

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 2 MARCH 2026 - 10.00 AM



PRESENT: Councillor A Woollard (Chairman), Councillor L Foice-Beard (Vice-Chairman), Councillor B Barber, Councillor J Carney, Councillor A Hay, Councillor P Hicks, Councillor A Miscandlon, Councillor P Murphy and Councillor D Roy

APOLOGIES: Councillor G Booth

Officers in attendance: Amy Brown (Assistant Director), Anna Goodall (Assistant Director) and Helen Moore (Member Services and Governance Officer)

OSC41/23 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 19 January 2026 were confirmed and signed.

OSC42/23 ANNUAL REVIEW OF ANGLIA REVENUES PARTNERSHIP

Members considered the information provided by Councillor Mrs French, Anna Goodall, Lorraine King, Theresa Mann, Katey Mills and Phil Butler from ARP

Members, asked questions, made comments and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Miscandlon raised concerns about delays by the Valuation Office Agency, he stated that he has a constituent for example who has been waiting for eight-month for a valuation officer to come and value joining two properties into one, could the panel explain the delay on these sorts of items? Lorraine King responded that the Valuation Office Agency changed its systems last year and as a result they have seen some significant delays in processing. She continued to state that the Valuation Office Agency is a separate entity to ARP and managed by HMRC.
- Councillor Roy asked about recovery and collection levels for fraud debt; Katey Mills responded with the 70–75% collected/active arrangement figure at nine months period, any debt that was not collected will then go through the usual recovery cycle and moved through to enforcement.
- Councillor Hay asked with the collection of Council Tax, particularly fraud, a large proportion of that collection goes to County Council, are County Council now giving Fenland District Council sufficient money to help with this collection? Councillor Mrs French confirmed that County Council are helping Fenland District Council.
- Councillor Miscandlon stated that the assumption from ARP that most people are online and happy to deal with modern technology is not true and would like to understand how ARP are planning to elevate this? Lorraine King responded that ARP's view is, if they can encourage as many people as possible to use the online service this gives the customer an automated, efficient service which then free's up officer time to help the deliver the service in a variety of ways to other customers.
- Councillor Miscandlon challenged the level of public promotion of ARP services, suggesting posters and better engagement with Town and Parish Councils, and noting they had not seen any promotions. Lorraine King stated that there are a variety of posters across all the contact centres along with rolling promotions on social media. Anna Goodall added that the model Fenland utilises in conjunction with the partnership, is that customers can contact the

Council through the contact centre then that way staff can follow the process through. Councillor Miscandlon suggested contacting Town and Parish Councillors as there has not been any leaflets that come through their offices and this can be a fast way of getting information across to members of the communities.

- Councillor Barber asked what Fenland DD projects, stands for? Theresa Mann confirmed that the DD stands for Direct Debt. Councillor Barber also asked what WSIT means on the presentation? Phil Butler confirmed that WSIT stands for West Suffolk IT.
- Councillor Barber stated that she had noted that ARP are dealing with 1,500 changes of address each week, is this across all nine areas or just the Fenland area? Theresa Mann stated that this was over the five main Council areas ARP deal with.
- Councillor Roy suggested a collaboration with digital hubs and warm hubs to support people (including senior citizens) who struggle with digital access, noting some areas have low internet access. Lorraine King responded that this is something that can be investigated.
- Councillor Carney asked if ARP work with professional agencies and professional charitable bodies such as P3, the NHS and social prescribers who visit vulnerable people at their homes. Lorraine King stated the teams are trained to work in the communities' with team referrals, this allows the team to identify someone who is vulnerable and from there this person is passed back to the communities' team at Fenland where they have all the local connections in place to support that individual.
- Councillor Foice-Beard asked for access to one of the slides that was not working on the presentation.
- Councillor Murphy pointed out that in one part of the presentation it stated 'faster, efficient online services' he stated that he was concerned about the older generation slipping backwards if they get too efficient online. Lorraine King agreed with the statement and reiterated her comment from before that by encouraging the majority online this will free up agents to support others who do prefer other methods of support.
- Councillor Hicks suggested having someone designated to the online service to help the elderly when they call in. Lorraine King stated that there is a group of people who are specifically trained experts to support vulnerable clients.
- Councillor Roy asked if ARP are considering an app-based approach for the future? Lorraine King stated that ARP do not have their own app, but it is something that is being investigated for the future which would work similar to a banking app.

