

Business Planning Proposals for 2022-27 – opening update and overview

- To: Children and Young People Committee
- Meeting Date: 19 October 2021
- From: Wendi Ogle-Welbourn, Executive Director for People and Communities
Tom Kelly, Chief Finance Officer
- Electoral division(s): All
- Key decision: No
- Outcome: This report continues the process of setting and business plan and financial strategy for 2022-27 which will culminate at the February full Council. Through this report, Members will gain awareness of:
- The current business and budgetary planning position and estimates for 2022-27
 - The principal risks, contingencies and implications facing the Committee and the Council's resources
 - The process and next steps for the council in agreeing a business plan and budget for future years
- Recommendation: The Committee being asked to:
- a) Note the progress made to date and next steps required to develop the 2022-23 to 26-27 Business Plan
 - b) Endorse the budget and savings proposals that are within the remit of the Committee as part of consideration of the Council's overall Business Plan

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1. Purpose and background

- 1.1 The Council's Business Plan sets out how we will spend the resources we have at our disposal to achieve our vision and priorities for Cambridgeshire, and the outcomes we want for people. This paper provides an overview of the updates to the Council's financial position since September 2021 when Committees were provided with an update on the draft Business Plan for 2022-27. The paper sets out the changes to key assumptions impacting financial forecasts, further risks and opportunities and next steps required to balance the budget and agree the Council's Business Plan for 2022-27.
- 1.2 For context, the previous update on business planning provided to committee in September can be viewed at [Children and Young People Committee meeting 14 September 2021](#).
- 1.3 The update in September showed a budget gap in the first year of the new business plan, 2022/23, that was larger than in the previous business plan. This was due to refreshed estimates of the impact of demand growth on services, and several new service pressures requiring funding.
- 1.4 This update shows the progress that has been made to identify opportunities to re-baseline budgets, make savings, and generate additional income, resulting in progress being made towards closing the budget gap in 2022/23. At the same time, further service pressures and investments are proposed to be funded. The result of these is a budget gap at this stage of £19.5m for 2022/23, and gaps in future years as set out at the end of the table in Section 3.2.

2. Context

- 2.1 On 9 February 2021, Full Council agreed the Business Plan for 2021-2026. This included a balanced budget for the 2021-22 financial year with the use of some one-off funding but contained significant budget gaps for subsequent years as a result of expenditure exceeding funding estimates. These budget gaps (expressed as negative figures) were:

2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
balance	-£22.2m	-£14.7m	-£15.1m	-£12.0m

- 2.2 The impacts of COVID-19 on the Council have been unprecedented and the pandemic remains a key factor and uncertainty in planning our strategy and resource deployment over the coming years. The Council continues to take a central role in coordinating the response of public services to try and manage the complex public health situation, impact on vulnerable people, education of our children and young people and economic consequences. Looking ahead we know that challenges remain as the vaccination programme progresses and winter illnesses re-emerge. We are already seeing the impacts of the pandemic on our vulnerable groups as well as those who have become vulnerable as a result of health or economic impact of the pandemic. Longer term there will be significant increases and changes in the pattern of demand for our services alongside the economic aftereffects. The Council is committed to ensuring that communities across Cambridgeshire

emerge from the pandemic with resilience and confidence for the opportunities and challenges that face us.

- 2.3 During 2020-21, the Council received significant additional funding and compensation from government and the NHS in order to effectively respond to the pandemic. Whilst the financial settlement for the response to date has been sufficient, predicting the on-going implications and financial consequences of COVID-19 remains challenging, particularly in terms of the impact on demand for council services. The 2021-26 budget includes estimates for these pressures in 2021-22 and experience of 2021-22 so far suggests these estimates were reasonable as the Council is not forecasting a significant variance against its budget in the current year. These will remain under review as new data is available. Significant pressures are expected in future years beyond 2021-22 and details of how each service's specific demand pressure estimates for 2022-27 have been made are within section 3. It is especially important this year that we keep these estimates under review as circumstances are so changeable over the course of this year.
- 2.4 Within the current context, the scope for traditional efficiencies has diminished, therefore the development of the Business Plan is focused on a range of more fundamental changes to the way we work. Some of the key themes driving the current thinking are;
- Economic recovery
 - Prevention and Early Intervention
 - Decentralisation
 - Environment & climate emergency
 - Social Value
- 2.5 Besides the pandemic, the other major risks and uncertainties in setting budgets for 2022-27 include the potential for national policy changes, such as reform of social care funding, the need for a multi-year funding settlement from government, the availability and sustainability of supply chains and resources, and changing patterns of demand for our services that has been a longer-term trend. The Council must make its best estimate for the effect of known pressures when setting its budget and retain reserves to mitigate against unquantifiable risks.

