

Dear Councillor

CABINET - TUESDAY, 17 JUNE 2025

I am now able to enclose for consideration at the above meeting the following reports that were unavailable when the agenda was printed.

**Agenda Item
No.**

4. DISCRETIONARY CHARGES IN PLANNING INFRASTRUCTURE AND PUBLIC PROTECTION(Pages 3 - 6)

To consider a report outlining a strategic proposal to review and enhance discretionary Charges in Planning, Infrastructure and Public Protection, focusing on enhancing service delivery, covering rising operational costs, reacting to national government changes and ensuring the sustainability of the services

Executive Councillor: B Mickelburgh

5. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2025/26(Pages 7 - 8)

To consider a report presenting the refreshed targets and tolerances for the suite of key performance indicators approved in the Corporate Plan 2025/26.

Executive Councillor: S Ferguson.

6. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT, QUARTER 4 2024/25(Pages 9 - 10)

To consider a report on progress with Corporate Plan actions/projects and the results of operational performance measures as at the end of Quarter 4 (January to March 2025).

Executive Councillors: S Ferguson and L Davenport-Ray.

7. FINANCE PERFORMANCE REPORT - PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2024/25(Pages 11 - 12)

To consider a report setting out the provisional outturn for the financial year 2024/25 for both revenue and capital.

Executive Councillor: B Mickelburgh

8. TREASURY MANAGEMENT OUTTURN REPORT 2024/25(Pages 13 - 14)

To consider a report which sets out the treasury performance for the period between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.

Executive

Councillor:

B

Mickelburgh.

Discretionary Fees- Planning & Public Protection

Comments of Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth)

1.1 The Overview & Scrutiny (Performance & Growth) Panel discussed the report at its meeting on 10th June 2025.

1.2 Councillor Martin requested confirmation as to when this was first discussed. The Panel heard that an exact date could not be provided but matters like this are discussed regularly with the Officers. Councillor Martin continued, referencing the Budget and Policy Framework procedure rules and claimed the procedure had not been followed in this instance, quoting part 2.1, part A of the Constitution. He reiterated that the Panel should have notified as soon as it came up. It was confirmed to the Panel that the notices had been presented correctly and the procedure has been followed. Councillor Martin confirmed that he fully supports the proposal of charging additional fees but would like to make the Recommendation that this not be delegated to Officers but charges to remain a decision of Full Council. The Panel heard that the Officers have adopted a new system 2 months ago which highlighted the upturn in Section 106 agreements which must be signed. This must reach the July Council otherwise they will be doing this at cost to the Council. The Panel were informed this had been brought to them in June to allow them time to scrutinise and be fully informed before Full Council in July. The Panel were also asked to consider agility when debating the proffered Recommendation suggested. The report is based on data and guidance that's been gathered by other Councils. The team are undertaking a viability assessment as part of the development of the Local Plan. If there are viability recommendations that suggest we need to make changes at pace, is the timescale to bring something to Full Council. Delegation needs to be crafted so there are no unintended consequences that could impact other work streams.

Councillor Martin expressed his concerns about setting a dangerous precedent as this would be the only discretionary charge that could be changed outside of a Full Council meeting, if this were approved.

It was confirmed that the Panel could make this Recommendation to Council and that the whole budget process must be separated from variations in-year to the budget which is why the issue is going ahead to Council to be considered. It was confirmed to the Panel that new legislation is coming that will introduce a new process and that Officers would like to be empowered in an appropriate framework to enable making those decisions in the best interests of the Council.

1.3 Councillor Taylor sought clarification as to Options 3:4:2 and 3:4:3 in the report, regarding making recommendations to Council. The Panel heard that, due to the nature of the report, it will go to Full Council in July. It is with the Panel tonight. The

Chair requested further clarification from the Officer on the implications of delaying. The Panel heard that there are a number of 106 agreements which must be signed. These can wait until the decision by Full Council in July but having to sign them now delay further would result in them being monitored for the next 30 years at a cost. They have a Developers Forum and would ask for assistance in this so they can bring the question of fees to the Forum. It was noted to the Panel that costs, such as PPA's are already included in the budget. Moving forward It would be the BNG monitoring fees. They will be able to a budget bid for the new line in August to build that in going forward.

