

Council



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19th July 2022

A meeting of the **Council** of North Norfolk District Council will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices on **Wednesday, 27 July 2022 at 6.00 pm.**

At the discretion of the Chairman, a short break will be taken after the meeting has been running for approximately one and a half hours

Members of the public who wish to ask a question or speak on an agenda item are requested to arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of the meeting. It will not always be possible to accommodate requests after that time. This is to allow time for the Committee Chair to rearrange the order of items on the agenda for the convenience of members of the public. Further information on the procedure for public speaking can be obtained from Democratic Services, Tel:01263 516010, Email:Emma.Denny@north-norfolk.gov.uk.

Anyone attending this meeting may take photographs, film or audio-record the proceedings and report on the meeting. Anyone wishing to do so should inform the Chairman. If you are a member of the public and you wish to speak on an item on the agenda, please be aware that you may be filmed or photographed.

Emma Denny
Democratic Services Manager

To: Mr T Adams, Ms P Bevan Jones, Mr D Birch, Mr H Blathwayt, Mr A Brown, Dr P Bütikofer, Mrs S Bütikofer, Mr C Cushing, Mr N Dixon, Mr P Fisher, Mrs A Fitch-Tillett, Mr T FitzPatrick, Mr V FitzPatrick, Mrs W Fredericks, Ms V Gay, Mrs P Grove-Jones, Mr G Hayman, Mr C Heinink, Mr P Heinrich, Dr V Holliday, Mr N Housden, Mr R Kershaw, Mr N Lloyd, Mr G Mancini-Boyle, Mr N Pearce, Mr S Penfold, Mrs G Perry-Warnes, Mr J Punchard, Mr J Rest, Mr E Seward, Miss L Shires, Mrs E Spagnola, Mrs J Stenton, Dr C Stockton, Mr M Taylor, Mr J Toye, Mr E Vardy, Mr A Varley, Ms L Withington and Mr A Yiasimi

All other Members of the Council for information.

Members of the Management Team, appropriate Officers, Press and Public



If you have any special requirements in order to attend this meeting, please let us know in advance
If you would like any document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact us

A G E N D A

1. MANCROFT ADVICE PROJECT (MAP) PRESENTATION

To receive a presentation from MAP Chief Executive Dan Mobbs about the Charity and the work it undertakes.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence, if any.

3. MINUTES

1 - 16

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22nd June 2022.

4. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

To determine any other items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

5. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

17 - 18

Members are asked at this stage to declare any interests that they may have in any of the following items on the agenda. The Code of Conduct for Members requires that declarations include the nature of the interest and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest (see attached guidance and flowchart)

6. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive the Chairman's communications, if any.

7. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

8. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

To consider any questions or statements received from members of the public.

9. PORTFOLIO REPORTS

19 - 66

To receive reports from Cabinet Members on their portfolios.

Members are reminded that they may ask questions of the Cabinet Member on their reports and portfolio areas but should note that it is not a debate.

No member may ask more than one question plus a supplementary question, unless the time taken by members' questions does not exceed 30 minutes in total, in which case, second questions will be taken in the order that they are received (Constitution, Chapter 2, part 2, section 12.2)

**Questions will be taken in the order that they are received.
Cabinet members (listed alphabetically)**

Cllr T Adams (Leader / Executive Support)
Cllr A Brown – Planning & Enforcement
Cllr A Fitch-Tillett – Coast
Cllr W Fredericks – Housing & Benefits
Cllr V Gay – Leisure, Culture & Wellbeing
Cllr R Kershaw – Sustainable Growth
Cllr N Lloyd – Environment
Cllr E Seward – Finance, Assets & Legal
Cllr L Shires – Organisational Resources

10. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET 11TH JULY 2022

No recommendations to Council were made at the meeting.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 15TH JUNE 2022

Recommendations from the June meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee were considered at the Full Council meeting on 22nd June 2022.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY 7TH JUNE 2022 67 - 72

At the CWP meeting held on 7th June 2022, the following recommendations were made, minutes have been included for context:

1. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCILS CONSTITUTION RELATING TO ESTATE MATTERS

RESOLVED

To support the proposed amendments as detailed in Section 3 and 4 of the report and recommend approval to Full Council, subject to the Portfolio Holder's agreement

2. APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON

RESOLVED

To recommend to Council that the process for recruitment of two Independent Persons should commence.

13. OUTSIDE BODY APPOINTMENTS

73 - 74

Group Leaders to make any required changes or consider new appointments to outside bodies.

14. CROMER AND FAKENHAM LEVELLING-UP BIDS

Report to follow.

15. QUESTIONS RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS

None Received.

16. OPPOSITION BUSINESS

None Received.

17. NOTICE(S) OF MOTION

None Received.

18. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To pass the following resolution – if necessary:

“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) _ of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act.”