3. Financial Overview

- 3.1 The previous report set out in detail the changes to demand and inflation projections that make up a significant part of the initial budget refresh. We are now in a stage generally of identifying ways to close the budget gap through savings, income generation and budget rebaselining. We will also continue to review funding assumptions as further government announcements or local taxation estimates are made.
- 3.2 Following the addition of the next round of proposals to partially close the budget gap, as well as further service pressures and investments, the revised budget gap is set out in the table below:

	£000				
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Budget gap at September Committees	23,411	16,123	17,903	14,678	14,256
Budget Reviews and Re-baselining					
Budget rebaselining in Adults	-2,405				
Budget rebaselining in Children's	-250				
Inflation and Demand Adjustments					
Staff costs inflation refresh	331	326	328	327	329
Adults demand projection adjustments	-73	-28	-29	-30	10
Service Pressures & Investments					
Pressures in Children's Services and Education	-250	250	732		
Pressures in Corporate Services	1,297	-246	-5	-35	-35
Pressures in Place & Economy	260		-650		-1,000
Investments in Adults & Health	322	170			
New or Amended Savings					
New savings in Adults & Health	-1,361	70			
New savings in Communities	-450				
New savings in Corporate Services	-29				
Savings rephasing Children's Services	46	-54	-100		
Savings rephasing in Adults & Health	543	568	-51	31	
New savings in Place & Economy	-335	-130			
Other changes					
Energy schemes - phasing of spend and income	-938	932	287	-18	-131
Commercial income rephasing & Covid impact	519	-99	-296	-90	57
Changes in funding estimates	-1,157	329	-60	1,682	484
Revised budget gap at October / November Committees	19,481	18,211	18,059	16,545	13,970
Change in budget gap	-3,930	2,088	156	1,867	-286

- 3.3 More detail about the proposals that make up this table relevant to this committee are set out in section 4 below.
- 3.4 It is important to bear in mind that the lines in the table in 3.2, and the equivalent table presented to the committee in September, only show the changes made compared to the current business plan. In some cases, there were already proposals effecting 2022/23 budgets and beyond in the current business plan. The full set of proposed budget changes for this committee can be found in the attached budget table.
- 3.5 There remains a significant budget gap for 2022/23 and in future years that will need to be closed by the time Full Council agrees a budget in February 2022. Work is continuing to identify further mitigations, and to review pressures that are already proposed to be funded.

4. Business Planning context for Children and Young People Committee

- 4.1 This section provides an overview of the savings, investments, or income proposals within the remit of the Committee.
- 4.2 The Committee is asked to comment on these proposals. Further detail and business cases will then come to committee in December ready for recommending to Strategy and Resources Committee in January 2022, for consideration as part of the Council's development of the Business Plan for the next five years. Please note that the proposals outlined are still draft at this stage, and it is only at Full Council in February 2022 that proposals are finalised and become the Council's Business Plan.
- 4.3 Draft budget tables are provided in Appendix 1 (People and Communities) reflecting proposals developed to date.
- 4.4 Cambridgeshire County Council is working with Health and other public and voluntary sector partners across the new Integrated Care System footprint to improve outcomes for all children, we are referring to this as the Children and Maternity Collaborative.
- 4.5 The Collaborative's main priorities will be to:
- work together to drive delivery of an integrated care system for maternity, children, and young people.
 - develop a set of system-wide outcomes for maternity, children, and young people.
 - align finances to support the children and maternity system.
- 4.6 The Collaborative's principles are:
- Evidence informed, responding to local need and inequalities.
 - Embed co-production with patients and families.
 - Integration of pathways to improve care and outcomes.
 - Collaboration and joint accountability.
 - Flexible commissioning arrangements.
 - Sustainability through realignment of existing resources.
 - Transparent decision making.
- 4.7 The Collaborative will monitor progress of the following key strategies and focus areas:
- 1 Special Education Needs and Disabilities Strategy (including early identification and prevention).
 - 2 Maternity (to include Better Births / Continuity of Carer).
 - 3 Strong Families, Strong Communities Strategy.
 - 4 Best Start in Life Strategy (pre-birth to 5 yrs.).
 - 5 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Strategy.
 - 6 Contextual Safeguarding Strategy.
 - 7 Autism Strategy.
 - 8 Transforming Care (Learning Disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder).
 - 9 Childhood obesity.
 - 10 Development of the Children's Hospital.
 - 11 Admission Avoidance.

