Date Published: 9 October 2026

Any decision in the minutes below will come into force, and may be implemented, on the expiry of three clear working days after the publication of the decision, unless a valid request has been received by a Joint Chief Executive objecting to the decision and asking for it to be called in.

CANTERBURY CITY COUNCIL

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting held on Monday, 5th October, 2026 at 7.00 pm in The Guildhall, St Peter's Place, Westgate, Canterbury

Present:	Councillor Alan Baldock (Chair)		
	Councillor Charlotte Cornell		
	Councillor Chris Cornell		
	Councillor Mel Dawkins		
	Councillor Pip Hazelton		
	Councillor Connie Nolan		
	Councillor Paul Prentice		
In attendance	Councillor Tom Mellish*		
	Councillor David Thomas		
Officers:	Suzi Wakeham	-	Joint Chief Executive
	Peter Davies	-	Joint Chief Executive
	Lauren Wheeler	-	Democratic Services Officer
	Nick Churchill	-	Senior Economic Development Officer
	Martin Hall	-	Senior Environment Manager
	William Hicks	-	Director for Place
	Lora McCourt*	-	Head of Locality Services
	Leo Whitlock	-	Head of Policy and Communications

(*present for part of the meeting)

296 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

297 DECLARATION OF ANY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

Later in the meeting, Councillor Paul Prentice made a voluntary announcement that he was an employee of Network Rail.

298 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Members welcomed Councillor Prentice to his first meeting of Cabinet as Portfolio holder for Transport and Planning.

Councillor Chris Cornell provided an update regarding horse-drawn carriages operating in the city following a petition earlier this year. The relevant statute that applied and the rationale for removing the item from the Public Forward Plan were clarified.

The council has so far been unable to find any legislation that provides a way for the current operation to be controlled or banned. KCC have been approached about the potential to use their powers under a TRO. Officers would prepare a report for Cabinet in the new year once additional legal advice had been explored. The Animal Welfare Act is policed by trading standards officers who can carry out welfare checks following a resident complaint. Residents can report concerns to Kent Trading Standards on 03000 41 20 20.

Councillor Hazelton announced that curtains were now included in the Household Support Fund and urged councillors to consider eligible residents that may be suitable to receive support under the scheme. Further information was available online.

Councillor Prentice reminded members that the Travel Choices survey remained open until 26 October and encouraged residents across the district to share their views and travel experiences to help inform future transport planning.

Councillor Dawkins attended a Trees Action Plan event that encouraged partnership working and ongoing engagement with stakeholders and residents' groups to help identify suitable planting locations. A plan would be produced by spring with further tree planting scheduled for the autumn.

A Canterbury Climate Change Business Breakfast would be held on 21 October at the Westgate Hall for businesses to consider their resilience to climate change and to learn more about any support available. A People’s Emergency online briefing for councillors would be held on 18 November.

Councillor Dawkins encouraged councillors to share details of the Great British Energy Community Fund with local community groups that may be interested in developing suitable projects. Further information was available online; applications would be subject to viability assessments.

St. Peters House had won a Highly Commended award recently in the Development and Regeneration category at the Kent Housing Excellence Awards 2026. Councillor Dawkins attended the event with officers and tradespeople who worked on the project to celebrate the achievement.

299 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were two speakers registered to speak on agenda item 9, Right to Grow – report back to Cabinet.

300 **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 JUNE 2026**

The minutes of the 30 June 2026 were agreed as a true record by general assent.

301 **REFERENCES FROM COMMITTEES**

The minutes from the Overview Committee on 10 September 2026 were noted and the comments were discussed at the relevant agenda item.

302 **CHANGE IN ORDER OF THE AGENDA**

The revised order was agreed by general assent – agenda item 9 would be taken first, followed by 11, 7, 8, 10 and item 12 in that order.

303 **RIGHT TO GROW - REPORT BACK TO CABINET**

Councillor Mellish and Lucy Platel (Herne Bay in Bloom) spoke directly before the item.

Councillor Mel Dawkins Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability introduced the report that presented the outcomes, learning and recommendations following completion of the two-year Right to Grow (RtG) pilot, which tested community cultivation on four council owned sites and assets. Learning from the pilot had informed the recommendations for any future RtG scheme.

There were three options for Cabinet to consider within the report:

Option 1. Continue Right to Grow in a revised form (as detailed in the report).

Option 2. Continue with Right to Grow operating in line with the original criteria and concept of the pilot, with the requirement of groups to enter into a legally binding licence which means groups will need to be a legal entity to participate. Continue to support the existing Salt Marsh Lane scheme.