19. PRIVATE BUSINESS

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 22 June 2022 in the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 6.00 pm

Members Present:

Mr T Adams	Ms P Bevan Jones
Mr D Birch	Mr H Blathwayt
Mrs S Bütikofer	Mr C Cushing
Mr N Dixon	Mr P Fisher
Mrs A Fitch-Tillett	Mr T FitzPatrick
Mr V FitzPatrick	Mrs W Fredericks
Ms V Gay	Mrs P Grove-Jones
Mr G Hayman	Mr C Heinink
Dr V Holliday	Mr N Housden
Mr R Kershaw	Mr N Lloyd
Mr N Pearce	Mr S Penfold
Mr J Rest	Mr E Seward
Miss L Shires	Mrs J Stenton
Mr M Taylor	Mr E Vardy
Mr A Varley	Ms L Withington

Also in attendance:

18 PRESENTATION BY THE PRISCILLA BACON HOSPICE

Hugo Stevenson gave a presentation on the work of the Priscilla Bacon Hospice. He spoke about the ongoing construction of the new Priscilla Bacon Lodge and outlined the additional facilities that would be available. Members were shown visual images of the site, including floor plans and an artist's impression of the finished lodge. Mr Stevenson concluded by thanking the Chairman for choosing Priscilla Bacon Hospice as one of her charities for the year.

19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs A Brown, Dr P Butikofer, P Heinrich, G Mancini-Boyle, G Perry-Warnes, J Punchard, Dr C Stockton, J Toye and A Yiasimi.

20 MINUTES

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Council, held on 18th May 2022, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

21 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None received.

22 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

23 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman spoke about the civic events that herself and the Vice-Chairman had attended since the last meeting:

- 19th May – Launch of Norfolk Community Foundation ‘Nourishing Norfolk’ campaign
- 21st May – Falklands Commemoration Service, Stalham Parish Church
- 26th May – Jubilee event at Wells Community Hospital
- 27th May – Jubilee Family Picnic at Antingham & Southrepps Primary School
- 28th May – Shrek the Musical, Sheringham & Cromer Light Opera Society
- 2nd June – Jubilee commemorative slate unveiling at Holt
- 3rd June – Inauguration of the Mayoress of Kings Lynn
- 3rd June – Jubilee Civic Service, Great Yarmouth Minster
- 12th June – Lord Mayor of Norwich & Sheriff of Norwich Civic Service, Norwich Cathedral
- 19th June – VE Day 75th Anniversary presentation of commemorative poppies, Cromer Parish church

24 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader began by speaking about the approaching anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide in Bosnia, when 8000 men and boys were massacred. He reminded members that their memory was honoured on 11th July every year and it should never be forgotten that hatred and intolerance could flourish if left unchallenged.

He then spoke about how the Council was addressing rising living costs for residents and staff through various schemes including the creation of two discretionary hardship funds for vulnerable residents, an increase to staff mileage rates and excellent performance in the rapid processing of energy rebates. He referred to the Norfolk Community Foundation’s launch of Flourishing Norfolk, which he had attended with the Chairman and thanked all members who were involved with similar initiatives in their communities. He also thanked staff in the Housing Team who were working hard to reduce the number of rough sleepers in the District.

The Leader thanked the Council’s Communications Team for their hard work in producing ‘Outlook’ magazine which would be distributed to all households in the District shortly.

He then spoke about concerns that had been raised with him regarding rising energy costs and whether the new Reef Leisure centre would be affected. He said he wished to reassure residents and members that the Council was in a more resilient position than most as it was a very modern and efficient facility.

The Leader concluded by informing members that there would be a special meeting of Cabinet at 1pm on 4th July to share information on the Council’s bids to the Levelling Up fund, ahead of the submission deadline of 6th July.

25 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

None received.

26 PORTFOLIO REPORTS

The Chairman asked if any Cabinet members wished to provide an update to their written report. Cllr E Seward, Portfolio Holder for Finance & Assets, referred to the figure in his report for council tax collection for 2021/2022 which was 98.10%. He clarified that this put NNDC in the top 15% of all local authorities for collection rates.

The Chairman invited members to ask questions:

Cllr J Rest referred to Cllr Seward's report and the reference to a lease at the Fakenham Connect building. He said this was another example of local members not being kept informed of matters in their ward. He asked for more information on the lease arrangements. Cllr Seward apologised that local members had not been informed and said that he would provide a written response.

Cllr N Dixon referred to the recent 'no notice' resignation of the Director of Resources. He asked the Leader why it happened the way that it did and whether there was any connection to the many criticisms of NNDC and the events of May 2019 made by the Council's external auditor, Ernst & Young, in their Annual Report for 2019/20. The Monitoring Officer advised Cllr Dixon that his question may have to be rejected as it was not possible to provide an answer without the disclosure of confidential exempt information. The Leader confirmed that as the questions concerned matters about staffing it could not be discussed in public session.

Cllr C Cushing asked the Leader to what extent he was involved in the discussions resulting in the 'no notice' resignation of the Director of Resources and whether there was any extraordinary departure deal agreed to enable this to happen, and whether the Leader had any involvement in such a deal. The Monitoring Officer advised that the question could not be answered without the disclosure of confidential exempt information and must therefore be rejected. The Leader referred Cllr Cushing to his previous response.

Cllr J Stenton asked the Leader whether the residents of North Norfolk would be told the details of any departure deal and any disciplinary action that had been taken. The Leader reiterated his previous response and said that such matters would not be discussed at any local authority and he did not intend to discuss them now.

Cllr M Taylor asked the Leader whether members, who had a collective responsibility for the governance of the Council, would ever be told the contents of any extraordinary departure deal and if it was a confidential agreement, would there be a provision for members to be told confidentially. The Leader referred Cllr Taylor to his previous response.