Members noted the information provided

OSC43/23 ROAD SAFETY PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Members considered the information provided by Simon Burgin, Dan Horn and Councillor Susan Wallwork.

Members, made comments, asked questions and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Miscandlon asked what the Road Safety Partnership (RSP) are doing in conjunction with Cambridgeshire Highways about the state of the road and what pressure can the Partnership put on Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) to improve the state of the road, and what affect are they seeing due to the condition of the roads in relating to accidents? Simon Burgin responded that the RSP carry out scene visits with the police and where a fatality or serious incident indicates a road surface issue, changes may follow through surface improvements or speed reduction. An example was given of the A10 being reduced to 50 mph following a motorcycle fatality involving loss of control after hitting an undulation.
- Councillor Hicks stated that the speed cameras appear to be the wrong way around for motorcycles as they are facing you rather than taking the rear number plate because motorbikes do not have a front number plate. Simon Burgin agreed with the statement and

added that the way the system works is, 'best evidence' and the speed camera is looking not just for the number plate but the person driving, mobile vans do have the ability to capture motorcycles with oncoming pictures for the speed and picture proof once the vehicle has passed.

- Councillor Hick commented on 3.20 of the report refers to the fatal review of all local road traffic collisions, and asked why this information is not being used proactively rather than reactively when some one has died? Simon Burgin responded that the fatal review is a separate process, the RSP carries out yearly cluster site analysis looking at collision hotspots, to work out why this is and what changes can be made to the network to change it.
- Councillor Hay asked why this subject has come to the Fenland District Council (FDC) O&S committee as everything on the report relates to CCC and is concerned that members of the public reading the report will be confused as to who is responsible for the roads and road safety in the area. Councillor Wallwork agreed that FDC do not need to take responsibility for the roads as this does come under the umbrella of CCC and explained that the only reason it has come before this committee today is because it is part of the Community Safety Partnership group and this is part of that partnership and as part of that shared knowledge of the area can help form best decisions to be made in certain situations.
- Councillor Murphy asked what the process is with road signs that have been damaged and left on the roadside. Simon Burgin stated that the highways network has an asset register and it is the job of the highways manager is to review their part of the network and order news parts for missing signs to be repaired or replaced.
- Councillor Murphy asked if it is legal to drive mobility scooters on the road and all pavements. Simon Burgin confirmed that mobility scooters have all area accessibility to allow them to get where they need to go.
- Councillor Foice-Beard referred to 1.9 of the report where the board makes recommendations to the workstream and asked what usually happens when recommendations are made or given, do they get actioned and are they considered? Simon Burgin replied the workstream leads will study the issues and problem or the emerging trend and then make a decision about what the plan will be for that particular issue.
- Councillor Barbar stated that regarding the temporary road signs they do not always appear to give the correct information and wondered if they could state which road is close and how far away that is. Simon Burgin agreed they can be confusing, but things are not always under the control of the Highways as some of these are put up by energy companies doing roadworks and recommended reporting any signs that are misinformative.
- Councillor Miscandlon stated that the black pole with the reflectors on the top that line the Fen roads are very rarely replace when damages by grass verge cutters or accidents and asked if the contractors for the grass verge cutting are held accountable for the damage. Simon Burgin responded that if it is a fatal accident then Highways will replace the poles, but if it is damage by any other means this would be the responsibility of the local highways manager to pick up on in his inspections.
- Councillor Roy asked why there was no acknowledgement of the volunteers that hold the Speed watch sessions and the impact they have on reducing the speed in the villages. Simon Burgin confirmed that the people involved with the Speed Watch do come to the board meeting and the review boards as they are a vital part of the community engagement as well as enforcement activities.

Members noted the information provided

Councillor Carney declared an interest on this subject at the beginning of the meeting due to his job role within the fire service.