- 1.4 Councillor Jennings asked why the scale of charges couldn't be set at Full Council in July. The Panel heard that the challenge could be that one person spends more and the next will be paying less in comparison. The example made was householders being unduly penalised where the larger developer would be getting a much better deal. They are working with the Finance Team on cost recovery and will be using this and the cost of contractors as a basis of the rates that will be set. They have sought to get feedback from the Developer community but this does not fit in with the July Council meeting.
- 1.5 A solution offered to the Panel would be to limit the delegation for the current financial year only. Councillor Martin agreed to this amendment to his Recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councillor Gardener and the Chair opened the floor for comments on the motion.
- 1.6 Councillor Taylor advised she was happy with the report as it had been presented and believes in putting her trust in the Officers as they are doing this to cover costs, not to make money. It was confirmed to the Panel that they would be working closely with he Section 151 Officer in this.
- 1.7 Councillor McAdam expressed his support for Councillor Martin's amended recommendation and reiterated that whilst the Officers should be making the recommendations, the final decision should lie with the Councillors as they have been elected.
- 1.8 Councillor Pickering expressed concern that this could potentially deter investors from wanting to invest in Huntingdonshire. The Panel heard that this had being taken into consideration as they do not want to deter growth in the region. There is a statutory obligation to monitor BNG and anyone who is undertaking development. They are following guidance from the Planning Advisory service which is what their model is based upon. They intend to be transparent in their costs and will be publishing these on the website. It was confirmed that there will be a possibility of reducing or waiving fees for projects such as community development.

1.9 The Panel hears the new Recommendation and a vote is called. 8 Members are For, 0 Against and 2 Abstainers.

1.10 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for Cabinet to make a decision upon the recommendations within the report, and additionally, the Panel request that the Cabinet consider adding the following recommendation to their report;

- 1) To be delegated to officers identified above for the current financial year only. Discretionary charges to be developed in consultation with relative Executive councillors as set out above but also include and Shadow Executive Councillors for planning and finance.

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Corporate Performance Indicators 2025/26

Comments of Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth)

- 1.1 The Overview & Scrutiny (Performance & Growth) Panel discussed the report at its meeting on 10th June 2025.
- 1.2 Councillor Jennings expressed his pleasure that his previous comments regarding One Leisure targets have been incorporated in the Plan. It demonstrates that Scrutiny does work in practise.
- 1.3 Councillor Martin agreed with Councillor Jennings and expressed his thanks for the adjustments that had been made based on the feedback provided previously. He expressed an interest in receiving further data and statistics from other organisations as this would provide a rounder picture which will aid in the scrutinising process. The Panel heard that it had been a difficult year for reporting due to people leaving but they now have two new Officers who have agreed to continue assisting with the reporting.
- 1.4 Councillor Taylor expressed her concern and reminded Members that setting targets is a good thing, but it must be remembered that behind the data is humans and the cost of setting targets that are unattainable could be demoralising. The Panel heard that they have always been cognizant of that and that they are trying to encourage people, drive performances and reward excellent performance. This is carried out with the consent of the Service owners, and they try not to set unattainable targets. They have adjusted 2 on the report for this reasoning.
- 1.5 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for an informed decision to be made on the report recommendations.

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Corporate Performance Report, Quarter 4 2024/25

Comments of Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth)

1.1 The Overview & Scrutiny (Performance & Growth) Panel discussed the report at its meeting on 10th June 2025.

1.2 Councillor Jennings expressed frustrations regarding P121 of the Corporate Performance review, Quarter 4 and that the red items were explained to be a blip and that they would be coming back up whereas with each quarterly report, they appear to be getting further away. The Panel heard that this view was respected, and this was a rare off year for the service and may be contributed to the Green Waste subscription as well as other factors. They are looking to fix this next year and that the service's ambitious targets are something that they are striving to achieve. Councillor Jennings went on to confirm the report advised the Green Waste subscription did not impact this and that missed bins is a big concern for residents. The Panel were advised there was nothing further to be said regarding this issue. The panel were made aware that the target for missed bins was an ambitious stretch target which the service would rather retain to strive for improvement, that performance remains ahead of the APSE comparator Councils.

1.3 Councillor Taylor requested clarification in relation to action 34 within the Corporate Plan specifically for more detail regarding the expressions of interest to develop the Local Skills Implementation plan. St Neots was presented as an example of having received 10 under the CPCA skills capital grant funding. Councillor Taylor wanted to understand what this looked like and how much involvement the local community had with this. The Panel heard this would be taken away and responded to by the Officers. Councillor Taylor wanted to see a performance relating to the new funding that will be received to assist in completing projects. The Panel were advised that they were not keen to report on funding for projects that have not begun yet as this would open the door to lots of schemes that need to be funded. The Panel also heard that the project for Quarter 4 is now completed and anything further would need to be discussed with the Portfolio holder and the coming year's budget setting process would be the time to explore future funding further.