Cllr G Hayman asked for a point of clarification. He said that the Leader had declined to answer a range of questions, some of which didn't ask for any confidential information to be disclosed. He asked whether the Leader could confirm whether he was involved in any discussion regarding a departure deal as that was not confidential information. He said that he was concerned that the Leader was trying to avoid responding to a straightforward question. The Monitoring Officer said that if Cllr Hayman was raising a point of order then the Constitution required that he state the council procedure rule which was being breached. Cllr Hayman replied that he would expect the Monitoring Officer to have knowledge of the constitution and assist him with this but he would hope that requirements around responses to questions would be set out in the Constitution. The Chairman suggested that Cllr Hayman received a written response to his query. Cllr Hayman agreed to this.

Cllr S Penfold commented that Cllr Hayman had raised a question rather than a point of order and it should have been treated as such and dealt with in sequence as there were other members waiting to speak. He referred to Cllr Gay's report and the reference to the North Walsham street feast in May and said that he wanted to encourage all members to attend the next one in July.

Cllr T FitzPatrick said that he would not put a question to the Leader as he believed it would not receive a response and that this in itself demonstrated a lack of compliance with the Nolan principles. He asked Cllr R Kershaw, Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Growth, about a leaflet that all members had received outlining the benefits of Equinor. He said as local member for Walsingham, it 'rubbed salt in the wounds' to hear about all of the opportunities being created by a new UK hub and operations centre being established in Great Yarmouth, when over 100 jobs had been lost in his ward due to inaction by NNDC. He said that he was concerned about the wider impact of the loss of good jobs for young people and in the hospitality sector. He said that he wanted to ask again what was being done to replace those 100 jobs in Fakenham and Walsingham. Cllr R Kershaw commented on the length of Cllr FitzPatrick's question and Cllr FitzPatrick replied that he had asked it politely and wanted a simple, straightforward response. Cllr Kershaw said that a lot of the jobs referred to by Cllr FitzPatrick had gone over a period of time not just in the last year. He added that the folly of creating a hub in a place which had just 3 hours of high water a day, meant that it was not suitable for serving large vessels. The industry had moved to Great Yarmouth because the larger fields were being serviced by hotel ships. He went on to say that he had visited Walsingham on several occasions but there had not been any interest in the site but that, as Local Member, Cllr FitzPatrick was advised of any new jobs in his ward. Cllr FitzPatrick said that he had not been notified of any.

Cllr V FitzPatrick asked Cllr Fitch-Tillett, Portfolio Holder for Coast, about the suspension of the demolition of a property close to the cliff edge in Happisburgh. He sought reassurance that a full risk assessment had been carried out and that there was no risk to the public and that the building would be monitored over the coming months to ensure there was no danger to the public whilst it remained in a precarious, semi-demolished state. Cllr Fitch-Tillett replied that it would be demolished in due course following a delay due to sand martins nesting in the cliffs. Work would continue once they had flown in the Autumn. She asked whether Cllr FitzPatrick had visited the site, he replied that he had not and that was not relevant to the question he was raising regarding public safety. Cllr Fitch-Tillett said that she could assure him that the site would be monitored and the final demolition would be undertaken following full health and safety checks. She referred to the demolition of 11 houses in Happisburgh 12 years ago, which had been done with full checks throughout the entire process. The Council's record was excellent regarding such work. Cllr FitzPatrick replied that he had not received a response to his initial question which was an outline of the steps that had been taken to ensure public safety at the current site in Happisburgh. He said he would be content to receive a written response if the Portfolio Holder could not reply now. Cllr Fitch-Tillett said she did not need to provide a written response. She confirmed that the site was fully fenced in and was satisfied that it was safe.

Cllr T FitzPatrick said that members' behaviour during portfolio holder reports was unacceptable and did not reflect the Nolan Principles.

Cllr N Pearce said that he wished to ask Cllr Shires, Portfolio Holder for Organisational Resources a question regarding customer service. He read out a letter that he had received from a resident which set out, in detail, their recent experience of trying to speak to an adviser regarding a financial matter. It had taken a lengthy period of time and a lot of questions to reach the right department. At this point he had been advised it would take a further 15 minutes to speak to someone. Eventually he was told that there would be a further wait and advised to call back the following day. Cllr Pearce went on to say that the correspondent had approached him

for assistance, asking when the Council would provide an efficient and caring service for those that could not use the internet. The experience had been frustrating to the point that he had given up. He concluded by asking Cllr Shires how she intended to address such problems – especially as he had raised a similar issue at the previous meeting of Full Council.

Cllr Shires thanked Cllr Pearce for raising the matter with her. She said that the call he had outlined could be traced forensically as it seemed an unusually long time to take to get through the options menu. Cllr Pearce said he did not feel it would be appropriate to ask for more detail from the caller and that the matter should be taken at face value. The Chief Executive said that the customer services team would investigate the matter and provide a response.

Cllr Dr V Holliday said she wished to ask Cllr Shires a question. She referred to the Council's performance management database, InPhase, and said that it provided information on the average customer services call queue time. However, based on her recent experience of a 21 minute wait for switchboard, she said that she would like to see the median call queue time and the outlier data. She then asked that having looked at the service level percentage and calls resolved whether would it be possible to also chart the number of calls unanswered or unresolved. In conclusion, she said that the charts on webforms and online queries only plotted volume, not processing time and she wondered whether it would be possible to chart the latter. Cllr Shires confirmed that the data was available and she would look into it and provide a written response to Cllr Dr Holliday.

