



Cambridgeshire
County Council

Capital Strategy

2023-2024

cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Contents

- 1: Executive summary
- 2: Strategic Context
- 3: Capital Investment Mapping
- 4: Future Years' Strategy Development
- 5: Detailed Strategy

Full appendices will be available with the final draft of this strategy in January.

1. Executive Summary

The Council's strategic financial framework is comprised of three distinct, but interdependent, strategies set out within this Business Plan:

- Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) (Section 2)
- Capital Strategy (Section 6)
- Treasury Management Strategy (Section 7)

This Strategy describes how the Council's investment of capital resources over the next ten years, matched by key partners, will optimise the ability of the Council to achieve its Strategic Vision and Corporate Priorities outlined within the Council's Strategic Framework. The Strategy is concerned with all aspects of the Council's capital expenditure programme: planning; prioritisation; management; and funding, and is updated each year as part of the Business Planning process.

The Council achieves its vision to "Create a greener, fairer, more caring Cambridgeshire" through delivery of its Business Plan, which targets seven key ambitions. To assist in delivering the Plan, the Council needs to undertake capital investment in order to deliver on its major commitments. This includes investment in new schools and in modernising school buildings, regeneration and improvement of the county's transport infrastructure and tackling the Council's ambitious net-zero target towards 2045.

It is crucial that when long-term investment decisions are undertaken, decision-makers can rely on clear and informed information. This includes:

- A long-term view of capital expenditure plans and any financial risks to which the Council is exposed.
- Ensuring due regard to the long-term financing affordability implications and potential risks.
- A clear overview of the Council's asset management planning arrangements and any maintenance requirements that have resource and business planning implications.

2. Strategic context

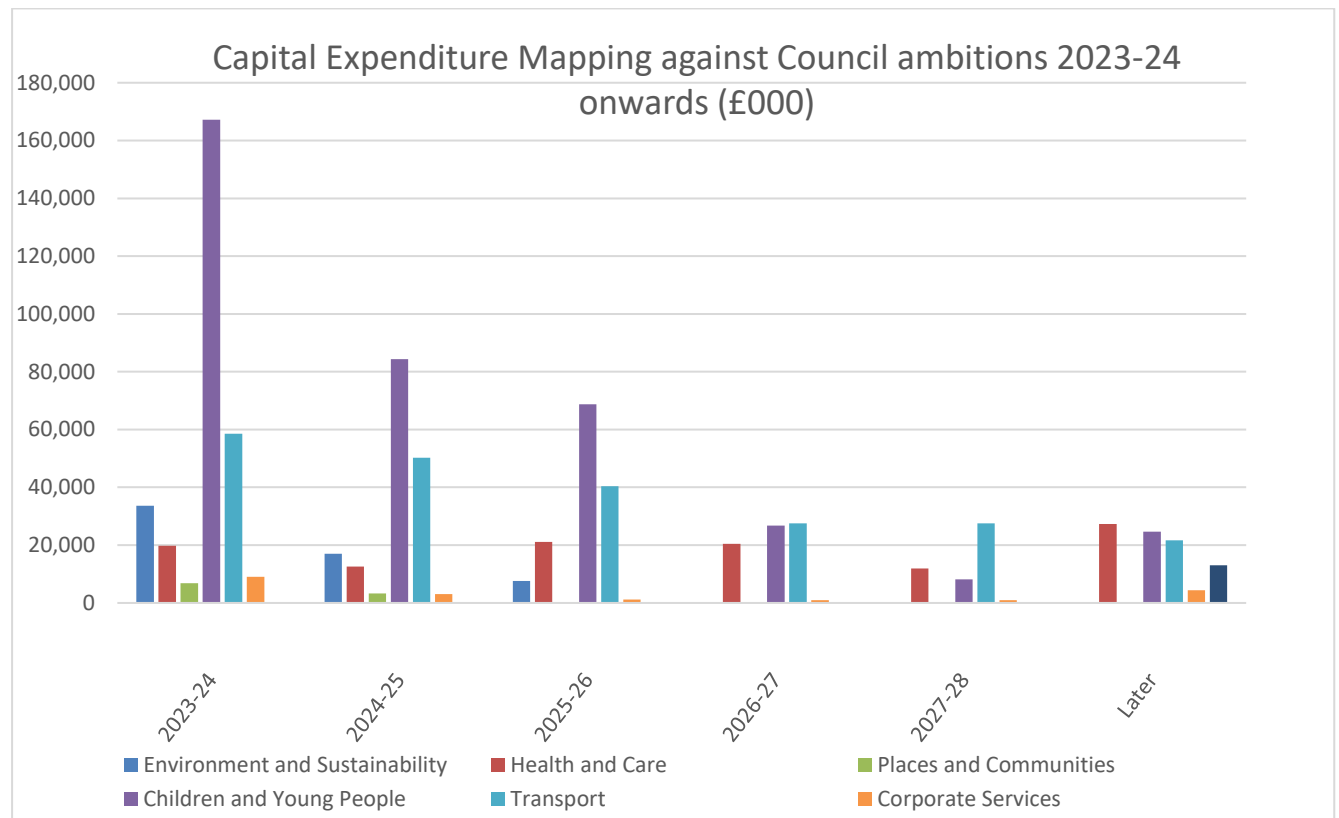
The development of this Strategy, along with the Council's other core strategies and plans, is informed by the current and longer-term strategic context, as set out in the Strategic Framework.

Cambridgeshire is a fast-growing place. In 2021, approximately 679,000 people lived in Cambridgeshire, one of the fastest growing populations over the last decade. Cambridge City was the second highest growing local authority in the East of England, mainly concentrating in younger adults, while our rural districts are seeing higher growth in over 65s. We expect population growth to continue through the next decade, particularly for our older age groups. Cambridgeshire also has areas of deprivation, including 16 neighbourhoods in the 20% most relatively deprived nationally.

The Climate Change and Environment Strategy sets out the Council's ambition for tackling the climate and biodiversity emergencies. The carbon footprint for Cambridgeshire in 2020 was 6.9m tonnes of CO₂ emissions; for this Council it was 113,000 tonnes. We must work over the coming years to reduce the carbon footprint of both the Council and the County, with targets for these to be net zero by 2030 and 2045 respectively.

3. Capital Investment Mapping

The Council's investment ambition can be mapped to the Council's priorities as follows:



A more detailed review of the Capital Programme is provided in part 5d.

4. Future Years Strategy Development

The Capital Strategy is constantly undergoing development as part of a process of continuous improvement to support members in their decision making.

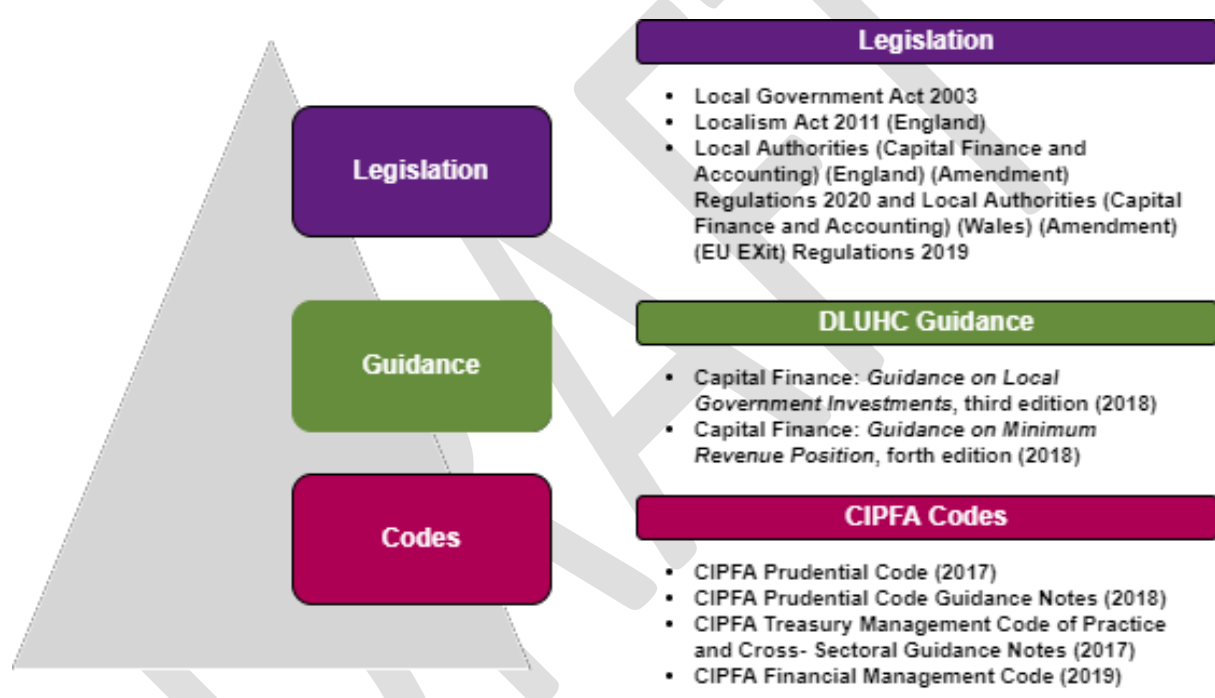
Future identified activity includes:

- Further development of the long-term (20-to-30-years) approach to the Capital Strategy, aligned to our longer-term corporate strategies
- Alignment with the ongoing development of the corporate strategy
- Assessment of asset management planning to inform decision making and risk as part of the development of the new Asset Management Strategy
- Updates to reflect the new Prudential Code, due to be implemented in 2023-24, and any other changes to statutory guidance
- Review of Business Case best practice and alignment of the prioritisation process with the new Corporate Priorities and Triple Bottom Line approach
- Continuing development of the use of carbon emissions assessment within investment decisions across all schemes.

5. Detailed Strategy

5a. Statutory Framework

Local Government capital finance is governed and operates under the Prudential Framework in England, Wales, and Scotland. The Prudential Framework is an umbrella term for several statutory provisions and professional requirements that allow authorities largely to determine their own plans for capital investment, subject to an authority following due process in agreeing these plans and being able to provide assurance that they are prudent and affordable. The relevant legislation, guidance and codes are set out as follows:



5b. Working with partners

The Council is committed to developing strong and positive partnerships that not only enhance the investment potential of the Council through opportunities for support and contributions from third parties but enable delivery of the Council's Corporate Priorities. Partnership working enables the

Council to leverage a larger package of investment that extends beyond our investment potential as an individual organisation.