12 Joint Commissioning.

13 NHS Long term plan – children and maternity transformation.

4.8 To support delivery of our key strategies, we are putting forward the following financial proposals. These include savings to support investments needed and overall budget deficit and budget pressures related to increased demand. Health is investing in mental health to ensure more support to schools and easier access to children and families for mental health services; also, a children’s hospital that will reach out to support community services.

4.9 Demand

The following table outlines the demand related budget proposals.

Ref	Title	Description	22/23 £000	23/24 £000	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000
A/R.3.008	Home to School Transport mainstream	To reflect the additional costs based on the forecast increase in pupils attending mainstream schools.	57	60	63	66	69
A/R.3.010	Funding for Home to School Special Transport demand	Additional funding required to provide transport to education provision for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN). The additional funding is needed as there are increasing numbers of children with SEN and there is a trend towards increasingly complex needs, often requiring bespoke transport solutions.	2,051	2,336	2,660	3,029	3,445
A/R.3.011	Funding for rising numbers and need of Children in Care	This is a volatile budget, this increase is not about growing numbers of children in care; it is the result of increased complexity of need among some of our children in care, and rapidly increasing prices for placements in independent sector fostering and residential care. This figure is subject to review as continued work to model pressures and options for mitigation continues.	1,200	-	-	-	-
A/R.3.016	Funding for additional Special Guardianship Orders demand costs	To cover the cost of placing children with extended family and other suitable guardians.	159	220	240	261	285
A/R.3.019	Children with Disabilities demand	To reflect the increase in care packages provided for children and young people with disabilities under the age of 18 years. There are also reversals of COVID-19 related demand bids put in for 2021-22 to support additional home to school transport costs up to the end of the summer term.	154	165	176	189	202

4.9 Pressures and Investments

The following table outlines the identified pressures and investments which have been included in the budget proposals.

Ref	Title	Description	22/23 £000	23/24 £000	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000
A/R.3.038	SEND Capacity	We know that pre-pandemic there was an increase in Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC) for children with special educational needs; post pandemic this has increased even more and the work we have done provides evidence this is a trend going forward.	565	-	-	-	-
A/R.4.022	Dedicated Schools Grant Contribution to Combined Budgets	This reflects the unwinding of historical arrangements and the resulting pressure which remains. This will be discussed with Schools Forum on the 5 November with the aim of deferring the reduction until 2023-24.	750	250	732	-	-
A/R.4.037	Occupational Therapy – Children’s	To reflect increased demand for children with special educational needs and disabilities.	496	-	-	-	-
A/R.4.039	Children’s Disability	This relates to the additional costs associated with in-sourcing the three residential short break facilities from Action for Children. Children with disabilities services sit operationally within adult services, but oversight remains with the responsibility of the Children and Young People Committee.	400	-	-	-	-
A/R.5.008	Family Group Conferencing	This has now been deferred until 2023-24 effectively resulting in a saving for 2022-23 – this can be funded from the Family Safeguarding grant.	-	250	-	-	-

4.10 Savings

The following savings have been identified and included in budget proposals.