27 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET 06 JUNE 2022

The Chairman invited Cllr L Shires, Portfolio Holder for Organisational Resources to introduce the first recommendation:

Cabinet Agenda 06 June 2022 – Agenda Item 14: Cromer Pier Infrastructure Works

Cllr Shires proposed the recommendations. She queried the inclusion of exempt papers in the agenda as there had been an agreement at the Cabinet meeting that some of the financial information should be shared in the public domain. The Chief Executive replied that the capital budget amount was specified in the recommendation which was included in the public papers.

Cllr C Cushing said that £1.134m was a huge sum of money to come out of the Council's purse and he had queried the bulk of the financial information being included in exempt papers at the Cabinet meeting. He said that he had concerns that this seemed to be yet another large amount of money being requested for the Pier. He added that for many residents of the District, the Pier was not always seen as a huge asset but more of a financial 'black hole'. He asked what other options had been considered for maintaining the pier in the future to prevent further requests to release substantial amounts of money and why, despite previous assurances that the Council would not need to continue to keep paying out for the maintenance of the pier, were members being asked yet again to support such a request.

Cllr Shires replied that this was the third and final phase of the project. She said that the work was necessary to ensure that the pier was a safe structure for the public to access. The alternative would be to dismantle the pier and she did not think that this was a feasible option. Cllr Cushing said that he felt there was more work to be

undertaken regarding how much money had been spent in recent years on maintaining the pier and what guarantee was there to assure members that this large tranche of money would be enough. The Chief Executive said that advice had always been sought regarding any works to the pier. It was a Grade II listed structure and the Council had a duty to maintain it. He said that alternative models of funding had been explored including sponsorship and the establishment of a trust but they were not considered appropriate at the time. He concluded by saying that many local authorities had responsibilities and obligations to preserve and maintain historic assets. Cllr Cushing commented that there should be a further discussion at some point to review the options available.

Cllr T FitzPatrick said that he was baffled why there were exempt papers for this item. He said that he understood that the contract had been awarded for both the capital project and the insurance contract (the second recommendation). He said that the cost to residents was over £10 a head. He asked about the tender process and that there was only one tender received. The Chief Executive replied that there had been an open tender process but only one tender had been received. Cllr FitzPatrick asked whether he could ask questions about the tender process given that the information was included in an exempt appendix. He referred to both of the Cabinet recommendations that were presented to Full Council for approval. Both related to tenders for large sums and in each case only one tender had been received. He said that this was concerning and he asked whether the tender process had been undertaken properly. He then asked about the valuation for insurance purposes and asked whether that was for the reconstruction of the pier. The Chief Executive replied that this was the next agenda item. There were two recommendations. Both related to the pier but they were separate recommendations. He said that he was at a total loss to understand why the residents of North Norfolk could not have the full financial details of the proposals shared with them. He asked the Monitoring Officer to state which paragraphs within the documents indicated that the information should be exempt. The Monitoring Officer referred Cllr FitzPatrick to the relevant paragraph of the legislation which was provided at the top of the exempt document. Cllr FitzPatrick said that he was not satisfied with the Monitoring Officer's response. The Monitoring Officer explained that both exempt appendices related to contracts that had not yet been awarded and outlined ongoing negotiations and were therefore not suitable for publication in the public domain.

Cllr Shires suggested that the two recommendations were dealt with separately as there seemed to be some confusion. Cllr FitzPatrick said that his main query was regarding why the information in the appendices for both recommendations was exempt. As far as he could see, only the name of the winning bidder needed to be kept confidential and he could not understand the justification for keeping the rest of the information confidential, unless the Council was in the standstill period for either contract. Cllr Shires replied that the insurance contract had not yet been awarded and that was why it was fully exempt. The Chief Executive clarified that there were two recommendations. The first item was to establish a capital budget for the works on the pier, following a tender process. The second item related to the awarding of the insurance contract for the pier. For the latter, a series of options had been presented to Cabinet and their preferred option was presented to Full Council. He explained that there was a significant increase in the insurance for the pier specifically with the Council's insurance premium renewal. He said that additional budget provision was therefore required for the insurance of the pier and Cabinet had recommended to Council the amount of excess in the event of catastrophic loss of the pier. With reference to Cllr FitzPatrick's question regarding the valuation of the pier, the Chief Executive said in terms of the discussions and learning from the

capital budget recommendation, the construction cost issues and the specialist marine environment, the valuation for a total rebuild needed to reflect these and the related insurance risk. Cllr FitzPatrick commented that he had deliberately not mentioned the name of the insurer so as not to breach confidentiality, yet the Chief Executive had now disclosed this information, he reiterated his request to have an explanation as to why the financial details for both recommendations were in exempt appendices.

Cllr N Housden said that he agreed with Cllr T FitzPatrick as the capital sum was included in the public papers and he too did not therefore understand why the rest of the information was in exempt appendices.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their comments and said that she would now put the recommendations to the vote in turn.

Cllr T Adams requested a recorded vote.

It was proposed by Cllr T Adams, seconded by Cllr L Shires and

RESOLVED with 19 votes in favour and 11 against

That a capital budget of £1,134,000 is approved to enable the works to be completed, to be funded from capital receipts

It was proposed by Cllr E Seward, seconded by Cllr L Shires and

RESOLVED

That additional budget provision is made the insurance contract for Cromer Pier for 2022/23 of £81.2k to be funded from the Delivery Plan Reserve if required at year end.