There are a range of capital schemes currently being delivered in conjunction with partners and our commitment to social and environmental values further demonstrate our aspiration to work with the public and private sector to deliver better outcomes for people, the environment, and communities. The following summarises some of the Council's key partnerships.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA)

The CPCA, led by the Mayor and representatives from the seven constituent councils, was created in 2017 to deliver the region's devolution deal. The CPCA works with the Business Board (the Local Enterprise Partnership) and other local partners to deliver strategic projects. Key ambitions for the Combined Authority include:

- doubling the size of the local economy
- delivering outstanding and much needed connectivity in terms of
- transport and digital links
- providing the UK's most technically skilled workforce
- growing international recognition for our knowledge-based economy
- improving the quality of life by tackling areas suffering from deprivation.

The Mayor and Combined Authority has a role to play in enabling carbon reduction and adaptation to climate change; therefore, the CPCAs activities and policies are informed by an ambition to tackle climate change.

The CPCA receives funding and powers from Central Government, which the Mayor and the Combined Authority Board oversee, and it sets out strategies and plans for delivering its ambitions. It is expected that CCC will deliver much of the capital work commissioned by the CPCA within Cambridgeshire, and several schemes form part of our capital programme.

Greater Cambridge Partnership

The Greater Cambridge Partnership is the local delivery body for a City Deal with central Government, bringing powers and investment, worth up to £500 million over 15 years, to vital improvements in infrastructure, supporting and accelerating the creation of 44,000 new jobs, 33,500 new homes and 420 additional apprenticeships.

It is the largest of several City Deal programmes agreed by central Government in 2013 and brings key partners together to work with communities, businesses, and industry leaders to support the continued growth of one of the world's leading tourism and business destinations. The four partners are:

- Cambridge City Council
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- South Cambridgeshire District Council
- University of Cambridge

The Executive Board is made up of members from the four partners, plus one member nominated by the CPCA Business Board.

In 2013, £100m of government funding was made available for transport improvements until 2020. Following successful completion of the Gateway Review in May 2020, an extra £200 million funding was made available up to 2025. The Greater Cambridge Partnership continues to explore funding opportunities, for example through Section 106 agreements with developers, and to explore private funding opportunities.

It is expected that Cambridgeshire County Council will undertake most of this work on behalf of the GCP. It is important to ensure that the strategic infrastructure scoped and delivered through the City Deal reduces carbon emissions through designing out carbon emissions where it can from the construction and operation of any new assets as well as a strategic goal of the infrastructure itself.

Connecting Cambridgeshire

The Connecting Cambridgeshire programme is improving Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's digital infrastructure – including broadband, mobile and public access Wi-fi coverage – to drive economic growth, help our businesses and communities to thrive and make it easier to access public services. The project is hosted by Cambridgeshire County Council and led by the CPCA, working with Peterborough City Council (PCC), Government bodies, local councils, and

external organisations, including telecoms suppliers and mobile operators.

Together with £3m from PCC and £8.75m Government funding, the Council's initial outlay of £20m in 2011 has since been used to leverage over £42m of direct funding, from external public and private sector sources, including £7.5m from the CPCA to extend the programme to improve mobile and public access Wi-fi, as well as fibre broadband. The broadband rollout has now brought superfast access to over 98.5% of premises, above the national average, which means the programme is on track to reach the 99% target. Project Gigabit means that 75% of premises can now access gigabit capable broadband coverage with download speeds of at least 1000Mbps. Coverage is increasing at pace through direct intervention and commercial deployment towards exceeding the Government target of 85% by 2025.

The Connecting Cambridgeshire Digital Connectivity Strategy 2021-2025 gives an overview of work underway to significantly improve broadband, mobile and public access Wi-fi coverage across the region by 2025. The strategy for the period 2021-2025 builds on the foundations of the existing programme, incorporating multiple workstreams, targeting the different aspects of digital connectivity from broadband, mobile, 'Smart' technology, and public access Wi-Fi to ensure that Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are well positioned to take full advantage of current and emerging technological advances.

This Land

This Land Ltd was established as a wholly owned company of the Council in 2016 in order to enable development of land for housing. The company aims to develop the land it has acquired, predominantly from the Council, to provide individual, high-quality homes and new communities that are in much demand across Cambridgeshire and the surrounding counties in the East of England. As of November 2022, the Council had issued long-term loans of £113.851m, for which it receives an annual revenue return by way of interest payments, and equity of £5.851m to This Land. During 2021, the Council undertook a shareholder review of This Land, assessing its commercial operation and future exposure to risk. Several key areas for action were identified, including governance, resourcing and personnel, improving the commercial and financial position of the company and taking opportunities to deliver on broader objectives through the company's work. Both the Council and the company have been addressing these actions during 2022, monitored through shareholder liaison meetings and formally at Strategy and Resources Committee.

Light Blue Fibre

Light Blue Fibre Ltd, one of the first of its kind in the UK, is a joint venture between the University of Cambridge and Cambridgeshire County Council, making both organisations' existing extensive duct and fibre networks commercially available. It aims to attract telecoms companies, infrastructure providers and technology businesses who understand the importance of full fibre connectivity and are looking to save time and money by reducing the need for expensive and time-consuming infrastructure developments.

One Public Estate (OPE)

OPE is an established national programme delivered in partnership by the Office of Government Property (OGP) within the Cabinet Office and the Local Government Association (LGA). It provides practical and technical support and funding to councils to deliver ambitious property-focused programmes in collaboration with central government and other public sector partners. Cambridgeshire's OPE group allows partners, including the district councils, health partners and the emergency services, to effectively collaborate on strategic asset management and rationalise the combined operational property estate within the county. The programme has secured up to £3.3m in funding so far to bring forward major projects for joint asset rationalisation and land release. OPE projects that are being delivered in conjunction with OPE partners include:

- Huntingdonshire District Council - North Huntingdon Strategic Growth Partnership – Wyton redevelopment
- Cambridgeshire Community Services (CCS) - Ely Princess of Wales Hospital redevelopment
- CCS - Wisbech North Cambridge Hospital redevelopment
- Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) - Joint Highways Depot move (from Whittlesford to Swavesey A14)
- CCS / CCC - Ely Care Home (at Ely Princess of Wales)
- Peterborough City Council - Peterborough Middleholme (BLRF)
- Fenland District Council (FDC) - Fenland Nene Waterfront (BLRF)
- CCS / Cambridge City Council (City) - Brookfields / Seymour St
- FDC – Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT) - Cambridgeshire Public Sector Accommodation review including NHS ICS and NHS Neighbourhood Hubs Alconbury
- City - Aylesborough Close Ph2, Cambridge

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Council also works closely with the city and district councils on the creation of new infrastructure needed as a result of development. CIL is at the discretion of the Local Planning Authority i.e., the city and district councils, who are responsible for setting the levy and have the final decision on how the funds are spent. However, as the County Council has responsibility for the provision of much of the infrastructure resulting from development, it is imperative that it is involved in the CIL governance arrangements of the city and district councils, and that it works closely with these authorities to ensure that it is able to influence investment decisions that affect the Council's services.

Local Area Energy Planning

Local Area Energy Planning is about determining the most cost-effective way of reaching net zero; identifying the partnerships that need to be created and the investments that will be required to achieve this. There are three strands:

- Place making – to achieve low carbon, oil and gas infrastructure use needs shifting to greater levels of 'electricity infrastructure', which will be the dominant infrastructure for heating and lighting buildings and transport for cars and light vans – or hydrogen for heavy transport. The Council therefore has a role in infrastructure planning and delivery.
- Green Investment – the Council can use its assets e.g., buildings and land either to host energy generation, for battery storage for larger projects or to become part of a project as an anchor tenant. The Council can also invest in energy projects for carbon reductions and carbon removals and potentially benefit from this.
- Local energy economy – investing in local energy provides jobs and services locally and financial benefits for the local economy. For example, skills investment to support retrofitting of buildings is supporting local business to build their capabilities as the market demand increases through government incentives

The Council is in the initial stages of scoping out the process, with budget allocated to progress this during 2022-23.

Large Energy Projects

Swaffham Prior Community Heat Network

The Council is collaborating with Swaffham Prior Community Land Trust, and

together, has brought renewable energy to Swaffham Prior by becoming one of the first villages in the UK to install a heating network into an existing community. The village is not connected to the gas grid, meaning 70% of homes rely on burning oil for heating. The ambition is to:

- Reduce future fuel poverty in rural off-gas communities
- Reduce dependence on oil to cut carbon emissions
- Provide cheaper, renewable heating to as many homes as possible

Over half the village have already outlined their intention to join the Heat Network, which will use Ground Source and Air Source Heat Pumps pumped through a community network to provide thermal energy, recognising the need for change and the Government's plans to phase out gas and oil boilers. The Energy Centre has been built and the heating network pipes have been laid, to which homes will be connected over time. The first home connections have been actioned and a programme is being developed to connect the first half of the village by May 2023. Over the next five years, homes will be connected as they look to come off oil or costly electricity heating. The Council's role will become that of the Energy Supplier in conjunction with the Council's technical partner, Bouygues Energy and Services Ltd, managing the heat network.

Energy Performance Services Framework Contract

Early in 2021, the Council entered into contract with Bouygues Energies and Services Ltd and SSE Energy Solutions for design and delivery of clean energy projects to benefit the Council financially, cut energy consumption and reduce carbon emissions. The Framework, led by Bouygues Energies and Services Ltd, includes strategic partners such as UK Power Networks consulting, Envision Digital, Element Energy, Cambridge Cleantech and Cambridge University Leadership in Sustainability, providing insight on the market and technological innovations. This procurement brings the engineering design skills, capabilities and capacities required for a wide range of energy projects including heat networks, building retrofits, electric vehicle charging, smart energy grids and solar farms. It is only through a partnering arrangement such as this that the Council can bring the advanced knowledge and skills from the private sector and focus it on the future energy system challenges and the role the Council plays in facilitating and benefiting from this change. For example, the Council has developed and constructed a new 37MW solar farm which will be generating renewable energy from summer 2023. It will generate sufficient renewable electricity for the equivalent of powering 10,000 homes. Not only will this investment generate local energy, building greater energy security for Cambridgeshire, but it will now directly power the heat pumps at the Swaffham

Prior Community Heat Network Energy Centre to reach a 98% decarbonisation of heating and hot water for homes connecting to the scheme.

