

**COUNCIL - 22 OCTOBER 2020**  
**ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

## **1. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

### **Question 1**

The following question has been received from Jethro Gauld and will be read out at the meeting on his behalf:

"Declaring a climate emergency last year was an important step for ECDC. Unfortunately, local councils across the UK may unwittingly be contributing to worsening the climate crisis by investing in fossil fuels via local authority pension funds and other investments. Fossil Free UK estimate that UK local authority pension funds currently invest £14bn in funds linked to coal, oil and gas. This is obviously incompatible with solving the climate crisis.

Will the council join other local authorities and large institutions such as The University of Cambridge in making a public statement on the current financial exposure of ECDC to fossil fuels and commit to:

1. Immediately freeze any new investment in publicly-traded fossil fuel companies;
2. Divest from direct ownership and any commingled funds that include fossil fuel public equities and corporate bonds within 5 years.

As public bodies, local councils have a responsibility to work for the public good; publicly divesting from fossil fuels sends a clear message to the markets that we need to leave them in the ground."

### **Question 2**

The following question has been received from Margherita Cesca Nelder-Haynes and will be read out at the meeting on her behalf:

#### **Electric vehicle charging points in East Cambridgeshire District**

##### **On behalf of East Cambs CAN, Climate Action Network**

The transport secretary has said, "It is vital that electric vehicle drivers feel confident about the availability of charge points near their homes and that charging an electric car is seen as easy as plugging in a smart phone."

Although car sales are down, sales of electric vehicles are surging. Demand for charging points is undoubtedly growing in the district. As part of the Government's £1.5 billion Road to Zero strategy, funding is now available to local authorities for the on street residential charge point scheme. Is the district council taking this opportunity and applying for funds under this scheme?

The district council has recognised the importance of electric charging points in their environment and climate action plan. But will you deliver on this? New residential developments are being constructed without EV charging points on site. Will the Council commit to stop this practise and introduce a new normal as part of their plans to reduce emissions to comply with the Climate Change Act?

### Question 3

The following question has been received from and will be read out at the meeting by Susan Bussell:

### **Questions to ask at Council meeting on behalf of Eastcamb's CAN**

#### **Energy efficiency of homes in the district**

The 2015 Report by the Building Research Establishment - Dwelling Level Housing Stock Modelling and Database -prepared for East Cambridgeshire District Council on housing stock highlighted that the average Energy Efficiency ratings for all private sector dwellings in East Cambridgeshire is 52 falling within band E, which is worse than the average for both England (55) and East of England (55). For owner-occupied housing stock in East Cambridgeshire, the figure is 53 and for the private rented sector it is 50.

This lower energy efficiency results in:-

- higher carbon emissions contributing to climate change and;
- increased fuel poverty amongst low-income families and poorer health.

The highest concentrations of fuel poverty and “excess cold”, in the private sector, were found in the wards of Dullingham Villages, The Swaffhams and Stretham.

1. What has the Council done to reduce carbon emissions from domestic properties and reduce fuel poverty across the whole of the District?
2. Is the Council going to take advantage of the Green Homes Grant – Local Authority Delivery, from Central Government, in order to make homes in the district more energy efficient, reduce fuel poverty amongst low-income families and decrease carbon emissions? I refer councillors to a very helpful and informative recent report titled Hotnumbers prepared on behalf of Carbon Neutral Cambridge. This report provides an overview of home energy upgrade opportunities in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough combined Authority in order to accelerate the rate of improvement and help optimise the use of the Green Homes Grant scheme in our area. Please see attached copy.
3. Lastly how is the Council enforcing the regulations concerning the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) for private rented properties, across the district, since it became a legal requirement for all, non-exempt, private rented properties to be at least an E rating since April 2020? It is noted that the BRE Report of 2015 stated that just under 25%, in East Cambridgeshire, were estimated to have an EPC rating of below an E rating.

## **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

## **6. TO RECEIVE PETITION(S)**

A petition has been received requesting that the Mepal Outdoor Centre remain as a Leisure Centre. The Petition has the title 'Save Mepal Outdoor Centre - Potential for the Future' and states that it is part of an ongoing community campaign to keep the Centre as a valuable resource for the future health and wellbeing of both the local environment and community.