12 members abstained.

28 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 15 JUNE 2022 - O&S ANNUAL REPORT 2021/2022

The Chairman of Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Cllr N Dixon, introduced this item. He explained that this was a statutory report which provided the Council with an outline of the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a summary of the work undertaken throughout 2021 – 2022. He commended the work of the committee and highlighted its many achievements, however, he said that he wanted to draw members' attention to three recommendations, which had been raised in previous years. They were a constraint and a restriction to the extent to which the committee could grow and add value.

The first, related to an insufficient number of substitutes. He said that on many occasions when apologies were given, there was not a substitute member in place and this meant that the committee was not operating at its full capacity.

The second recommendation highlighted the continued late submission of reports. This caused volatility in the committee's work programme. At pre-agenda meetings in particular, draft reports were often not available and there was no opportunity to comment or request additional information ahead of agenda publication.

The last recommendation highlighted concerns around 'last minute' requests to include items under 'urgent business'. Again, this degraded the quality of scrutiny and limited the opportunity to add maximum value to the process.

It was proposed by Cllr C Cushing, seconded by Cllr N Pearce and

RESOLVED

To note the report, affirm the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, and consider the following concerns raised within the report:

- Additional Committee substitutes required to adequately address the number of apologies given.
- Late submission of reports continues to cause volatility in the Work Programme.
- Too many 'last minute' requests to include items under Urgent Business which degrades both the quality of scrutiny and the opportunity to add maximum value to the process

29 EXTENSION OF THE TEMPORARY INCREASE TO MILEAGE RATES, DUE TO THE SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN FUEL COSTS.

The Chairman invited the HR Manager to introduce the report. He explained that the report provided members with information to consider a medium-term increase in mileage rates for staff due to the ongoing situation with respect to increased fuel costs. If supported, the increase would remain in place to the end of the 2022/2023 financial year.

Cllr T FitzPatrick said that he knew how hard staff worked and acknowledged that fuel costs were high, however, he could not support the proposals during a time of an unprecedented rise in the cost of living. Inflation was rising sharply and mortgages were being pushed up. People were struggling to pay for food and it was the wrong message to give to the hard pressed people of North Norfolk at this time. He requested a recorded vote.

Cllr G Hayman said that he agreed with Cllr FitzPatrick's comments regarding the timing and optics of the proposal. He added that there could be an issue with expenses that if they were higher, then it encouraged and increased use of them, whereas if they were lowered it could encourage a reduction in the use of vehicles. He said that the Portfolio Holder for the Environment should have concerns around such proposals as it the Council should be taking the opportunity to cut the number of journeys being undertaken by staff. He then asked if the mileage rate increase would apply to members. The HR Manager confirmed that these proposals just applied to officers. Members' allowances were dealt with under a different process.

Cllr Hayman then asked if it was possible to have a list of officers and the mileage that they claimed for over the period of a year. He suggested that Overview & Scrutiny Committee could review this. The HR manager replied that he could provide this information on service basis rather than by individual.

Cllr V FitzPatrick said that this was a difficult matter. He reminded members that the Council was not always held in the highest regard by the public and he felt that awarding such a sizeable increase in mileage rates could cause significant reputational damage. He added that many people were really struggling with rapidly

increasing costs and proposals such as this just added to the public's perception of a 'them and us' culture within local authorities. He concluded by saying that it was a terrible message to send out during such a difficult time and he could not support it. All alternatives to car usage should be considered instead.

Cllr N Pearce agreed with the previous comments. He acknowledged the challenges that everyone faced, including high fuel costs. He reminded members that during the pandemic staff had adapted quickly to working from home and modern technology should be utilised fully. He said that the focus should be on essential journeys only. He said it was the wrong message at the wrong time and it also went against the Council's ambition of achieving net zero status.

The Leader, Cllr T Adams clarified that the proposals related to business travel. Journeys had reduced significantly during the pandemic but there was still a requirement for key staff to make some necessary journeys across the District. He said that he was fully supportive of them. He urged the Government to address the issue of rising full costs. He concluded by saying that it was a temporary increase and it would be reviewed regularly.

Cllr N Housden said that he agreed that the proposals were totally inappropriate for this time. He referred to section 2.6 of the report which mentioned the 'Green Book' and asked if members were to reject the proposals, if the Council would be in contravention of the green book or whether it could take its own decisions in the context of the fuel increases. The HR Manager said that this was a local agreement between the Council and Unison. It had been agreed initially on a temporary basis but was coming forwards to members to be formally ratified. Cllr Housden asked for clarification on the review period. The HR Manager confirmed that it was monthly and would be undertaken by the Chief Executive. Cllr Housden asked whether, if fuel costs were to drop, the mileage amount would be pro-rata or if it would revert automatically to 45 pence per mile. The HR Manager replied that this had not been considered, adding that it was a volatile environment. In response to a further question from Cllr Housden, the HR Manager confirmed that the temporary increase would not go up beyond 60 pence in the next 12 months.

Cllr N Lloyd, Portfolio Holder for the Environment, said that he wished to clarify some of the issues that had been raised regarding the environmental impact of the proposals. He said that the Council was moving over to electric vehicle fleets as leases expired. In addition, HR was working on a salary sacrifice scheme to enable staff to switch to electric cars. He said it was important to remember that some officers had to travel right across the District, often to react to incidents that had been reported by the public. It was necessary part of their job that they had to fulfil.

