
9.	W99	12 Month Review of Community Advice Service	To receive the annual update on the performance and capacity of the Community Advice Service.	It was resolved: That the annual update report be noted.	Housing & Community Advice Manager

11.	W100	Budget Monitoring Report	To provide Members with budget monitoring information for services under the remit of this Committee.	<p>It was resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ii) That the Committee's projected yearend underspend of £157,500 when compared to its approved revenue budget of £5,558,994, be noted. ii) That the Committee's overall position on Capital as a projected outturn of £1,321,294, which is £2,000,000 lower than its revised budget, be noted. 	Finance Manager
12.	W101	East Cambs Street Scene (ECSS) Accounts 2020/21	To receive the East Cambs Street Scene (ECSS) Accounts 2020/21	<p>It was resolved:</p> <p>That the East Cambs Street Scene (ECSS) accounts 2020/21, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, be noted.</p>	Director Operations
13.	W102	ECDC Environment Plan – Update and Renewable Energy Proposed Way Forward	To consider progress on the 'Top 20' actions in the Council's Environment Plan and a proposed approach in relation to Action 8 relating to renewables.	<p>It was resolved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. To support, in principle, the potential to install PV solar panels on the roof of E-Space North, and agree that steps be taken to further investigate such potential, including, in due course, the seeking of quotes to implement such panels. ii. That the findings of such an investigation be reported to the appropriate Committee(s) and/or full Council, in order to make a decision on whether to proceed with such installation and to determine whether to make provision in our budgets for 2022/23 to do so. 	Strategic Planning Manager

14.	W103	Review of Grant to Citizens Advice West Suffolk (CAWS)	To consider the outcome of a review of the grant awarded to Citizens Advice West Suffolk (CAWS) for 2021/22 and determine whether the grant be awarded for 2022/23.	It was resolved: i. That the findings of the review be noted. ii. That a grant of £46,332.06 be awarded to CAWS for a Service Level Agreement from 1 st April 2022 to 31 st March 2024.	Communities and Partnerships Manager/ COVID-19 Recovery Coordinator
15.	W104	Review of Grant to Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire (VCAEC)	To consider the outcome of a review of the grant awarded to Voluntary and Community Action East Cambridgeshire (VCAEC) and a procurement exercise for the provision of Voluntary Sector Support Services.	It was resolved: i That the findings of the review and procurement exercise be noted. ii That £39,530 be awarded to VCAEC for a new Service Level Agreement from 1 st April 2022 to 31 st March 2024.	Communities and Partnerships Manager/ COVID-19 Recovery Coordinator
16.	-	ARP Minutes	To receive the Minutes of the ARP Joint Committee Meeting held on 21 September 2021.	It was resolved: That the Minutes of the ARP Joint Committee meeting held on 21 September 2021 be noted.	Director Commercial
17.	-	Forward Agenda Plan	To receive the Committee's Forward Agenda Plan.	It was resolved: That the Forward Agenda Plan and cancellation of 17 January 2022 Committee meeting be noted.	Democratic Services Officer (Committees)

Please Note: These decisions will come into effect on Monday 29 November 2021 unless any 3 Members object and call-in the decision. The call-in must be in writing to the Chief Executive and be received by Monday 22 November 2021. Recommendations of the Policy Committees to other bodies (or to Council) cannot be called-in, nor can any decisions categorised as urgent in accordance with the call-in procedure.