Ref	Title	Description	22/23 £000	23/24 £000	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000
A/R.6.256	Delivering Greater Impact for Troubled Families	Reversal of previous saving in relation to Troubled Families following the end of the grant and ‘payments by result’ income.	150	-	-	-	-
A/R.6.257	Special Guardianship Orders	Such allowances are usually only paid when the alternative would be for the child to be in the care system. We have reduced the numbers of children coming into care in Cambridgeshire through the implementation of Family Safeguarding. Fewer children coming into care also means fewer children leaving care under a Special Guardianship Order, and hence a reduction in the cost of allowances.	-250	-	-	-	-
A/R.267	Children’s Disability 0-25 service	This saving has been reprofiled into 23/24 to reflect the additional costs associated	-	-100	-100	-	-

		with in-sourcing the three residential short break facilities from Action for Children. Children with disabilities services sit operationally within adult services, but oversight remains with the responsibility of the Children and Young People Committee.					
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4.11 The below table provides a breakdown of the existing demand, pressures and savings already included in the existing business plan, which we are not proposing any changes to.

Ref	Title	Type	22/23 £000	23/24 £000	24/25 £000	25/26 £000	26/27 £000
A/R.3.023	COVID-19 Impact – Home to School Transport Mainstream Demand	Demand	-264	-	-	-	-
A/R.3.024	COVID-19 Impact – Home to School Transport Special	Demand	-139	-	-	-	-
A/R.5.003	Flexible shared care resource	Investment	174	-	-	-	-
A/R.7.107	COVID-19 Impact – Education Income	Income	-107	-	-	-	-
A/R.7.108	COVID-19 Impact – Outdoor Centres	Income	-766	-114	-	-	-
A/R.7.109	COVID-19 Impact – School Absence Penalty Notices	Income	-150	-	-	-	-
A/R.7.202	Home to School Transport – Grant Funding	Income	403	-	-	-	-

4.12 In addition, the following proposals are being considered for temporary funding from reserves, rather than permanent investment, and so will not appear in the main business planning tables.

- **SAFE Team:** The team works with young people who are at very high risk of criminal and/or sexual exploitation. It is currently funded through a grant from the Office of the

Police and Crime Commissioner, funding that ends in March 2022. We continue to work with partners to explore joint funding opportunities for this service. Current estimates are that £268k investment will be needed in 2022/23, but the final amount will be adjusted to reflect any external funding which is secured.

- **SEND Capacity:** In addition to the permanent investment outlined previously, a further £325k of temporary investment is required to support the current levels of demand in the system.
- **SEND Transformation:** The SEND Transformation programme will consist of a series of workstreams to shift system behaviours, to manage demand, improve local provision and processes and consequently reduce spend. Costings are currently being finalised, but the requirement is anticipated to be in the region of £1m over a three-year period. Final figures will be confirmed in due course and will be adjusted to reflect any contributions secured from other sources. The proposed workstreams are:
 - **Changing the Conversation (CtC)** - Embedding a strengths-based, person-centred approach to conversations across the education, health and care system to enable positive, sustainable change that focuses on early intervention, inclusivity and education, health and care provided close to home across the SEND system, providing the foundation for the new way of working and processes.
 - **Mapping Provision** - Developing a strategic view of provision to inform what is needed, developed and possible. To ensure that SEND provision is fully aligned with the aims of the transformation programme, we need to fully understand what provision currently exists and how impactful this is on children's outcomes and what value for money they provide. (Quality and cost).
 - **SEND Support** – Designing and the wide promotion of our SEND Support offer with CYP, families and settings. All stakeholders will be aware of the support available to them without requiring a plan. Developing a SEND system, toolbox, and a shared understanding about what can be provided in mainstream settings. Ensuring professionals are confident talking to families and CYP about what SEND Support can offer, providing reassurance that CYP can have their needs met and receive the best possible support without requiring a plan. By ensuring there is a consistent approach to SEND Support, we should see a system that does not see EHCPs as a 'golden ticket' to accessing support.
 - **Tuition** - Review existing arrangements to ensure that tuition and alternative provision is used appropriately, consistently and in line with Preparing for Adulthood values and a strengths-based approach. There is an opportunity to ensure tuition provision enables children and young people to return to classroom settings where their outcomes and life chances will improve, and support will be most cost effective.
 - **Outreach Model** - To facilitate supporting children and young people with SEND in mainstream provision through Special Schools outreach. Special schools are experts in supporting children with SEND needs and with greater support could

more effectively upskill peers in mainstream settings to support children to remain in their schools.