Cllr H Blathwayt said that it was a difficult decision to support but it must be acknowledged that staff were living and working in a rural area and it was challenging to attract staff. If the Council wanted to attract good quality officers then it must compensate them.

Cllr E Vardy referred to the proposals being locally negotiated between the Council and Unison. He asked whether they had been shared with other local authorities in the region or had the Council acted alone. The HR Manager replied that this was just a local agreement between NNDC and Unison. He said that any discussions outside of the Council would be for Unison to progress. Cllr Vardy expressed his disappointment.

Cllr S Butikofer said that some very good points had been made. She acknowledged

that it was a difficult decision but she agreed with Cllr Blathwayt that it was important to compensate staff for the excellent work that they did. In some parts of the country, Council staff were having to go to food banks as they were struggling with increased living costs.

Cllr L Shires said that it was not clear which procedures had been followed to come to this decision. The report did not include any details regarding this. She asked whether it would be possible to make a decision pending confirmation to Cabinet regarding the procedures that had taken place. The HR Manager replied that there had been discussions between himself and Unison representatives and a delegated decision had been taken to implement an initial temporary increase for 3 months. He said that the Monitoring Officer would have to provide a response regarding the full governance process.

Cllr Hayman said that he wished to make the following amendment:

The report should be sent back to the relevant committees for comment and review before coming back to Full Council for consideration

Cllr N Housden seconded the proposal.

Cllr T FitzPatrick sought clarification regarding the process as there was already a proposal on the table that had been seconded. Cllr T Adams said that he did not wish to withdraw his proposal. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that Cllr Hayman's proposal would be treated as an amendment to the original proposal and would be taken first.

The amendment as proposed by Cllr Hayman and seconded by Cllr Housden was put to the vote. 12 members voted in favour, 16 against and 2 members abstained. It was therefore not supported.

The Chairman advised members that she would now move to a recorded vote on the substantive motion.

It was proposed by Cllr T Adams, seconded by Cllr H Blathwayt and

RESOLVED

To agree Option 2 – to support the increased mileage rates for the remainder of the 2022/23 financial year, subject to monthly review by the Chief Executive, with the increased rates being removed if there is a significant reduction in fuel prices over that period.

17 members voted in favour, 12 against and 1 member abstained.

30 INTERIM SECTION 151 OFFICER ARRANGEMENTS

The Chairman invited the Chief Executive to introduce this item. He explained that Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 required the Council to designate a Chief Finance (Section 151) Officer. The Chief Finance Officer had a number of statutory duties and responsibilities relating to the proper administration of the Council's finances, assets and resources and be responsible for those arrangements including managing the relationship with the Council's Internal and External Audit functions, submission of Government returns.

Following the recent resignation of the officer who had fulfilled this role for the Council since September 2016, it was necessary to designate a new officer to fulfil the Chief Finance Officer role for the authority on an interim basis until a permanent appointment of a new Director of Resources was made. He said that he had begun conversations with neighbouring local authorities and the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) about filling the vacancy on an interim basis to provide the necessary support for the Council to fulfil its section 151 obligations in the intervening period whilst recruitment took place for the Director of Resources role. He had not been able to conclude discussions with a neighbouring authority but they had been positive and he was hopeful of reaching an outcome soon. He therefore sought delegated authority, in consultation with the Group Leaders, to make the interim appointment.

Cllr N Dixon asked who had held the responsibilities of Section 151 Officer from 1st June until now. The Chief Executive replied that there was a deputy S151 Officer but they were currently absent from work due to sickness. The matter had been discussed with the Council's external auditors and had brought forward this report to members at the first opportunity.

Cllr G Hayman asked about the level of risk that the Council was exposed to in the absence of both the S151 officer and the deputy 151 officer. The Chief Executive replied that the risks were identified in section 2.5 of the report, adding that it would be possible for the S151 Officer to be absent on leave and the deputy to be absent through sickness and at present the Council's position had not varied from that.

Cllr N Housden asked what level of indemnity was the Council covered for in the absence of a S151 Officer. The Chief Executive replied that he would have to come back to Cllr Housden with a response on this. He said that he had advised the Council's external and internal audit partners of the situation and they had indicated that on the basis that a report was taken to Full Council as soon as possible, they were satisfied with the current situation.

Cllr N Pearce asked what arrangements had been in place to oversee the responsibilities of the Director of Resources. The Chief Executive replied that there were processes in place to cover the line management responsibilities of the Director of Resources and these currently shared between the Council's two other directors. The appointment of an interim S151 Officer would cover those areas where the Council was exposed to some risk.