Smart Energy Grids – Babraham and St Ives Park and Rides

The Council is partnering with local organisations to deliver clean electricity, build local energy resilience, and cut carbon emissions. These two projects are currently under construction and will add solar PV canopies over the car parking, electric vehicle charging for cars and buses, battery storage, and supply local customers with renewable electricity. Both projects will complete during 2023-24 and are establishing the case for new business and investment models. The innovation is integrating a number of low carbon technologies together with control systems to direct energy flows to where it is needed, and facilitating electricity sales directly to customers on or next to the sites.

Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Pilot - Cambridge

Collaborating with Cambridge City Council, the Council has installed 19 fast chargers in the Riverside and West Chesterton areas. The procurement leveraged a further 4 rapid chargers as social value. Two grants were successfully applied for to fund this project – £1.5m from the Green Recovery Fund to cover the electricity network reinforcements required and £142k from the On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme to fund 75% of the chargepoint installation. Both the City Council and CCC have part match-funded the scheme, totalling £45k.

School Retrofit and Low Carbon Heating Programmes

The Council has supported over 60 Cambridgeshire schools to make energy savings and generate local renewable energy. Total investment to date is £16.4m, funded by Government grants, prudential borrowing and some local contributions. Together this is saving £837k on school energy bills and 2,006 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per annum. Altogether, 8 schools are having low carbon heating solutions installed and a further 19 are in the pipeline. Of particular note is Comberton Village College, where oil boilers in 10 plant rooms have been replaced by a ground source heat pump solution. This was constructed during 2022 and is now being commissioned for operation from early 2023.

Decarbonising Council Offices

Twenty-two Council buildings have been taken off gas and oil boilers to date, and moved to Air Source Heat Pumps to cut carbon emissions. These 22 projects between them are expected to save approximately 370 tonnes CO₂ emissions per year. The total cost of these projects was £5.3m, of which £3m was funded

by grants from the UK Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.

5c. Internal Influences

As well as the Council's Corporate Strategy, the Capital Strategy has clear links to many other strategies, policies, and plans. The most significant of those strategies and their influence are detailed below.

Strategy	Influence
Strategic Framework	Ensures the Council's plans are driven by the shared vision to create a greener, fairer, and more caring Cambridgeshire and focuses on achieving a number of outcomes for the people of Cambridgeshire.
Medium Term Financial Strategy	Sets out the financial picture facing the Council over the next five years, the resources available to the Council, and the Council's strategy for managing its resources effectively.
Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy	Sets out how the Council will use the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts direction on transformational activity that reduces costs or demand for services.
Service Financial Plans	Set out the level of financial resources available for each Service area, across both revenue and capital.
Treasury Management Strategy	Establishes the framework for the effective and efficient management of the Council's treasury management activity, including the Council's borrowing and investment portfolio, within legislative, regulatory, and best practice regimes. The Strategy balances risk against reward in the best interests of stewardship of the public purse.
Investment Strategy	In addition to a high-level, long-term overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services, it provides an overview of how the associated risk of financial and non-financial investments is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.
Accommodation Needs Assessment for Older People and People with Physical Disabilities	Sets out Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's long term commissioning intentions for accommodation for older people and adults with physical disabilities to ensure sufficient, affordable, and quality accommodation is available to meet demand up to 2036.

Education Organisation Plan	Sets out the strategic direction on education across the Combined Authority area, based on the Council's statutory duties regarding the sufficiency, diversity, and planning of places for early years, school-aged children (including special schools) and post-16 education and training provision.
Think Communities Approach	A decentralised approach which ensures that the council develops its physical assets in a collaborative way with individual communities and other public sector services to ensure they are relevant, accessible and enhance placed based delivery.
Transport Investment Strategy	Sets out the transport infrastructure, services and initiatives that are required to support the growth of Cambridgeshire.
Transport Delivery Plan	Provides forward visibility of all the planned highway and transport capital schemes on the local network that are in all probability going to be delivered within the 3-year timeframe.
Supporting New Communities Strategy	Ensures that infrastructure in new communities is designed to meet the needs of the community now and in the future. Supports the development of a self-supporting, healthy, and resilient community. Ensures that where people's needs are greater than can be met within community resources, they are supported by the right services and are helped to return to independence.
Planning Obligations Strategy	Sets out the Council's approach to securing developer contributions. Forms the principles for the advice which officers provide, including details about the service areas for which we may seek planning obligations.
Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2022	Sets out the Council's ambitious plans to reduce our own and the county's carbon footprint, and to support others in their efforts
Asset Management Strategy	Provides detail on the framework for operational asset management.
County Farms Estate Strategy	Outlines how the estate will be managed to optimise income and development returns to produce a target revenue return to the Council of 4%, as well as how the estate will be managed to promote rural businesses, healthy living, support nature and protect the environment.

Sustainable Procurement Strategy	Sets out how procurement activity will support the delivery of the Council's priorities and the national priority outcomes in a way which is sustainable – our actions today will only have positive effects for those generations living in the Cambridgeshire of the future. Category Strategies, the Social Value Policy and other procurement related plans and policies will take the lead from this Strategy.
IT Strategy	Articulates how staff in shared services can work effectively with colleagues across both the Council and PCC to deliver more effective services to our citizens. Staff need access to IT that supports this vision and enables secure, easy, and robust sharing with collaboration tools delivered on a cost-effective basis, with the minimum level of duplicate costs for equipment and licences.

Sustainable Procurement Strategy

Procurement activity at the Council will be sustainable and recognise the risk that inaction on climate and biodiversity will create to our economy and social fabric; it will have the most positive environmental, social and economic impacts on a whole life basis.

The Council's procurement activity will be based on the following fundamentals:

- **Managing Risks:** identification, prioritisation, and management of risks to the Council and its communities through procurement.
- **Due Diligence:** always trying to find a way to address adverse sustainability impacts connected with procurement activity.
- **Setting Priorities:** focusing efforts on managing risks and maximising sustainability.
- **Avoiding Complicity:** avoiding being complicit in wrongful activity.
- **Exercising Influence:** trying to influence the behaviour of suppliers and other stakeholders.

There is a golden thread that runs through procurement activity at the Council. The thread links together:

- Regulation
- Contract Procedure Rules
- Procurement Guidance and standard documentation

- Delivery of operational procurement activity

The key priorities of the Strategy are:

1. The Council will support the growth of local businesses and the third sector by making procurement spend more accessible.
2. The Council will increase the levels of social value delivered by our suppliers.
3. The Council will contribute to the Council's Net Zero Targets.
4. The Council will deliver best value outcomes through procurement activity.
5. The Council will ensure that our procurement processes are robust, transparent, non-discriminatory and compliant.

Asset Management Strategy

The Council's Capital Strategy inevitably has strong links to the Council's property Asset Management Strategy, which provides detail on the framework for operational asset management; this includes defining the principles which guide asset management, its role in supporting service delivery and carbon reduction, why property is retained, together with the policies, procedures and working arrangements relating to property assets. The Council's Asset Management Strategy is currently under review and will be developed under the guidance of Strategy and Resources Committee.

The Strategy will focus on the key objectives of:

- Reducing costs
- Co-locating front and/or back-office services
- Reducing carbon emissions
- Adapting assets to build resilience to a changing climate
- Increasing returns on capital
- Opening up investment opportunities
- Improving service delivery to communities

There will also be a detailed review of existing policy and strategy, and in particular a strengthening of the Corporate Landlord model and its links into corporate strategies such as the Sustainable Procurement Strategy, Think Communities and Older People's Accommodation.

Investment Strategy (Non-financial)

Part of the Council's approach of dealing with the twinned pressures of reduced central government funding and growing demand for services has been to deliver better financial returns from property and asset holdings.

CIPFA's Prudential and Treasury Management Codes 2021 require all local authorities to prepare an investment strategy, covering both financial and non-financial assets. The Investment Strategy for financial assets is included within the Treasury Management Strategy; for non-financial assets, it is included here and should provide (in addition to a high-level long-term overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services):

- An overview of how the associated risk of non-financial investments is managed
- The implications for future financial sustainability.

Any commercial acquisition carries with it a degree of risk and as this involves the investment of public funds, the rationale for engaging in such activity should be clear. As with the rest of the Capital Strategy, all investment activity has been undertaken in line with the Council's vision of 'creating a greener, fairer and more caring Cambridgeshire'.

However, recent changes to the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) rules and CIPFA's Prudential Code mean that the Council is not looking to invest further in new commercial property acquisitions beyond the current portfolio over the medium-term.

Whilst no further investment is anticipated, the Council does now hold a commercial property portfolio, and as such, still needs to consider the long-term sustainability risk implicit in becoming too dependent on commercial income, or in taking out too much debt relative to net service expenditure. There are inherent risks associated with commercial activity (for further detail see part 5h) and as such the Council has taken a measured risk approach towards supporting a proportion of its core activity with commercial income. The table below shows the forecast levels of commercial income as a percentage of net service expenditure.

Dependency on Commercial Income:

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Commercial income* to net service expenditure	-3.5%	-3.7%	-3.9%	-4.0%	-3.8%	-3.6%

* Commercial income here includes both financial and non-financial income

As part of this Capital Strategy, the Council sets a debt charges limit during the business planning process as a mechanism to ensure that the Council does not overcommit its revenue resources to servicing debt. This can also be reviewed in terms of debt as a proportion of net service expenditure; for details on this see part 5f. However, it should be noted that the majority of these financing costs do not relate to borrowing incurred for commercial investment, but rather to necessary borrowing required to support the Council's service Capital Programme.

There may be a need in the future to dispose of property investments. This could occur because of the need to return the investment to cash for other purposes, poor financial performance of a particular property, or poor environmental and energy performance, for example. Whilst it is expected that the majority of investments will be held for the medium to long-term in order to achieve the required return and to justify the cost of the acquisition, it is important to understand the opportunities to dispose of any investment. Therefore, as part of the investment decision, consideration has been given to the potential ways in which the Council could "exit" from the investment, such as sale to another investor, sale for redevelopment, etc. These exit strategies are detailed in the current investment portfolio summary in Appendix 1 of this Strategy.