Option 3. Do not progress

Officers provided clarification where necessary, and the Cabinet discussed the report including the following points:

- Members reflected on the two-year pilot and observed that this period had provided valuable learning, and the opportunity to establish projects and to understand what worked in practice. The pilot had highlighted several challenges around legal structures, community engagement and the capacity of local groups.
- The requirement for a formal legal entity had created barriers for some groups. Alternative approaches were explored by environment officers along with property and legal colleagues to help increase participation and identify solutions to some of the challenges. These included less formal partnership arrangements and memorandums of understanding,
- Engaging with objectors had produced positive results in some cases. Individuals who had initially raised concerns had been invited to join steering groups and had gone on to become active contributors after gaining a better understanding of the projects.
- A public-facing website and expression of interest process were proposed in the revised recommendations to help community groups come forward with ideas. It was recognised that expectations would need to be managed and

that it would be beneficial if support was provided to smaller groups that wished to work together on projects.

- The benefits of a partnership approach were emphasised, particularly when working with established community groups. It was suggested that encouraging early conversations and involving communities from the outset could improve project outcomes and increase local support.
- The wider benefits of community-led initiatives included improved wellbeing, stronger local networks and opportunities to identify alternative uses for land.
- The preferred and agreed approach by Cabinet for the scheme going forward would focus on working in partnership with community groups, with support, oversight and governance provided through the Open Space Biodiversity Group.

It was then proposed, seconded and when put to a recorded vote

RESOLVED

To continue the Right to Grow scheme, delivered in accordance with the revised approach and recommendations set out in Option 1 of the report.

Record of the voting:
For (7): Councillors Baldock, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Hazelton, Nolan and Prentice
Against (0)
Abstained (0)

Reason for decision: Option 1 provided a more accessible and flexible model while reducing the legal burden on community groups and the council. The use of a clear criteria checklist and public-facing webpage would help retain the ability to support and formalise appropriate, robust RtG schemes, in line with Corporate Plan objectives.

304 **CITY AND TOWN CENTRE STRATEGIES**

Councillor Chris Cornell, Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Regeneration introduced the report that provided information on structured delivery planning that is required following the adoption of the City and Town Centre Strategies at Cabinet in February. The report set out three-part delivery framework: project directories for each place, place panels for strategic stewardship and partnership advocacy, and a focused CCC action plan setting out the commitments the council can realistically progress ahead of LGR.

The report included a summary of the feedback from Overview Committee on 10 September on the proposed next steps, primarily on the creation of place panels. Overview Committee recommended to Cabinet that the proposal to create place panels be approved (Option 1 below).

The three options for Cabinet to consider within the report were:

Option 1: Approve the establishment of three strategic place panels, underpinned by project directories and a focused CCC action plan.

Option 2: Continue with project directories and an action plan but delay the establishment of place panels.

Option 3: Rely on existing service planning and do not create place panels, project directories or a specific CCC action plan.

Officers provided clarification where necessary, and the discussion by members included the following points:

- The strategies introduced a new, community-led approach to supporting high streets and local areas following extensive public engagement with over 1,000 residents and set out a long-term vision for the next 15 to 20 years.
- Feedback gathered through engagement was developed into the project directories that were intended to be 'live' documents that continued evolving with new ideas and projects added over time by residents and partner organisations. A process for which would be outlined and introduced.
- Officers confirmed they would begin progressing actions from the plan while work continued to develop and refine project proposals in the directories.
- The introduction of Place Panels, supported by Overview Committee were proposed to help shape priorities and support delivery. They were intended to be community-led rather than officer-led and to provide a mechanism for ongoing local involvement.
- The panels were expected to focus on identifying 'quick wins' where possible, prioritising areas requiring investment, and helping move early ideas into deliverable projects. They were intended to be supported by residents and local anchor organisations.
- A transparent process to recruit independent members to the panels would take place to include open applications and interviews, with independent chairs. A timetable and appointment arrangements would be confirmed but would be similar to the process used to recruit independent members to the Whitstable Harbour Board. This can also be refined if required.
- Officers confirmed that the panels would work alongside existing governance arrangements and would not replace or bypass established democratic decision-making processes. Formal decisions would remain with the appropriate bodies.
- Membership arrangements would remain flexible to reflect local circumstances and priorities. Where vacancies arose, appointments would be reviewed by the Director of Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member, based on the needs of the panel rather than automatically filled by a representative from the same organisation.