It was proposed by Cllr T Adams, seconded by Cllr R Kershaw and

RESOLVED

- 1) Provide delegated authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the three Group Leaders and Finance portfolio holder to make an interim appointment of a Chief Finance (Section 151) Officer with immediate effect pending recruitment of a new Director of Resources.**
- 2) Note the need to establish an Employment and Appeals Panel to support the process of recruiting and appointing a new Director of Resources**

31 QUESTIONS RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS

32 OPPOSITION BUSINESS

The Leader of the Opposition, Cllr Cushing introduced the motion. He said that it had been brought forward to highlight the financial support provided by the Government to North Norfolk during the pandemic. Examples of some of the grants provided were listed in the motion and he drew members' attention to the following – £130m of business grants paid out to businesses across the District, the furlough scheme which provided vital support to many residents and the Universal Credit uplift. He then said, that almost as soon as the pandemic began to ease, there was a global surge in fuel costs which was exacerbated by the conflict in Ukraine, stoking inflation and creating a cost of living crisis. The Government had responded quickly to help the most financially vulnerable. Again, he highlighted key programmes of support such as the energy rebate scheme, for which so far almost £6m had been paid out to North Norfolk residents. He then spoke about the Council Tax Hardship Fund for 2020/21 where the Government provided £723,834 of funding for NNDC to allocate to applicants to help with the payment of their Council Tax during the pandemic. As at 31st March 2021, the council had paid out £543,737 of this funding, leaving an under-spend of £180,097. He explained that the Government had allowed Councils to retain the under-spend for allocation to residents during 2021/22. NNDC had opted to use the £180,034 to create a Discretionary Hardship & Support Grant which was being used to help Council Tax payers in need.

Cllr Cushing then read out a letter, written by the Leader, Cllr T Adams, that had recently been published on the North Norfolk Liberal Democrat Group's website. He said that the letter clearly indicated that the Administration of the Council had chosen to provide funding to support vulnerable residents, when in fact it was Government money that had been allocated for that specific purpose. He said that this was not the only example of the Administration trying to claim credit for Government funding – highlighting another leaflet issued earlier in the year relating to Covid grants. He read out the text of the leaflet and said, yet again it was a clear misconception that was being presented.

He concluded by saying that it was disappointing that an item of Opposition Business had to be brought forward to highlight that it was the Government which had provided substantial funding not the Administration.

Cllr T Adams responded by quoting former Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher who had said 'it is your money, there is no such thing as public money, only taxpayers' money'. He said that he could therefore not see why the residents of North Norfolk should be grateful to the Government. In fact there had a considerable reduction in funding support to Councils in recent years and, as a rural area, the spend per capita was much lower than in urban areas. Now, with the cost of living crisis escalating fast, the Government was being ineffectual regarding support for fuel and energy costs. He said that the grant funds that were being used to support vulnerable residents were being carved out of limited resources. Many of the grants had to be applied for and the process could be challenging with punishing timescales. He referred to the Heritage Action Zone in North Walsham which the Council had been successful in receiving funding for but it was down to the hard work and dedication of officers that the project was progressing so well. He concluded by saying that hardship funds were created out of acts of necessity not generosity. He would write to the Government but not to thank them, instead he would ask them to do more regarding fuel, food and travel costs. He asked the group leaders to join him in writing to staff to thank them for delivering so well on all of the programmes of support that were needed by residents. It was down to their efforts that the Council had been amongst the fastest in rolling funding and support out and this had been recognised by the Government.

Cllr J Rest, Leader of the Independent Group began by referring to the list of Government support that Cllr Cushing had listed in his motion. He said he wondered why, to achieve a sense of balance, other Government funding streams had not been mentioned such as the overspend of £10bn on PPE, the offer of £10k to MPs to cover staff working from home during the pandemic in addition to the £26k already claimed to cover office costs and the failed 'track & trace' scheme which had cost £37bn but did not achieve its goal. He spoke about the £530m spent on the creation of seven Nightingale hospitals, which could not be operated due to insufficient staff. In conclusion, he said that no monetary cost could be put on the lives lost due to the decision to discharge elderly, Covid-infected patients from hospital into care homes.

Cllr E Vardy referred to funding of £7.7m package of hardship support introduced by Norfolk County Council such as the cost of living support fund was offering £3.6m to support families with cost of living vouchers, there was also £1m allocated for the Norfolk Assistance scheme to support families in hardship not eligible for free schools meals and £2.2m to support those aged over 65 by providing vouchers and awards through the voluntary sector. Finally, there was £840k of funding set aside to help other bodies, including district councils, to support those facing housing need. He said, that perhaps the District Council should therefore also consider thanking the County Council in addition to central Government.

Cllr M Taylor said that he wished to add his support to the motion. He said that the least couple of years had been one of the most testing times in recent history and the list of funding and support schemes set out in the motion demonstrated the huge effort that the Government had made to support people. Without these support packages, even more damage and suffering would have been inflicted on North Norfolk residents during the pandemic and it was therefore right that the Leader should write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, thanking the Government for its considerable support, on behalf of the residents of North Norfolk.

Cllr T FitzPatrick said that it was important to bring forward this motion as it highlighted the level of support provided by the Government. He acknowledged Cllr Rest's comments about Nightingale hospitals but said he was glad that they were put in place but relieved that they didn't need to be used. He said it was normal practice for councils to bid for funding and it was important to be transparent about how support packages were funded and delivered. He referred to earlier in the meeting when the Leader had declined to answer questions and said that there was no need for confidentiality during this debate and that the Leader could acknowledge the level of Government support during the last two years, even begrudgingly.

Cllr S Penfold said that he disagreed with Cllr Cushing's statement that no-one could have envisaged the challenges and trials that the Government had had to face in the last two years. He said that this was not true as Brexit was entirely of the Government's own making. Cllr Penfold concluded by saying if any letter should be written it should be to staff thanking them for their efforts in distributing support and grants to residents so quickly.