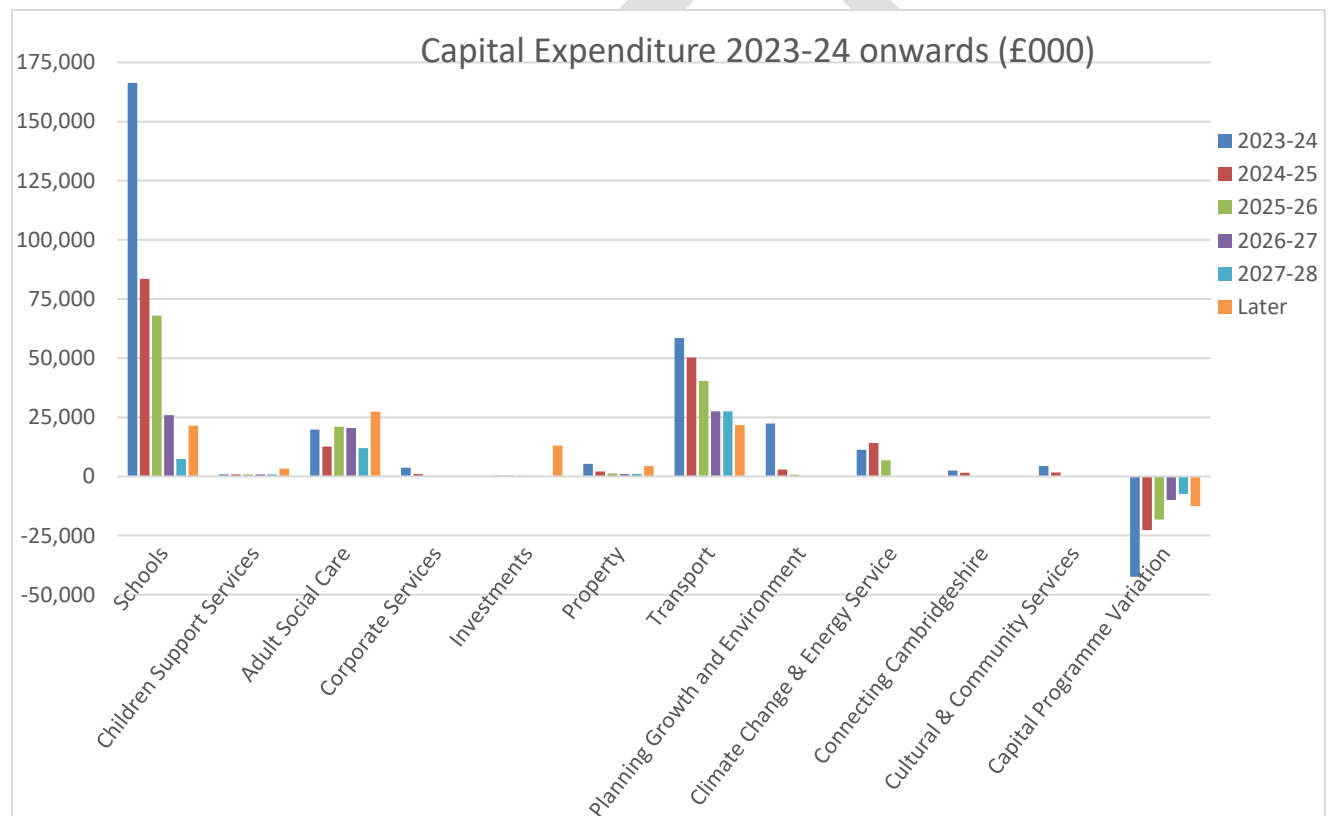
Active monitoring of the performance of individual properties within the portfolio is undertaken jointly across the property and finance teams. If any underperformance is identified, the teams will develop an action plan to determine how to mitigate any increase in risk or threat to ongoing security, liquidity, and yield.

Whilst all capital schemes are expected to contribute to delivery of the Council's

Corporate Priorities, there are some schemes that are also expected to reliably demonstrate revenue income / savings at least equal to the debt charges generated by the scheme's borrowing requirement. These schemes are called Invest to Save or Invest to Earn schemes and will be self-funded in the medium-term.

5d. Capital Investment Plan

Including an estimated previous spend of £560.5m on active schemes, the total value of the 2023-24 Capital Programme is £1.3bn. The following chart and tables provide the areas of spend from 2023-24 onwards; the categories of most significant capital expenditure for the Council are schools and transport.



Schools

Capital Scheme Category	£m	Description
Basic Need	305.7	The population of Cambridgeshire is growing; therefore, additional school places are required. This covers early years, primary and secondary education for both maintained and academy schools, as the Council retains the statutory duty to provide school places.
Adaptions	3.8	Covers rebuilds after major incidents such as fire or flooding, adaptions to bring older buildings up to date in line with the Department of Education Building Bulletin guidance, and work to address long-standing suitability and condition issues.
Condition & Maintenance	27.3	Addresses significant condition and statutory compliance issues identified in maintained schools' asset management plans, ensuring places are sustainable and safe. This funding is used alongside Government grants and loans to fund non-carbon heating solutions in some schools where oil or gas boilers require replacement.
Schools Managed Capital	7.8	This funding is allocated directly to maintained schools to enable them to undertake low-level refurbishments, minor condition and maintenance works, and purchase equipment such as IT.
Specialist Provision	18.7	Covers both basic need provision for Special Educational Need and Disability (SEND) places, as well as adaptions to facilitate placement of children with SEND in mainstream schools in line with decisions taken by the County Resourcing Panel.
Temporary Accommodation	1.0	Enables the Council to increase the number of school places provided using mobile accommodation. This could be related to temporary increases in pupil numbers that do not require long-term resolution or could be a short-

		term solution whilst a longer-term resolution is identified and developed.
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Transport

Capital Scheme Category	£m	Description
Integrated Transport	43.0	Covers local infrastructure improvements regarding accessibility, road safety engineering work, new cycle route provision and the Council's contribution to the Highways Agency A14 upgrade scheme.
Operating the Network	56.0	Carriageway and footway maintenance, improvements to the Rights of Way network, bridge strengthening and traffic signal replacement. It also supports provision of the Integrated Highways Management Centre and Real Time Bus Information system, which provide real-time travel information.
Highways & Transport	126.8	One-off schemes to provide resolutions to specific highways and transport issues. Examples include full reconstruction of the B1050 Shelfords Road and replacement of the King's Dyke level crossing in Whittlesey.

Capital Programme Variation

The nature of capital planning is such that it can be difficult to accurately forecast timing of capital expenditure for each individual scheme, as it is difficult to pinpoint exactly which schemes will experience unforeseen delays. In order to ensure that this does not unduly impact on the revenue position (see part 5f below for further detail on the impact capital has on revenue), the Council employs the use of centrally calculated and allocated Capital Programme Variation budgets in order to reduce the overall level of anticipated borrowing each year to a more accurate level. These budgets are calculated by applying a percentage reduction at Service level to the programme, based on several factors such as historical slippage, the nature of the current schemes in the programme, etc. This explains why the expenditure for this area in the chart

above is negative. As slippage forecasts are reported throughout the year, they are offset against the variation budgets for each Service, leading to a balanced outturn overall up until the point when rephasing exceeds this budget.

Further detail on all schemes can be found within the individual service finance tables (Section 3 of the Business Plan).

5e. Funding the Strategy

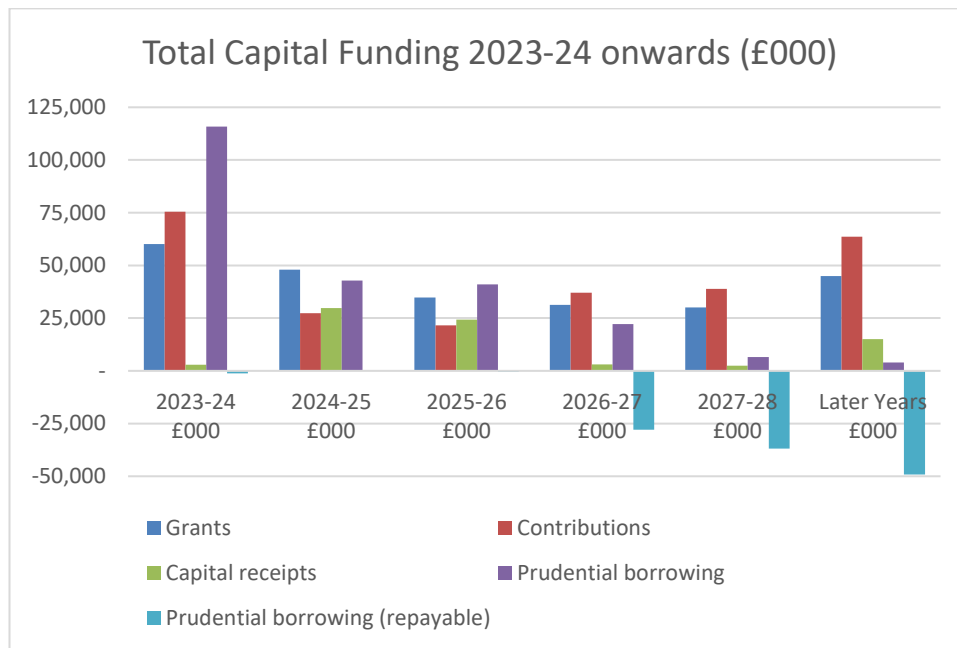
Capital expenditure is financed using a combination of the following funding sources:

Earmarked Funding	Central Government and external grants
	Developer contributions (Section 106), Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and external contributions
	Private Finance Initiative (PFI) / Public Private Partnerships (PPP) ¹
Discretionary Funding	Central Government and external grants
	Prudential Borrowing
	Capital Receipts
	Revenue funding

¹ This source of funding is no longer available for new schemes

A more detailed explanation of these funding sources is provided in Appendix 2 of this Strategy.

The 2023-24 ten-year Programme, worth £707.9m, is budgeted to be funded through £513.5m of external grants and contributions, £77.5m of capital receipts and £116.9m of borrowing.



Prudential borrowing (repayable) normally arises through timing differences between expenditure and receipt of income. This is common in relation to schemes funded, or part-funded, by developer contributions where the timing of the contribution is determined by the pace of development and meeting certain triggers, whereas the infrastructure may be required at an earlier point. For example, a new school may be required early on in a development, even though it will not reach capacity (and therefore will not trigger all the funding milestones usually linked to the number of housing completions) for several years. Prudential borrowing (repayable) will also be used to fund capital loans to other organisations; these loans will eventually be repaid, therefore over the life of the programme the borrowing required is zero. This explains the negative Prudential borrowing (repayable) in later years in the above chart.

Government Grants

Councils have received one-year funding envelopes for three years in a row, which hampers the Council's ability to make efficient and effective decisions over long-term financial planning. The lack of certainty has been further exacerbated by the number of financial reforms which have been put on hold, particularly during the pandemic as well as during various changes in political leadership. The Government's Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) 2021 covered the period 2022-23 to 2024-25; however, despite this, the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2022-23 was only for one year. This is not conducive to robust financial planning, particularly in relation to capital. However, the Autumn Statement delivered in November 2022 did commit to protecting existing capital plans, such that public sector net investment as a

proportion of GDP will average 2.5% over the forecast period, delivering over £600 billion of planned public sector gross investment over the next 5 years. The Local Government Finance Settlement 2023-24 is expected in December 2022.