OSC44/23 PUBLIC HEALTH & EDUCATION

Members considered the information provided by John Rooke

Members, made comments, asked questions and received responses as follows:

- Councillor Roy raised concerns about underutilisation of the new Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC) in Wisbech and said residents' feedback indicated poor uptake, with GP preference to refer to King's Lynn. he stated that the Wisbech CDC had not worked as well as expected and linked this to how it has been established and operated, plus GP referral routes and potential cross-border referral opportunities. John Rooke stated that increasing utilisation of the CDC is on the agenda and agreed Wisbech has not been used as they would like and the system used does need encouragement to change to drive up the usage.
- Councillor Foice-Beard asked if the authorities involved could not fund the local hospitals such as Wisbech and Doddington to utilize the area in a more efficient way as many local people struggle in the Fenland area to get to the bigger hospitals for appointments. John Rooke agreed that local hospitals do need to be utilized, the location and funding of diagnostic centres are set nationally, there had been an application for national capital funding to upgrade local X-ray equipment that the Integrated Care Board had applied for, and he is anticipated a decision around March.
- Councillor Hay stated that in the presentation diabetes was mentioned but pre-diabetes was not mentioned, she is aware there is additional support for people and asked if this is something that is being used regularly. John Rooke responded, to identify prediabetes and undiagnosed cardiovascular risk (high blood pressure and high cholesterol), GP data is used to offer earlier prevention and support.
- Councillor Carney stated that one of the biggest issues people come across is transport to and from the local Hospitals in Huntingdon, Peterborough and Kings Lynn, and asked if some of these transport barriers could be broken down? John Rooke responded that two partners are looking to move their services outside of the main Hospitals to alternative facilities and utilize the local services more efficiently, this will also include a digital service.
- Councillor Hicks ask what is being put in place to change the mindsets of the local GPs to use the CDC facilities? John Rooke stated that GPs send people for specialist investigations for a reason based on clinical judgment, during covid everything was sent through to the hospitals, but the authorities are now looking at bringing back minor procedures to local provision.
- Councillor Miscandlon asked if anything was being changed to undertake the current system regarding getting a doctor's appointment and service. John Rooke stated that since October the GP contract changed so that patients can contact their GP practice 24 hours a day to request appointments to stop that funnel of 8am calls into the surgery, but what it has not been solved is patients getting appointment quickly and conveniently. He continues what is coming in from the 1 April 2026, with the new contract is that they are asked to reserve specific appointments for people who believe they need urgent care that day so that people can get access that same day and not be put off by issues of access that can traditionally happen. Councillor Miscandlon responded that there has been no evidence of this change and questioned if the public know about the new contract and suggested this be promoted.
- Councillor Roy felt concerned that the communication between GP practices and the Care Partnership has not improved since the last O&S meeting as the panel seem to be asking the same questions as they did at the last meeting with them and he is concerned that the public are seeing information from this meeting that is critical to the NHS and the service is not getting through. John Rooke stated that he would have expected GP practices would

have made patients aware of the changes available and stated that he will be investigating the reason why the information has not been advertised and patients are not aware after the finding from today's meeting.

- Councillor Roy mentioned about the 'All Right Mate' initiative that was launched, stating that he has seen positive results from this with more men coming forward for vaccination etc. Councillor Roy asked if there was any work being put in place along similar lines going to students and colleges concerning information on health, well-being and mental health. John Rooke stated that there is national drive to do more to promote the support available for mental health and healthy living through the Health Trust and the partner teams will be leading on this to make the provision consistent and available in schools.
- Councillor Hay stated that there is the NHS app which is available to download and this allows the patient to book appointments and view any medical records and suggested looking this up.

Members Noted the Information Provided

OSC45/23 USE OF WAIVER PROVISIONS

Councillor Woollard confirmed there was nothing to report at this meeting.

OSC46/23 UPDATE ON PREVIOUS ACTIONS

Councillor Woollard confirmed the previous actions were duly noted.

OSC47/23 FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

Councillor Woollard confirmed that no questions have been asked regarding the Future Work Programme.

12.25 pm

Chairman