- **Enhanced Resource Bases (ERB)** - Confirming the commissioning arrangements for ERB and SEND units and develop a Cambridgeshire offer for ERB ensuring that ERBs are effectively meeting the needs of CYP, and that there is a clear understanding of what they provide and how this differs from other types of provision. Ensuring provision that is aligned with sufficiency, forecasting and ambitions for more CYP to have their needs met in mainstream, local settings.
- **Social Emotional and Mental Health** – Working with health colleagues in the children’s collaborative to deliver enhanced mental health support to schools and other education settings. Developing specialist provision for pupils with SEMH needs on primary school sites. A clear and consistent approach to monitoring, challenging, and supporting schools and settings. A primary school network of early intervention and prevention support services. This will improve outcomes for children experiencing SEMH needs while remaining in mainstream education.
- **Preparing for Adulthood** - Ensuring focus across the SEND system on preparing every child with SEND to successfully transition into adulthood. Developing a clear information and supported employment/internships offer for all cohorts (delivered where appropriate in Further Education settings) with alignment to the inhouse job coaches.
- **System Design** - to redesign and simplify the SEND system to improve navigation for parents/carers and improve consistency in access and provision. This workstream will create the blueprint of a transparent SEND system, to ensure that as far as is possible, the component parts of the Cambridgeshire SEND system are aligned and talking with one voice in terms of process, finance, decision, and goals.
- **Banding & Descriptors** – to transform our funding systems to include banding & descriptors of need whilst exploring the concept of zero-funded plans, to give reassurance of support without the need for additional funding. To bring clarity to the graduated approach for staff and parents by having a consistent approach to understanding and planning to meet needs. To develop system wide banding and a robust set of descriptors of need and expectations of provision and how those needs can be met within settings. Align practice across mainstream and special schools about how needs can be met.
- **Valuing SEND** - explore the potential of introducing the Valuing SEND or similar approach, to settings to enable holistic and strengths-based conversations, a better understanding of individual and cohort needs, and how settings can meet this.
- **Panel Redesign** - redesigning our panel structure including the Needs Assessment Panel, Funding Panels, and high-cost placement panels, developing consistent, transparent, and strengths-based multi-agency decision making from assessment through to issue of plans. We will also introduce improved systems

for making a 'no to issue' decision. Ensuring decisions are child centred and robust, making sure that children are receiving EHCPs when required, and that those who do not require plans are pointed towards appropriate support. This will include explicit reasoning and feedback to stakeholders, increasing transparency and confidence in the system.

- **Annual Review improvement** - Improving our annual review process to ensure these are timely, outcome-focused and of high quality. Improving confidence in the system and increased transparency in decision-making and the importance and purpose of Annual Reviews in supporting outcomes. Through increasing the quality of reviews, support to CYP will be proportionate and more plans could be ceased where outcomes have been achieved, this should be seen as a positive achievement by professionals, parents/carers, children, and young people. This is particularly a focus for young people leaving school to ensure their journey to independence is best supported.
- **Legal Review** - enabling better use of council resources and more effective joint working with professionals by involving the right professionals at the right time to reduce escalation of cases to legal proceedings; engage in mediation earlier and bring some aspects of legal proceedings 'in house'; effective use of Legal provider SLA to ensure effective working and value for money.

In addition to the workstreams detailed above, we have identified the following enabling activities that will support us to deliver change:

1. **SEND case management system** - procurement and implementation of a SEND case management system. This work sits outside the programme, with governance via the Education System Programme. It will have a major impact on the day to day working of the SAT (Statutory Assessment Team) and beyond, facilitating efficient working and system collaboration.
2. **Trajectory Management** - development and embedding of a trajectory management approach and mechanisms for capturing and sharing programme impact.
3. **Workforce roles, responsibilities, and development** - All people in the SEND system are clear about their role and the role of others and how they each add value to every child with SEND.
4. **Communications and engagement** - Develop and rollout a programme communications plan, to plan and prepare for the key messages that need to be delivered to stakeholders over the course of the transformation with messages aligned in content and timing to the key activities and milestones within the programme.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 We are continuing to explore the following areas in relation to potential savings opportunities, which will be reported back to committee in November.