Government Grants - Highways

As part of the National Infrastructure delivery Plan, a National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) was created to provide an additional £1.1bn of funding by 2020-21 to relieve congestion and deliver upgrades on local roads and public transport networks. In 2018-19, a £1.7bn Transforming Cities Fund was created out of the NPIF to target projects that drive productivity by improving connectivity, reducing congestion, and utilising mobility services and technology; the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) was allocated £74m from this fund. Key measures in relation to the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor have also been announced, including a commitment to build up to 1 million new homes in the area by 2050, £5m to develop the proposals for Cambridge South Station, and construction on key elements of the Expressway between Cambridge and Oxford, ready to be open by 2030.

In addition to the Highways Maintenance formula allocation, the Department for Transport (DfT) provide an Incentive Fund. This fund is to help reward local highway authorities who can demonstrate they are delivering value for money in carrying out asset management to deliver cost effective improvements. Each authority self- assesses themselves against set criteria that determines which of three bands they are allocated to (Band 3 being the highest performing). The Council continues to be successful in maintaining Band 3 status and for 2022-23 has secured the maximum funding available of £10.2m. However, this represents a 29% reduction in needs and incentive-based funding as compared to 2020-21 when the Council received £14.6m. This is reflective of a £250m reduction in the overall national allocations. We await DfT to provide confirmation of the grant funding to be provided for 2023-24, which is anticipated in early 2023, and likely to remain at 2022-23 levels.

The 2019 Conservative Manifesto committed to an additional £2bn of additional funding for pothole repair: £500m per annum from 2020-21. For 2020-21, the funding provided by DfT came via the new Pothole Fund, which was an amalgamation of previous Challenge Fund monies and the old Pothole Action Fund. This resulted in a funding allocation for the Council of £10.2m in 2020-21 and a further £8.3m in both 2021-22 and 2022-23. It is anticipated that the DfT will provide a further £8.3m in 2023-24.

In the Spending Review 2021, the Government announced:

- £2.7bn over the next 3 years for local roads maintenance.
- £3bn of bus investment, including £1.2bn for bus transformation deals in England to deliver London-style services, fare, and infrastructure improvements, and a further £355m new funding for zero emission buses.
- £2bn of investment in cycling and walking to build hundreds of miles of high-quality, segregated bike lanes and other facilities to improve

cyclists' safety. This includes £710m of new investment in active travel funding over the next 3 years.

Any allocations of this grant to Cambridgeshire will be factored into the business planning process as they are announced.

As the CPCA is now the local transport authority it therefore receives the above DfT local transport authority designated funding, but the CPCA continues to commission the Council to carry out the required works on the transport network.

Government Grants – Levelling Up

The Levelling Up White Paper was published in February 2022, setting out in detail the framework and next steps for spreading opportunity more equally across the United Kingdom. The Government aim is to support local economic growth in order to regenerate town centres and high streets, support individuals into employment, improve local transport links and invest in local culture, while giving communities a stronger voice to take over cherished local assets that might otherwise be lost.

The White Paper promises a series of next steps:

- consultation on missions and metrics and the new devolution framework
- the establishment of a new independent body focusing on local government data
- rolling out Levelling Up Directors across the UK, alongside a new Levelling Up Advisory Council
- simplifying growth funding
- creating three sub-groups to support the levelling up advisory council
- introducing future legislation to create an obligation on the UK Government to publish an annual report on progress and to strengthen devolution legislation in England.

To support these objectives, the Government has launched four new investment programmes to support communities right across the country. All share common challenges and opportunities, which the Government is anticipating to address in collaboration with local partners. These investment programmes are:

- The UK Community Renewal Fund: £220m of funding to help local areas prepare for the launch of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. 1,073 bids were submitted by the deadline of June 2021; 477 bids have been accepted totally £203m. The CPCA submitted 7 bids, of which 2 totalling £3.4m were successful.
- The Levelling Up Fund: £4.8bn of funding to invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK, including regenerating town centres and high streets, upgrading local transport, and investing in culture and heritage assets. The first round allocated £1.7bn to fund 105 projects; none of the local authorities in Cambridgeshire received any funding under this round. Applications for the second round closed in August 2022; outcomes of this round will be announced by the end of 2022, however the Autumn Statement 2022 confirmed this round would allocate at least £1.7bn.
- The Community Ownership Fund: £150m of funding over 4 years to help ensure communities can support and continue benefiting from the local facilities, community assets and amenities most important to them. The first 21 projects were announced as part of the 2021 Spending Review (none relate to Cambridgeshire). The second round is currently open with applications closing in December 2022; the fund is expected to be delivered over at least 8 bidding rounds.
- The UK Shared Prosperity Fund: £2.6bn of funding for investment by March 2025, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation via a funding formula, rather than a competition, recognising that even the most affluent parts of the UK contain pockets of deprivation and need support. Investment plans were required to be submitted by August 2022, with the first payments expected from October 2022.

Government Grants – Environment

A new discounted interest rate was introduced in 2018, accessible to authorities for 3 years to support up to £1bn of infrastructure projects that are ‘high value for money’. The Council submitted two bids to access this discounted interest rate; in November 2019 it was notified that the bids had been successful, and the Council can now secure £61m of borrowing at a discount of 0.4% below standard PWLB borrowing rates. This will support a variety of energy investment

and community energy schemes to be delivered by 2023-24. The first tranche was accessed in March 2020 when the Council applied for £8m at the discounted rate, followed by a second tranche of £6m in August 2021 and a third tranche of £9m in December 2021.

Following on from this, the UK Infrastructure Bank (UKIB) opened for business in June 2021 and was initially expected to unlock more than £40bn of infrastructure investment. The Autumn Statement 2022 announced that the Government is placing the Bank on a statutory footing, cementing its status as a key institution that will facilitate long-term investment in infrastructure to tackle climate change and support regional and local growth. The Council is evaluating whether any of our schemes should apply for this investment.

The Government has set up several grant schemes to support the retrofit of existing buildings called the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund, Community Heat Fund, Home Upgrade Grants, a 'Prospering from the Energy revolution' fund and a whole stream of other pump prime funding. It has also brought forward the Environment Bill and Agriculture Act; these will bring inward investment to change the way we do things and value public goods.

The Council has secured over £6m of funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to help decarbonise heating and improve energy efficiency in Council buildings and schools. The Council is part of the Cambridgeshire Energy Retrofit Partnership (CERP); this covers all Cambridgeshire local authorities as well as the CPCA and together submits funding bids to the Sustainable Warmth, Home Upgrade Grants and local authority decarbonisation schemes. To date, just over £9m has been secured for domestic retrofits, with a further funding bid submission for £11m; the partnership will find out if this has been successful during 2023. The Council has also submitted a bid to Innovate UK: Pioneer Places for a project to scope the system change required to attract private sector investment to achieve Net Zero by 2045 for power, heat, mobility, and product manufacturing. If successful, this bid could open opportunities for an £8m place-based funding bid that will help implement Local Area Energy Planning and support businesses.

The Council has secured funding for tree planting in non-woodland settings via the Local Authority Treescapes Fund. Through two rounds of this fund, the Council has secured a total of £490k; £220k for the Council with the remainder secured to fund projects with the district councils.

Government Grants - Education

The Government allocates capital funding to enable authorities to provide sufficient school places for every child who needs one, as well as ensuring that longer-term capital allocations are made in order to aid planning for school places. Unfortunately, the current methodology used to distribute funding for additional school places does not always reflect the Council's need, requiring additional borrowing on top of grants received. Almost all of this need relates to infrastructure that the Council has a statutory responsibility to provide, therefore there is limited flexibility for the Council in deciding whether to proceed with these schemes and allowing for their costs within the capital programme.

The Council seeks to maximise its Basic Need funding by establishing how the funding allocation model works and providing the School Capacity (SCAP) data to the Department of Education (DfE) in such a way as to maximise the Council's allocation. The Council has been allocated £2.3m of Basic Need funding for 2023-24 and £12.5m for 2024-25, based on the Council's SCAP return submitted for May 2021.

The DfE has also revised the methodology used to distribute condition allocations in order to target areas of highest condition need. The funding now consists of a weighted pupil element, banded condition scores, and a location factor to represent increased costs as determined by the Building Cost Information Service. The DfE have also increased the funding rate from £146 in 2021-22 to £148.50 per pupil before other factors are applied. Transitional arrangements are in place for the 2022-23 allocation round; protected responsible bodies will receive no less than 75% of the allocation they received in 2020-21. The reduction in funding needed to support transition protections has been recycled back into the formula.

To date, the Government has given approval to 9 new free schools in Cambridgeshire. All but one were part of Wave 12 (2016-17) of the Government's central free school programme. Three have opened; two special schools (Martin Bacon Special Academy at Northstowe and Cavendish Special School at Impington) and one primary school (Marleigh Primary School on the eastern fringe of Cambridge City). Not all of the Wave 12 bids, however, are in areas where the Council has an identified basic need requirement; one of these has since been cancelled by the DfE and five schemes remain at pre-implementation stage. Two further bids were submitted under Wave 14 of which one was successful; a new Secondary Free School in Wisbech, which is

being funded by the Education Funding Agency. The government is expecting to open a further 15 new free schools across the country under Wave 15, which was launched on 22 July 2022 and focuses on those areas that currently have the lowest educational standards, as well as a need for additional school places. The outcome of Wave 15 will not be known until 2023.

The current live special free school wave is inviting local authorities to apply for new special free school projects in their area. Trusts will then be invited to apply to open special free schools in successful local authority areas early in 2023.

The Spending Review 2021 reaffirmed the Government's commitment to rebuilding 500 schools in the worst condition over the next decade across the country as part of the Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP), alongside an announcement of £2.6bn to be spent on creating 30,000 new school places for children with special educational needs and disabilities. The Council responded to a DfE consultation on the criteria for the prioritisation and selection of schools for inclusion within the PSBP, also identifying those schools in Cambridgeshire that are in most urgent need of investment. Although no bids from Cambridgeshire were approved in the most recent DfE announcement, neither were they rejected. They have been rolled forward for consideration in a future round of the PSBP.