It was then proposed, seconded and when put to a recorded vote

RESOLVED

That the Council:
1. establishes place panels for Canterbury, Herne Bay and Whitstable; and
2. delegates authority to the Director of Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member responsible for overseeing the place panels, to: a. invite identified local anchor institutions, partnerships and key community organisations to nominate representatives to serve as non-elected members of the panels; and b. appoint, following an open invitation for applications, individuals to serve as non-elected members of the panels, with those appointments reported to Full Council for noting.

And Cabinet NOTED:

• Project directories for Canterbury, Herne Bay and Whitstable.
• Canterbury City Council's City & Town Centre Strategies action plan.

Record of the voting:
For (7): Councillors Baldock, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Hazelton, Nolan and Prentice
Against (0)
Abstained (0)

Reason for decision: This option would provide the clearest route from strategy adoption to strategic place stewardship, while managing expectations, preserving officer delivery responsibility and supporting transition through LGR.

305 **DRAFT CIL ACTION PLAN 2026**

Councillor Baldock, Cabinet Member for Strategy and Finance introduced the report that seeks agreement of the final CIL Action Plan (2026), to deliver the priority projects from within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, based on the agreed approach to distributing and ringfencing CIL monies.

There were three options for Cabinet to consider within the report:

Option 1 – To approve the CIL Action Plan (2026) as per the recommendations of the CIL Spending Advisory Board

Option 2 – Partially accept the spending recommendations of the CIL Action Plan (2026)

Option 3 – Reject the CIL Action Plan (2026)

Cabinet discussed the report and officers provided clarification as required, including the following points:

- The establishment of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Advisory Board was welcomed, with the first meeting having recently taken place.
- Officers outlined the proposed CIL Action Plan and summarised the allocation of funding towards a range of transport, education and community infrastructure projects. The role of CIL funding in supporting the Local Plan and wider strategic priorities was acknowledged.
- The importance of maintaining an open, transparent and collaborative approach to prioritising infrastructure investment across the district was highlighted.
- Monitoring of the impact of funded projects would be essential to ensure that measurable benefits were delivered for residents and contributed to the council's longer-term objectives.
- Future cycle hire funding and any extension of the existing scheme would be considered across the district.
- Members discussed the future allocation of funding within unparished areas; officers confirmed that proposals could be suggested and brought forward through the Advisory Board and Cabinet. Arrangements for local engagement

and the process of funding distribution (including smaller 'pots') would require further development, particularly in unparished areas, to ensure a fair and strategic approach across the district.

- Cabinet expressed support in principle for greater local involvement in identifying spending priorities, including the potential role of upcoming Place Panels in suggesting projects for unparished areas to ensure that funding reflected local needs.
- Current resource pressures for officers were acknowledged, comments raised during the discussion would be considered and brought forward for future consideration where appropriate.

It was then proposed, seconded and when put to a recorded vote

RESOLVED

That:

(1) The CIL Action Plan (2026) be approved as per the recommendation of the CIL Spending Advisory Board.

(2) Authority be delegated to the Joint Chief Executives, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader, to approve expenditure of up to 10% above the project budgets set out in the CIL Action Plan (2026). (Option 1)

Record of the voting:
For (7): Councillors Baldock, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Hazelton, Nolan and Prentice
Against (0)
Abstained (0)

Reason for decision: Approval of the recommended CIL allocations would enable the council to begin delivering infrastructure necessary to support planned growth across the district and implement key priorities within the emerging Local Plan, Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Transport Strategy. The recommended projects identified in partnership with infrastructure providers would help to secure external funding opportunities, address infrastructure capacity pressures and support sustainable development.

306 **CANTERBURY DISTRICT COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP - REPORT BACK ON 25/26 AND DELIVERY PLAN 26/27**

Councillor Connie Nolan, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement, Safety and Enforcement introduced the report that presented the annual review and Scrutiny committee's feedback to Cabinet, and summarised partnership achievements during 2025/26 and priorities for 2026–2029.

The Cabinet discussed the report, and officers were praised for their strong partnership working that underpinned community safety activity across the district.

Strong relationships with local organisations, volunteers and educational institutions continued to make a valuable contribution in achieving positive outcomes in reducing crime, tackling exploitation, improving community reassurance, and addressing issues such as domestic abuse, environmental crime and road safety.

Work was ongoing to support victims of domestic abuse and to progress the council towards accreditation in this area. The importance of understanding and responding to the needs of vulnerable groups, including women experiencing rough sleeping, was highlighted by members.

Officers confirmed that the impact of recent prisoner release schemes would be monitored and they would continue to work closely with partners to manage any emerging community safety issues.