- Home to School Transport
- Re-baselining of existing budgets
- Opportunities for grant substitution

5.2 The high-level timeline for business planning is shown in the table below.

October / November	Service Committees provided with an update of the current position along with information about business cases being prepared and their estimated savings or investment
November / December	Business cases go to committees for consideration
January	Strategy and Resources Committee will review the whole draft Business Plan for recommendation to Full Council
February	Full Council will consider the draft Business Plan

6. Alignment with corporate priorities

The purpose of the Business Plan is to consider and deliver the Council's vision and priorities and section 1 of this paper sets out how we aim to provide good public services and achieve better outcomes for communities, whilst also responding to the changing challenges of the pandemic. As proposals are developed, they will consider the corporate priorities:

- 6.1 Communities at the heart of everything we do
- 6.2 A good quality of life for everyone
- 6.3 Helping our children learn, develop and live life to the full
- 6.4 Cambridgeshire: a well-connected, safe, clean, green environment
- 6.5 Protecting and caring for those who need us

7. Significant Implications

7.1 Resource Implications

The proposals set out the response to the financial context described in section 4 and the need to change our service offer and model to maintain a sustainable budget. The full detail of the financial proposals and impact on budget will be described in the financial tables of the business plan. The proposals will seek to ensure that we make the most effective use of available resources and are delivering the best possible services given the reduced funding.

7.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications for the proposals set out in this report.

- 7.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications
The proposals set out in this report respond to the statutory duty on the Local Authority to deliver a balanced budget. Cambridgeshire County Council will continue to meet the range of statutory duties for supporting our citizens.
- 7.4 Equality and Diversity Implications
As the proposals are developed ready for December service committees, they will include, where required, Equality Impact Assessments that will describe the impact of each proposal, in particular any disproportionate impact on vulnerable, minority and protected groups.
- 7.5 Engagement and Communications Implications
Our Business Planning proposals are informed by the CCC public consultation and will be discussed with a wide range of partners throughout the process. The feedback from consultation will continue to inform the refinement of proposals. Where this leads to significant amendments to the recommendations a report would be provided to Strategy and Resources Committee.
- 7.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement
As the proposals develop, we will have detailed conversations with Members about the impact of the proposals on their localities. We are working with members on materials which will help them have conversations with Parish Councils, local residents, the voluntary sector and other groups about where they can make an impact and support us to mitigate the impact of budget reductions.
- 7.7 Public Health Implications
We are working closely with Public Health colleagues as part of the operating model to ensure our emerging Business Planning proposals are aligned. Public Health colleagues are key partners in the Children and Maternity collaborative of the ICS, Best Start in Life and Strong Families, Strong Communities strategies.
- 7.8 Environment and Climate Change Implications on Priority Areas
The climate and environment implications will vary depending on the detail of each of the proposals which will be coming to committee later for individual approvals (currently scheduled for November / December committees). The implications will be completed accordingly at that stage.

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?

Yes

Name of Financial Officer: Martin Wade

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the CCC Head of Procurement?

Yes

Name of Officer: Henry Swan

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law?

Yes

Name of Legal Officer: Fiona McMillan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?

Yes

Name of Officer: Beatrice Brown

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?

Yes

Name of Officer: Matthew Hall

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?

Yes

Name of Officer: Julia Turner

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health?

Yes

Name of Officer: Helen Freeman

If a Key decision, have any Environment and Climate Change implications been cleared by the Climate Change Officer?

Yes

Name of Officer: Emily Bolton

9. Source Documents

9.1 Appendix 1a. Introduction to the Finance Tables

9.2 Appendix 1b. Finance Tables (Table 3, People and Communities)

9.3: Accessible versions of this report and appendices are available on request from Tessa.Adams@cambridgeshire.gov.uk