The Council has also been invited by the DfE to make an application to participate in the 2022-23 Safety Valve Programme which is designed to assist local authorities in reducing overspends in their High Needs Block expenditure for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). As part of its DfE safety valve application, the Council has requested capital funding for a number of additional SEND capital schemes. This forms part of the overall strategy to increase capacity and reduce the reliance on more costly external placements. A decision is expected in January 2023; therefore, these schemes are not currently reflected in the 2023-24 draft Capital Programme. If the funding bid is unsuccessful, or is agreed but at a reduced level, further decisions will be required on which of these projects can proceed.

Developer Contributions and Capital Receipts

New home completions in Quarter 2 of 2022 were up by 16% on Quarter 2 of 2021, according to the National House-Building Council for new dwellings. Despite rapid changes to the economy, housebuilders have registered 66,855 plots for Quarter 2 of 2022, up by 45% on Quarter 2 of 2021. As a result of the stronger-than-expected market in 2021 and early 2022, having completed more

homes and scaled back land-buying activity in 2020, housebuilders need to replenish and add to their immediate land supply to continue delivering homes over the short to medium term; however, this will be at a slower rate than during 2021. A key obstacle for the construction industry is addressing ongoing challenges in securing building materials, rising borrowing rates and inflation. Issues around labour are increasing, particularly with skilled trades like bricklayers and carpenters, and even finding qualified professionals such as quantity surveyors is becoming more problematic. In addition, the housing market is now weakening as the UK heads into recession. House prices are starting to fall due to interest rates climbing and inflation rates increasing as a result of both national and global events. Prospects of a long recession have lowered the confidence of housebuilders and developers, which, coupled with increasing interest rates, will limit profits and lead to falling demand for development land.

Office take-up peaked in Quarter 1 2022 and is now 20% higher than Quarter 1 2020. The take-up has slowed down through 2022, but some sectors such as life sciences remained strong. The commercial real estate firm CBRE predicted that office take-up for 2022 in the UK would surpass the record lows seen in 2020, but would remain significantly below 2021 when the office market rebounded from the pandemic; average rental prices have increased by 5% in the first 9 months of 2022 according to Prime Office Space. CBRE maintains the view that there will be a transition towards a more hybrid form of office work. Sentiment towards commercial real estate is improving but there remains a significant divergence in performance between highly prized industrial and logistics units and out-of-favour retail.

This highlights that the impact of Covid-19 is mixed across differing sectors of the property market, both nationally and locally. However, the shortage of building land for housing caused by the pandemic cutback in purchases by developers suggests that the Council's ability to fund capital investment through the sale of surplus land and buildings, or from contributions by developers will not be severely impacted moving forward.

The Government has declared a climate emergency and set a target to reduce carbon emissions by 78% by 2035 based on the recommendations of the Climate Commission on the 6th carbon budget. This in turn should set the country on course to deliver its final target of net-zero carbon emissions for the UK by 2050. The Joint Administration has set the ambition to deliver net zero by 2045 for Cambridgeshire, increasing the local pace and scale of delivery and to reflect the

climate crisis. Delivering the changes required for the net-zero target will require investment into energy infrastructure, building retrofits, circular economy, active travel and mobility that changes our dependency on fossil fuels for heating and powering homes and businesses, moving around and waste. The changes will be significant and will include regulatory improvements to building standards, land use, transport planning, and waste management to ensure clean and sustainable growth. Whilst the development industry reacts to these changes, some impact may be felt on developer contributions as our national and local systems shift focus to tackle climate and biodiversity emergencies.

The Council will re-invest 100% of all capital receipts received (after funding costs of disposal up to the allowable limit of 4% of receipt) back into the Capital Programme, focusing these on schemes that either generate an ongoing revenue return, remove carbon emissions or are short-life assets.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

CIL works by levying a charge per net additional floor space created on all small-scale developments, instead of requiring developers to pay specific contributions towards individual projects as per the current developer contribution process (Section 106, which is still in place for large developments). Although this is designed to create a more consistent charging mechanism, it also complicates the ability of the Council to fund the necessary infrastructure requirements created by new development due to the changes in process and the involvement of the city and district councils who have exclusive legal responsibility for determining expenditure. The Council therefore generally receives a much lower proportion of the cost of infrastructure requirements through CIL contributions.

Huntingdonshire and East Cambridgeshire District Councils are currently the only districts within Cambridgeshire to have adopted CIL. Cambridge City Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and Fenland District Council currently have no plans to implement CIL.

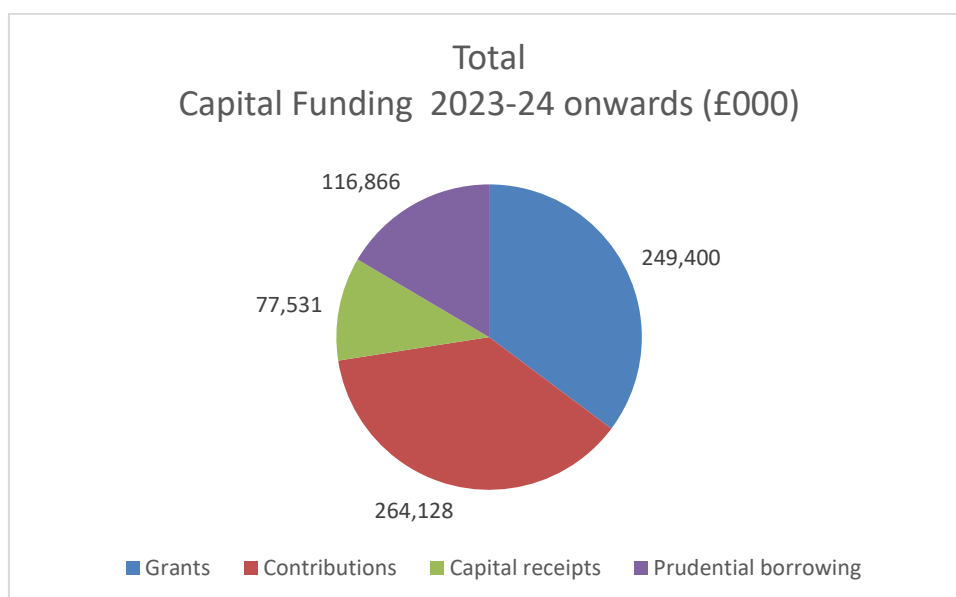
Moving forward, the Council will also need to start scoping mechanisms to help itself, businesses and communities consider how carbon removal, offsetting and insetting projects can be developed to benefit the local economy and guide ourselves and partners through the complexity of how this could work.

Borrowing

The Council will only look to borrow money to fund a scheme either to allow for

schemes that will generate payback and/or reduce future carbon liabilities (via either financial/carbon savings or through income generation), or if all other sources of funding have been exhausted but a scheme is required.

Despite this, the Council has an affordability gap of £116.9m over the ten-year programme, which is due to be funded by borrowing.



5f. Revenue Implications and Affordability

All capital schemes have a potential two-fold impact on the revenue position, due to:

- the cost of borrowing through interest payments and repayment of principal (called Minimum Revenue Provision), or through the loss of investment income; and
- the ongoing revenue impact of the scheme (such as staff salaries, utility bills, maintenance, administrative costs etc.), or revenue benefits (such as savings or additional income).

To ensure that available resources are allocated optimally, capital programme planning is determined in parallel with the revenue budget planning process.

Both the borrowing costs and ongoing revenue costs/savings of a scheme are considered as part of a scheme's appraisal, and therefore, the process for prioritising schemes against their ability to deliver outcomes.

In addition, the Council is required by CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital

Finance in Local Authorities 2021 to ensure that it undertakes borrowing in an affordable and sustainable manner. In order to guarantee that it achieves this, during each business planning process, Strategy & Resources (S&R) Committee determines what proportion of revenue budget is spent on services and the corresponding maximum amount to be spent on financing borrowing. This is achieved by setting an advisory limit on the annual financing costs of borrowing (debt charges) over the life of the plan.

In order to afford a degree of flexibility from year to year, changes to the phasing of the debt charges is allowed within any three-year block, so long as the advisory aggregate limit remains unchanged. Blocks refer to specific three-year periods, starting from 2015-16, rather than rolling three-year periods. The advisory limit on debt charges is reviewed each year by S&R Committee to ensure that changing factors such as the level of interest rates, or the external funding environment are taken into account when setting both.

Due to the Council's strategic role in stimulating economic growth across the county through infrastructure investment, any capital proposals that can reliably demonstrate revenue income / savings at least equal to the debt charges generated by the scheme's borrowing requirement are excluded from contributing towards the advisory borrowing limit. These schemes are called Invest to Save or Invest to Earn schemes and will be self-funded in the medium-term. Whilst the financing costs for commercial activity schemes have already been removed from the budget and recharged to the Investment Activity budget, there are several other Invest to Save / Earn schemes that have not been recharged e.g., third party loans. The following table therefore compares revised net financing costs excluding these costs. Following the change in the Minimum Revenue Provision policy, agreed by Full Council in February 2016, the limits in recent years have been increased by 2% each year:

Financing Costs	2021-22 £m	2022-23 £m	2023-24 £m	2024-25 £m	2025-26 £m	2026-27 £m
2023-24 draft BP (net figures excluding Invest to Save / Earn schemes)	33.2	30.2	37.1	43.5	44.0	43.4
Recommend limit	39.7	40.5	41.3	42.2	43.0	43.9
HEADROOM	-6.5	-10.4	-4.2	1.3	1.0	-0.5

Recommend limit (3 years)	121.5	129.1
HEADROOM (3 years)	-21.1	1.8

Once the service programmes have been refined, if the amalgamated level of borrowing and thus debt charges breach the advisory limit, schemes will either be re-worked in order to reduce borrowing levels, or the number of schemes included will be limited.

Invest to Save and Invest to Earn schemes for all Services are expected to fund any revenue pressures, including borrowing costs, over the life of the asset. However, any additional savings or income generated in addition to this repayment will be retained by the respective Service and will contribute towards their revenue savings targets.