The following was

NOTED by general assent:

1. The Community Safety Partnership's achievements during 2025/26;
2. The Community Safety Partnership's new priorities and actions for 2026–2029; and
3. The feedback provided by the Scrutiny Committee and the operational updates made in response.

307 **PROVISION OF TOILETS ON HERNE BAY SEAFRONT**

Councillor Charlotte Cornell, Cabinet Member for Council Services, Culture and Heritage introduced the report that set out an options appraisal for the relocation of the public toilets currently attached to The King's Hall, Herne Bay, required as part of the wider Kings Hall refurbishment works.

Officers answered questions and provided additional information that included costs, strengths and weaknesses for the following options:

Option 1: Kings Hall site - modular public toilets

Option 2: Near the new beach huts / East Cliff Promenade - modular public toilets

Option 3: NCI & coastguard lookout building, East Cliff Parade

The Cabinet discussed the report including the following points:

- Members expressed support for option 2 which was considered the best option by officers for accessibility and increased provision during the Kings Hall refurbishment.
- The scheme would be funded from the existing toilets budget which would also include additional (modular) toilet provision for Hampton to be completed at the same time. An update on related projects in Herne Bay would be provided in due course.
- Members suggested ideas for additional facilities, including external amenities. Officers would review the suggestions; some nearby facilities were already in place.

It was then proposed, seconded and when put to a recorded vote

RESOLVED

1. That Cabinet agrees that new modular public toilets are provided at the East Cliff Promenade, near the new beach huts (Option 2), funded from the existing public

toilets budget, and that officers proceed to develop this option through the necessary governance, design and procurement stages.
2. The proposal is that the new modular toilet block consists of one accessible and baby changing facility, and two further toilets. See SK02 Plans and Elevations. Total provision three toilets. Costs in this report refer to this size of modular unit.

Record of the voting:
For (7): Councillors Baldock, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Hazelton, Nolan and Prentice
Against (0)
Abstained (0)

Reason for decision: A new modular toilet block near the beach huts on the East Cliff Promenade best supports the council's wider ambitions and increased footfall at the East Cliff Promenade and avoids undermining the improvements at The King's Hall.

It is the lowest-cost option, at an estimated £135,000, and could be delivered within around six months, potentially avoiding the circa £12,000 cost of temporary portaloos.

308 **ADOPTION OF THE CANTERBURY DISTRICT BIODIVERSITY PLAN – A NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY**

Councillor Mel Dawkins, Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability introduced the report and the Canterbury District Biodiversity Plan that followed involvement of the Open Space and Biodiversity Group, a three-month public consultation and presentation to Overview Committee.

The report seeks Cabinet approval to adopt the Canterbury District Biodiversity Plan – a nature recovery strategy, as a supporting document to the draft Local Plan.

The three options for Cabinet to consider were:

Option 1: Adopt the Canterbury District Biodiversity Plan

Option 2: Do not adopt the Canterbury District Biodiversity Plan

Option 3: Request a redraft and further consultation

The Cabinet discussed the report including the following points:

- Members welcomed the Biodiversity Plan and recognised the significant amount of work undertaken by officers and stakeholders to reach this stage. The strategy was praised as a well-evidenced document with a clear and ambitious long-term vision.
- Extensive consultation and engagement, including input from specialist groups and feedback from Overview Committee, had strengthened the document and helped to ensure that the proposed actions were practical and deliverable.
- The strategy's importance as a supporting evidence document for the Local Plan was acknowledged. It provided a clear framework and would be used as a resource to inform and inspire, and to help guide future decision-making and development proposals.
- Officers were thanked and congratulations were given to all those involved in preparing the strategy for its content quality and presentation. It was

suggested that some of the images could be displayed in the public-facing council offices to showcase the work and further increase public engagement with the strategy.

It was then proposed, seconded and when put to a recorded vote

RESOLVED

That Cabinet adopt the Canterbury district biodiversity plan 2026-2042/43.

Record of the voting:
For (7): Councillors Baldock, Charlotte Cornell, Chris Cornell, Dawkins, Hazelton, Nolan and Prentice
Against (0)
Abstained (0)

Reason for decision: Option 1 respects the council's biodiversity declaration, supports delivery consistent with the Regulation 19 Local Plan policies and informs the council's biodiversity duty.

309 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 3rd November 2026

310 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS TO BE DEALT WITH IN PUBLIC**

There was none.

311 **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Not required.

312 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS WHICH FALLS UNDER THE EXEMPT PROVISIONS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 OR THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 OR BOTH**

There was none.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.10 pm