1.4 Councillor Gardener conveyed disappointment over the PI L18, 9% reduction in household waste recycled and reused since the implementation of the Green Wastes subscription service. PI L20 confirms household residual waste has increased and believes this is a bad look for the Council as this is not very 'green' since this has resulted in 247,000 tonnes of additional waste to go to landfill. The Panel heard that being unable to collect food waste had been an issue, but this would be resolved next year by introducing the new food waste service from April 2026. They also heard that waste is measured by weight resulting in a disproportion shift in the percentage

recycled when considering changes in green waste as food waste is heavier than for example recycled plastic. Huntingdonshire is working at the forefront of the implementation of Household food waste collections as part of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Waste Partnership and has received transition funding from the government to support the establishment of separate household food waste collection. This service will go live in April 2026.

1.5 Councillor Corney expressed his thanks to the Community Action Team service and commended them on the job they do. He requested clarification on what occurred in October/November of 2024 to push the fly tipping numbers into red and asked if any events at the recycling centres had an impact on this. The Panel heard that the hours of operation for the recycling centre had changed and were operating reduced seasonal less hours. The Panel heard further explanation could be discussed with the Community Action Team as the Officers investigate fly tipping thoroughly and would have a greater understanding of this matter.

1.6 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for an informed decision to be made on the report recommendations.

Finance Performance Report – Provisional Outturn 2024/25

Comments of Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth)

1.1 The Overview & Scrutiny (Performance & Growth) Panel discussed the report at its meeting on 10th June 2025.

1.2 Councillor Martin was appreciative that time was made for the report to be run through with him ahead of tonight's meeting. He wanted members of the public to understand that though this shows an overspending amount of £56,000, they are in fact £4 million better off than first set out in the budget. He reflected on the tough decisions they potentially wouldn't have had to make if they had known this would be the outcome. The Panel heard that £2 million of that £4.2 million was included within the budget as contributions to the Workforce Strategy to the Future Financial Sustainability earmarked reserves. The additional 2.2 million contributions to earmarked reserves were funded by additional interest receivable on cash investments. The Council has higher cash balances, and the interest has remained high. It was advised that if the interest changed or if they had not been as prudent in budget setting, the result would be very different, and it is impossible to predict when or if interest rates will change.

1.3 Councillor Jennings expressed his thanks for the table and its usefulness. He brought attention to the debt owed to the Council over a year old, referencing the £165, 000 owed to HDC for 3CICT services, wanting clarification about what this is and the likelihood of its recoverability. The Panel were informed that this is a primarily debt owed by Cambridge City Council for services. The new Chief Digital and Information Officer is on top of this and leaning heavily to get this debt paid. Councillor Jennings requested a layman's explanation for the Panel relating to the reduction in minimum revenue provision as he struggled to understand its meaning. The Panel heard that this is a statutory provision to repay debt. The provision is made up of many assets. This is based on the previous year's capital programme. It is best practise to review this annually and recalibrate it. If you don't have to make as much provision, that allows more money for Service provisions.

1.4 Councillor Taylor sought clarification on where the funding for the health and wealth building came from that was put aside at full Council. The Panel heard that this was a matter taken to the Overview & Scrutiny (Environment, Communities and Partnerships). A full discussion and presentation were given by Claudia Deeth and John Taylor to that Panel. The next steps are leading towards a small pilot scheme of grant arrangements. This issue falls under the remit of the other Scrutiny Panel and further clarification can be found in those papers and the recording.

1.5 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for an informed decision to be made on the report recommendations.

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Treasury Management Outturn Report 2024/25

Comments of Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Performance & Growth)

1.1 The Overview & Scrutiny (Performance & Growth) Panel discussed the report at its meeting on 10th June 2025.

1.2 Councillor Gleadow expressed her appreciation for the new Treasury Management Outturn report format, the graphs made the report a much easier read.

1.3 Councillor Martin agreed with Councillor Gleadow in that the report was very detailed and asked for confirmation of any issues that are foreseen that will negatively impact the good financial position (specifically in relation to treasury management) the Council is currently in. The Panel heard that interest rates are a concern, the forecasts received are from for the Bank of England lending rate rather than general investment interest rates, in addition the Council has a lot of money invested with the DMO and there is little historic evidence, and as a result a risk, in relation to how far and fast the DMO interest rates could fall if general interest rates start to drop (ie DMO could fall faster due to other factors). The DMO is used as there is a guarantee from the Government that they will repay it investments. Another factor to consider is global unrest and how that impacts the economy such as driving inflation or interest rates. The Russia-Ukraine war breaking out was drawn on as an example of this.

1.4 Following the discussion, the Panel were informed that their comments would be added to the Cabinet report in order for an informed decision to be made on the report recommendations.

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