However, there will still be a short-term revenue cost for these schemes, as with all other schemes funded by borrowing. Therefore, S&R Committee still needs to review the timing of the repayments, in conjunction with the overall total level of debt charges to determine affordability of the Capital Programme, before recommending the Business Plan to Full Council. The debt charges budget required to fund capital borrowing for the ten-year programme is forecast to spend £38.0m in 2023-24, increasing to £42.0m by 2027-28. The following table shows the proportion of net budget (excluding schools) that is forecast to be spent on debt charges, resulting from the estimated increase in borrowing levels over the period of the 2023-24 plan. Maintaining the proportion of budget spent on debt charges at 2023-24's level (9.6%) would reduce the revenue cost of capital schemes but would require a reduction or rephasing of the Capital Programme

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Debt charges (including Invest to Save / Earn schemes) as a percentage of Net Service Expenditure	9.6%	11.0%	10.3%	9.8%	9.1%
Debt charges (excluding Invest to Save / Earn schemes) as a percentage of Net Service Expenditure	8.0%	9.0%	8.4%	8.0%	7.4%

In the Spending Review 2015, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced that to support local authorities to deliver more efficient and sustainable services, the government would allow local authorities to spend up to 100% of their capital receipts (excluding Right to Buy receipts) on the revenue costs of reform projects between 2016-17 and 2018-19. The Government then further extended this flexibility to cover a further 3 years until 2021-22, then a further 3 years to 2024-25. The Council has been using this flexibility to fund transformational activity, and as a result, prudential borrowing undertaken by the Council for the years 2017-18 to 2024-25 will be between £1.5m and £3.9m higher in each respective year. This is expected to create additional Financing costs in the revenue budget of between £82k to £215k each year. For further information, please see the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy contained within part 8 of the MTFS (Section 2 of the Business Plan).

The Council also includes the capitalisation of the cost of borrowing within all schemes; this has helped the Council to better reflect the cost of assets when they actually become operational. Although the capitalised interest cost budgets are initially held on an overall Service basis within the Capital Programme, the funding is ultimately moved to the appropriate schemes each year once exact figures have been calculated.

5g. Managing the Borrowing Requirement

The Council's Treasury Management Strategy (Section 7 of the Business Plan) considers how the cash requirements arising from the Council's Capital Strategy and detailed investment programme are managed by external borrowing, and the timing of any such borrowing. Where capital expenditure has been incurred without a resource to pay for it, i.e., when it is proposed to be funded by borrowing, this will increase the Council's Capital Financing

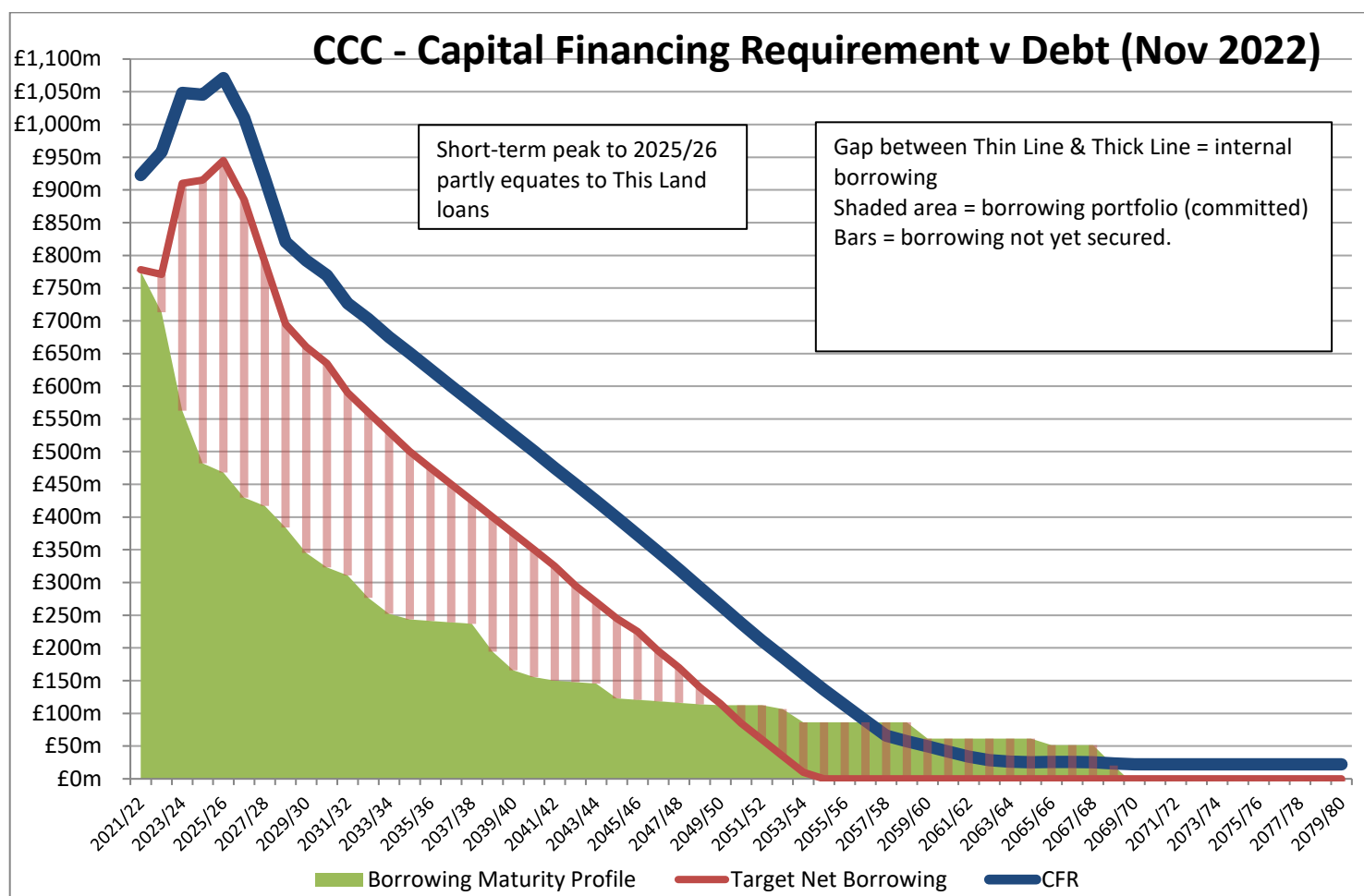
Requirement (CFR). The CFR therefore effectively represents the Council's underlying need to borrow. The Council reduces the CFR by making a prudent provision for the repayment of historic capital expenditure from its revenue budget in line with its agreed policy – this is called Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). Calculation of the CFR is summarised in the table below and results in the need to borrow money.

	Opening Capital Financing Requirement
+	Capital expenditure incurred in year
-	Grants, contributions, capital receipts and revenue funding used to fund capital expenditure
-	Prudent Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)
=	Closing Capital Financing Requirement

Future projections of the CFR based on the Capital Programme and resources deemed available to fund it are shown in the table below. Forecasts are subject to the timing of capital expenditure and receipt of funding sources.

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Total CFR	1,048.5	1,045.4	1,070.9	1,010.6	917.6

The following chart shows the Council's projected CFR (underlying borrowing need) against the maturity profile of all active loans. The shaded red bars therefore represent the amount of borrowing required to be secured in future in order to meet the Council's projected borrowing requirement, based on the forecast capital programme.



The Council's main objective when borrowing is to achieve a low but certain cost of finance, while retaining flexibility should plans change in future. These objectives are often conflicting, and the Council therefore seeks to strike a balance between cheap short-term loans and long-term fixed rate loans where the future cost is known but higher. In the current higher-interest rate environment, the balance is more skewed towards taking out cheaper, short-term loans; however, this has been made possible due to the Council taking advantage of historically low interest rates during 2021 to extend the maturity profile of the Council's debt by taking out longer-term loans. For further detail regarding the Council's long-term borrowing strategy, please see the Treasury Management Strategy (Section 7 of the Business Plan).

5h. Risk

There are a range of future risks beyond the control of the Council that have the potential to impact upon the Council's ability to deliver its capital ambition. The Covid-19 pandemic has brought into stark focus the potential disruption that

health crises, for example, can cause to life as we know it. Retaining a focus on future risk through a risk management approach that identifies, assesses, and manages (as far as is possible) risk is a critical part of the Capital Strategy, approach, and programme. The Council does not have the resources to mitigate all risks faced, so instead manages risk proportionately, utilising the expertise of senior officers.

The Council's planning and governance processes have been developed in such a way as to mitigate these risks. All capital Business Cases are required to complete a section on risk to identify the main drivers and potential mitigations. The following table sets out some of these:

Risk	Mitigation
Legislative	Changes in statute and regulation will impact upon capital projects, as they must comply with current legislation. The Council ensures that it keeps abreast of these developments, responding to consultations where appropriate and taking any required adjustments to strategies or processes through the appropriate governance channels.
Property Markets	Various aspects of the programme, such as rental income, income generated by capital receipts and funding through developer contributions are affected by the health of property markets. The Council ensures it has a sound property asset strategy, suitable diversification, adequate resourcing (including use of external experts where required), and a long-term approach.
Environmental	The impacts of a changing climate are being felt globally and Cambridgeshire, being low lying makes it vulnerable to sea level rise, increasing flood risk, drought, and overheating, as well as future resource constraints resulting from loss of nature and global competition for resources.
Interest Rate	A considerable proportion of the Council's programme is funded by borrowing and is therefore exposed to fluctuations in interest rates. The Council uses prudent forecasts for future interest rates and constantly reviews its long-term borrowing strategy to mitigate against any interest rate rise risk. Further detail can be found in the Treasury Management Strategy.

Inflation	Given the size of the portfolio, a small rise in inflation can have a significant impact upon project costs. The Council builds in inflation estimates where appropriate to mitigate against this risk, plus schemes include contingency budgets in order to further mitigate against unanticipated rises. Contracts are also negotiated using fixed terms where possible. Close monitoring of the programme supports early identification and therefore appropriate response.
Capacity	A significant challenge in the current environment is the capacity within the supply chain to deliver projects on time and to budget. In addition, the Council needs to ensure it has sufficient project delivery expertise in order to deliver schemes efficiently and effectively. For significant programmes, dedicated project delivery resource is allocated to ensure capacity and expertise. Supply chain capacity is managed at the project and programme level, with residual risks escalated through the Council's governance process as necessary.

It is important to integrate climate risk into financial risk management to enable decision-makers to understand the climate related issues facing both the Council in how it runs its budget, investments and services, as well as enabling Cambridgeshire's residents and businesses to thrive. Identifying and diagnosing the challenges and impacts will help us to develop strategies to inform and solve them. For example, the hot summer of 2022 has increased the maintenance costs for highways as a result of roads overheating, and the ground under the highways contracting and then expanding. This type of cost could become more prevalent and needs proactive management.

The Council is still developing its climate risk approach. It will look to ensure climate change is addressed through the Council's governance; how it impacts on strategy; how climate-related risks and opportunities are assessed and managed; and look to apply performance measures and targets to manage these issues.