The Petition contains 2,319 signatures, as follows:

468 verified local signatures

183 unverified local signatures

83 not on Register

1585 from other parts of UK or abroad

The Petition Organisers, Colin Stevens and Mercedes Rollason, will speak for up to 3 minutes in support of the Petition and respond to questions by Members, in accordance with the Council's Petitions Scheme.

## **7. NOTICE OF MOTIONS UNDER PROCEDURE RULE 10**

### **(i) Protecting the Public's say in the Planning Process**

Amendment to Motion shown on Agenda Sheet attached at the end of this document.

## **8. TO ANSWER QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS**

The following question has been received from Councillor Mark Inskip to the Leader of the Council relating to Mepal Outdoor Centre:

['Question to the Leader of the Councillor regarding surveys and assessments commissioned by the Council on the Mepal Outdoor Centre site](#)

The District Council has commissioned an extensive set of surveys and assessments of the Mepal Outdoor Centre site over the past year. These include a preliminary ecology appraisal, a groundwater risk assessment survey, a topographical survey, numerous daytime winter bird surveys, breeding bird, reptile and botanical surveys.

In her interview with the Ely Standard on the 18 August the Leader of the Council referred to the bio-diversity of the site and "some important wildlife." Presumably this is confirmed by these surveys and assessments. Neither opposition councillors nor members of the public have access to these surveys and assessments and we can therefore only speculate as to the details in these documents.

In response to a Freedom of Information request FOI/EIR 20/21-170 issued last month requesting publication of the document the council argued that "the public interest in

maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information” until the submission of the planning application.

Given the level of public interest demonstrated by the petition of over 2,300 names presented to the council why is it necessary to continue to keep these documents secret, particularly if there is an intent to publish later this year?

And if there is an intent to publish, as implied in the response to the Freedom of Information request, can she confirm that every document listed in the request will be published in November and on what date in November?’

Question from Councillor Matthew Downey:

"How has this Council marked Black History Month this year? Please supply a list of activities and dates."

Question from Councillor John Trapp:

"What progress has been made to date on the promised formal review of the property requirements of Palace Green Homes and East Cambs Community Housing to be completed by the end of December2020? How is it intended that members of this Council will be engaged in the review and the outcome reported to all members?"

Question from Councillor Alec Jones:

How many dwellings in the private rented sector in East Cambridgeshire have a category 1 Housing Health and Safety Rated System (HHSRS) hazards? What percentage of properties in the private rented sector does this equate to? Which wards have the highest concentrations of such properties?

Question from Councillor Charlotte Cane:

1. How many dwellings in East Cambridgeshire have been granted planning consent by the Local Planning Authority but not completed?
2. How many units of social housing have been completed in East Cambridgeshire in each of the last five years?

Question from Councillor Lorna Dupré:

- What proposals are being put to the Combined Authority for Market Town Masterplan projects in the towns of Littleport and Soham and the city of Ely? Who has been involved in putting together these proposed projects? Please supply a statement for each of these three settlements showing dates of

consultation, which individuals and organisations have been involved, and links to the consultation materials used.

- What response is the Council making to the Government's *Raising accessibility standards for new homes* consultation, and how are members being involved in making that response?

Question from Councillor Simon Harries:

- What action does the agreement with the Ministry of Defence for the purchase of the former MOD housing at Princess of Wales Hospital permit the Ministry to take in the event that this Council's Planning Committee refuses planning consent for development in Phase 2 on this site?
- What deadlines does the agreement with the Ministry of Defence for the purchase of the former MOD housing at Princess of Wales Hospital set regarding Phase 2 of the development for (a) submission of a planning application; (b) granting of a planning application; (c) completion of construction on the site?

**COUNCIL – 22 OCTOBER 2020**

**AGENDA ITEM 7(i) – PROPOSED AMENDMENT**

---

Delete paragraphs 1 (1-4), 2 (1-4), 3 (1-2), 4 (1-4) and 5 (1-3)

Add 'This Council resolves to'

Retain paragraph 5 (4)

Proposer: Councillor Anna Bailey  
Seconder: Councillor Joshua Schumann

Please note for clarity purposes, the amendment is detailed in full below:

*This Council resolves to instruct officers to bring forward a paper to the Finance & Assets Committee examining the potential for the Council to work with East Cambridgeshire rural parishes to apply for designation under Section 157(i) of the Housing Act 1985, with the consequent power to set its own affordable housing threshold.*