Investment Strategy Risk

The structure of the property portfolio has a significant bearing on the portfolio's inherent risk and return profile. Therefore, a key objective of the non-financial investment strategy was to create diversification within the portfolio in order to manage exposure to the risks of concentrating too much activity in any particular sector. Key risks in the portfolio can be categorised in as follows:

Risk	Mitigation
Income	<p>The main risk in a commercial portfolio is tenant vacancies and the resultant loss of income. The costs of holding a vacant property include non-domestic rates, insurance, utilities, security, inspections and management. In addition, there are costs of marketing the property, the agent's disposal fees and legal fees for completing the lease documentation for re-letting the premises. The Council holds a sinking fund reserve, which is topped up each year in order to provide cover for both ad hoc additional expenditure, as well as both expected and unexpected loss of income through vacant property and/or lease breaks.</p>
Yield	<p>The aim of the majority of investments is to provide a secure return on income. The Council manages its commercial property as a single portfolio, ensuring that the collective returns achieved on the investments meet the overall financial target that is set.</p>
Concentration	<p>Sector Concentration – the main property sectors are retail, office, industrial and leisure/healthcare. The Council has spread its portfolio of investment across the different sectors in order to limit exposure to any volatility in a particular area. Like geographic diversification, industry diversification is sensitive to the diversification requirements of the overall portfolio.</p> <p>Geographical Concentration – it is important for the Council to understand the future economic viability of localities, which will be influenced by a number of local and national economic factors. For example, future major transport infrastructure investment could significantly influence the economic viability of an area and therefore the future value of investments in that locality.</p>

	<p>Property Concentration – diversifying a real estate portfolio by property type is similar to diversifying a securities portfolio by industry. Different property types cater to different sectors of the economy. For example, office property generally responds to the needs of the financial and services-producing sectors; industrial property to the goods-producing sectors; retail property to the retail sector; and hotels to the travel and tourism sectors, employment growth, and the business cycle. Understanding the return and risk factors attendant to different property types requires understanding the factors affecting each property type’s user groups.</p> <p>Tenure Concentration – the portfolio is managed to ensure that it contains a broad spread of tenants. This analysis can be driven by credit ratings, nature of business, lease length, and the value of the leaseholds. It is important to evaluate tenant credit ratings according to the senior corporate debt of the lessees. Leases are compared regarding their length (including renewal options), which may vary considerably, typically from ten to twenty years.</p>
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The Investment Strategy requires continual evaluation of the investment portfolio against the Council’s priorities to ensure that it is fit for purpose. A larger and more balanced portfolio would have helped to achieve the Council’s aim of increasing income to support the delivery of services throughout the county, however, balancing this with risk means that a core portfolio of property assets has been sought, diversified by sector (industrial, offices and retail), location and risk.

5i. Capital Planning and Governance

The Capital Strategy will support, and be aligned to, the new decision-making framework which is currently being developed by the Council. When making long-term investment decisions, clear and informed information is vital to understanding the short- and long-term impact on key social, financial, and environmental indicators. Any investment proposal will be considered within the context of, but not be limited to, the following areas of impact within the Council’s Triple Bottom Line approach:

- Whether the investment will support the increase of the social foundation within Cambridgeshire; ensuring no community lacks the basics of life on which no one should be left falling short (from food and housing to

healthcare and political voice).

- How the investment will ensure we do not overshoot our pressure on the environmental systems (such as a stable climate, fertile soils, and a protective ozone layer).
- A long-term view of the Council's capital expenditure plans and any financial risks to which the Council are exposed.

The Council operates a five-year rolling revenue budget, and a ten-year rolling capital programme. The very nature of capital planning necessitates alteration and refinement to proposals and funding during the planning period; therefore, whilst the early years of the Business Plan provide robust, detailed estimates of schemes, the later years only provide indicative forecasts of the likely infrastructure needs and funding streams for the Council.

New schemes for inclusion in the Programme are developed by Services in conjunction with Finance in line with the Corporate Priorities outlined in the Strategic Framework. Any new capital scheme costing more than £250,000 is appraised as to its financial, human resources, property, carbon, environment, and economic consequences. The justification and impacts, as well as the expenditure and funding details of these schemes are initially specified in an outline capital Business Case, which becomes more detailed as the proposal develops. At the same time, all schemes from previous planning periods are reviewed and updated as required. All schemes, whether existing or new, are scrutinised and challenged where appropriate by officers to verify the underlying costs and/or establish whether alternative methods of delivery have been investigated in order to meet the relevant needs and outcomes of the Council.

An Investment Appraisal of each capital scheme is undertaken as part of the Business Case development, which allows the scheme to be assessed against social, financial, and environmental factors. This allows schemes within and across all Services to be prioritised, considering the finite resources available to fund the overall Programme and in order to ensure the schemes included within the Programme are aligned to assist the Council with achieving its Corporate Priorities.

Capital Programme Board (CPB) provides support and challenge with respect to both the creation of an initial budget for a capital scheme, as well as the deliverability and ongoing monitoring. The Terms of Reference require CPB to ensure that the following outcomes are delivered:

- Appropriate estimates for cost and time of capital projects
- Robust project and programme management and governance
- Post project evaluation and monitoring of key carbon reductions and environmental benefits
- Prioritisation across the whole programme.

Service Committees review the draft service programmes, and the overarching Capital Programme is subsequently agreed by S&R Committee, who recommends it to Full Council as part of the overarching Business Plan.

The Capital Programme is monitored in year through quarterly reporting to Service Committees via Finance Monitoring Reports.

These feed into the Integrated Finance Monitoring Report, which is scrutinised by CPB and also reviewed by S&R Committee. The report identifies changes required to the Capital Programme and seeks approval for:

- new / updated resource allocations
- slippage or brought forward programme delivery
- increase / reduction in overall scheme costs
- virements between schemes to maximise delivery against the priorities of the Council.

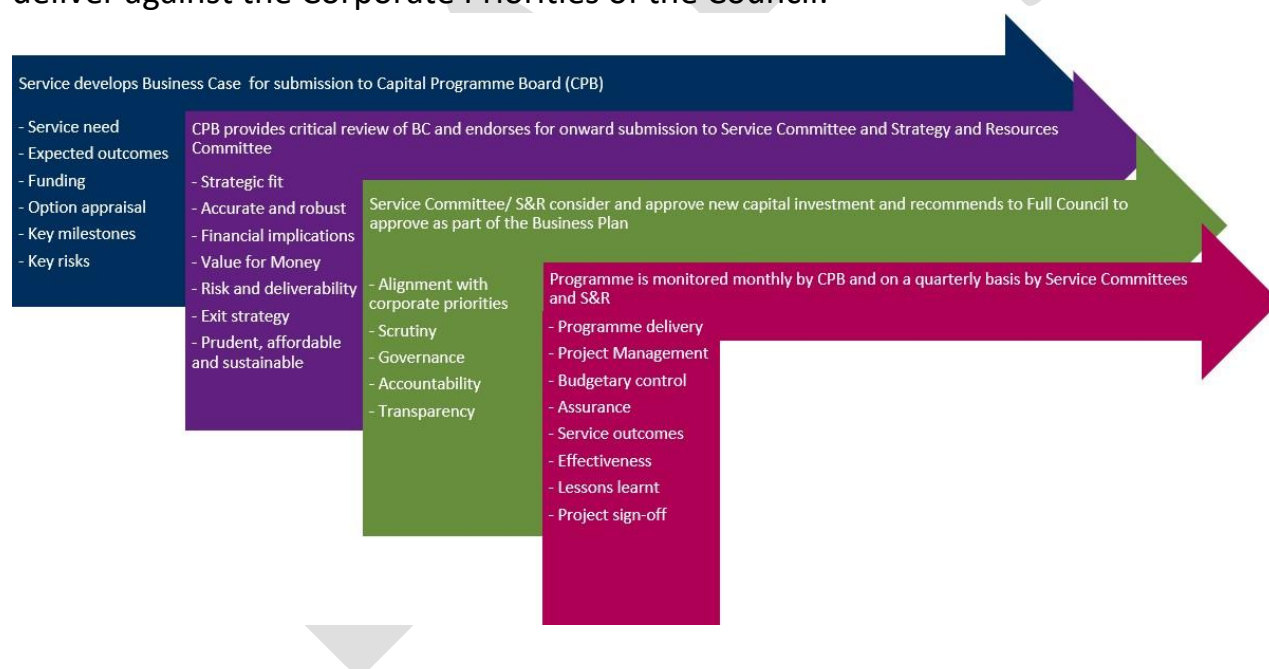
It is inevitable that new demands and pressures will be identified by the Council on an ongoing basis, however, as far as possible addressing these requirements is undertaken as part of the next business planning process, in line with Regulation 6.4 of the Scheme of Financial Management. Therefore, all new capital schemes should be approved via the Business Plan unless there is an urgent need to seek approval that cannot wait until the next planning process. In these situations, any supplementary capital request will be prepared in consultation with, and with the agreement of, the Section 151 Officer. Where possible, the report will be reviewed by CPB before being taken to the Strategic Management Team by the relevant Director and the Section 151 Officer, before any request for a supplementary estimate is put to S&R Committee.

New demands and pressures and changes to estimated costs and funding for ongoing schemes will also potentially result in the need for virements between schemes. All virements should be carried out in line with the limits set out in Appendix I of the Scheme of Financial Management, up to the upper limit of

£250,000 by the Section 151 Officer. Anything above this limit will be dealt with in line with the process for new schemes and will be taken to S&R Committee for approval as part of the monthly Integrated Finance Monitoring Report. Any overspends, whether in year or in relation to the whole scheme, once approved will be funded using applicable external sources and internal, non-borrowing sources first, before using borrowing as a last resort.

Once a project is complete, CPB follows a post-implementation review process for any significant schemes (schemes over £1m, or for schemes between £0.5m and £1m where the variance is more than 20%) in order to ensure that the Council learns from any issues encountered, and highlights and follows best practice where possible. In addition, the Board can request for a review to be completed on any scheme where it is thought helpful to have one.

The following diagram summarises the relevant responsibilities regarding the Capital Strategy to ensure decisions are made legitimately, transparently and deliver against the Corporate Priorities of the Council:



In order to support prioritisation and to avoid slippage and potentially unanticipated additional costs, the Council needs to ensure it has access to sufficient skills and capacity both within the Council and externally in order to deliver the Capital Programme. Such capacity could be project management and development skills, technical and design skills, knowledge, availability of contractors as well as wider market factors.

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