Cllr A Fitch-Tillett said that she wanted to acknowledge the allocation of funds from central Government to support the Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme (CTAP). However, a lot of hard work had been done to access this funding via various coastal groups. She said that she could not support the motion otherwise though.

Cllr L Shires said that NNDC was not the only council to get the Household Support

Fund but it was important to look at how the money was used to benefit local residents. She referred to the fight at the County Council regarding the provision of free school meals over Easter and the fact that it took 6 weeks to achieve an outcome. She said that she was devastated that the first option that the opposition asked the Council to write about was gratitude. She said that a thank you would not feed the families of North Norfolk or keep them warm. She said that she was appalled on behalf of the residents of North Norfolk.

Cllr V FitzPatrick said that he wanted to express his thanks to staff for the way in which government funds had been distributed. He said it was important to acknowledge the difference that the grants had made, with many lives being saved and local businesses being kept afloat.

Cllr E Withington concurred with the points raised about the hard work of the staff and said that it was due to the persistence of officers that so much funding had been allocated for coastal management. She then read out a news release issued by the Rural Services Network which stated that if England's rural communities were a distinct region, their need for levelling up would be greater than that of any other part of the country. Pressures faced by small towns and villages were not reflected in the Government's metrics and as a result 12m people were effectively side-lined. She said that the funding that the Government funding allocated across the country during the Covid pandemic was still not sufficient to 'level up' North Norfolk as a rural community and she was therefore did not feel able to send a letter of thanks.

Cllr N Pearce said that the Government had provided funds to help many people during a very difficult time and this should be acknowledged. He said that it wasn't necessarily gratitude that was needed but a recognition that the Government did something.

Cllr W Fredericks commented on the furlough support scheme. She said that the self-employed had begged the Government to provide financial support and it taken a long time for anything to come through and whilst they waited many community groups had had to step in and assist with the provision of food and basics.

The Chairman invited Cllr N Dixon to speak as seconder of the motion. He began by saying that it was easy to be wise after the event. He said that he wished to present another perspective. The underlying issues of the motion were about openness, accountability, honesty and selflessness and these were four of the seven Nolan Principles which guided everyone holding public office. He referred to a previous motion proposed by the Administration extolling the virtues of the Nolan Principles and calling for more training on them. At the time he had pointed out that training didn't matter if members didn't comply with them in every day council and public facing party business, then members would fail them and that was where the training need was greatest. He said that if there had not been deception in the Liberal Democrat statement on their website, there would not be this item of Opposition Business coming forwards. He said it was about compliance with reasonable codes of behaviour and if anyone did not agree with the Nolan Principles then he would not expect them to support the motion.

The Chairman asked Cllr Cushing as proposer of the motion to speak last. Cllr Cushing said that he felt the Leader's response was churlish. The Administration was happy to take credit for money that had been given by the Government. £400bn had been spent on support for Covid and so far £47bn had been allocated to support the cost of living crisis. This should be acknowledged and the Government should be thanked for their support.

It was proposed by Cllr C Cushing, seconded by Cllr N Dixon

- 1) That the Leader of the Council writes to the Chancellor of the Exchequer on behalf of the residents of North Norfolk to thank the Government for the considerable support it has given and continues to give the people and businesses of the District.
- 2) That a copy of the letter is sent to Duncan Baker, the Member of Parliament for North Norfolk, and Jerome Mayhew, the Member of Parliament for Broadland, so that they understand the gratitude of this Council.

When put to the vote, 10 members voted in favour, 19 against and 1 abstained. The motion was therefore not supported.

33 NOTICE(S) OF MOTION

34 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

35 PRIVATE BUSINESS

The meeting ended at 9.10 pm.

Chairman

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Declarations of Interest at Meetings

When declaring an interest at a meeting, Members are asked to indicate whether their interest in the matter is pecuniary, or if the matter relates to, or affects a pecuniary interest they have, or if it is another type of interest Members are required to identify the nature of the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. In the case of other interests, the member may speak and vote. If it is a pecuniary interest, the member must withdraw from the meeting when it is discussed. If it affects or relates to a pecuniary interest the member has, they have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public but must then withdraw from the meeting.

Have you declared the interest in the register of interests as a pecuniary interest? If Yes, you will need to withdraw from the room when it is discussed.

Does the interest directly:

1. Affect yours, or your spouse / partner's financial position?
2. Relate to the determining of any approval, consent, licence, permission or registration in relation to you or your spouse / partner?
3. Relate to a contract you, or your spouse / partner have with the Council
4. Affect land you or your spouse / partner own
5. Affect a company that you or your partner own, or have a shareholding in

If the answer is "yes" to any of the above, it is likely to be pecuniary.

Please refer to the guidance given on declaring pecuniary interests in the register of interest forms. If you have a pecuniary interest, you will need to inform the meeting and then withdraw from the room when it is discussed. If it has not been previously declared, you will also need to notify the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.

Does the interest indirectly affect or relate to any pecuniary interest you have already declared, or an interest you have identified at 1-5 above?

If yes, you need to inform the meeting. When it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but must then withdraw from the meeting.

Is the interest not related to any of the above? If so, it is likely to be another interest. You will need to declare the interest, but may participate in discussion and voting on the item.

Have you made any statements or undertaken any actions that would indicate that you have a closed mind on a matter under discussion? If so, you may be predetermined on the issue; you will need to inform the meeting and when it is discussed, you will have the right to make representations to the meeting as a member of the public, but must then withdraw from the meeting.

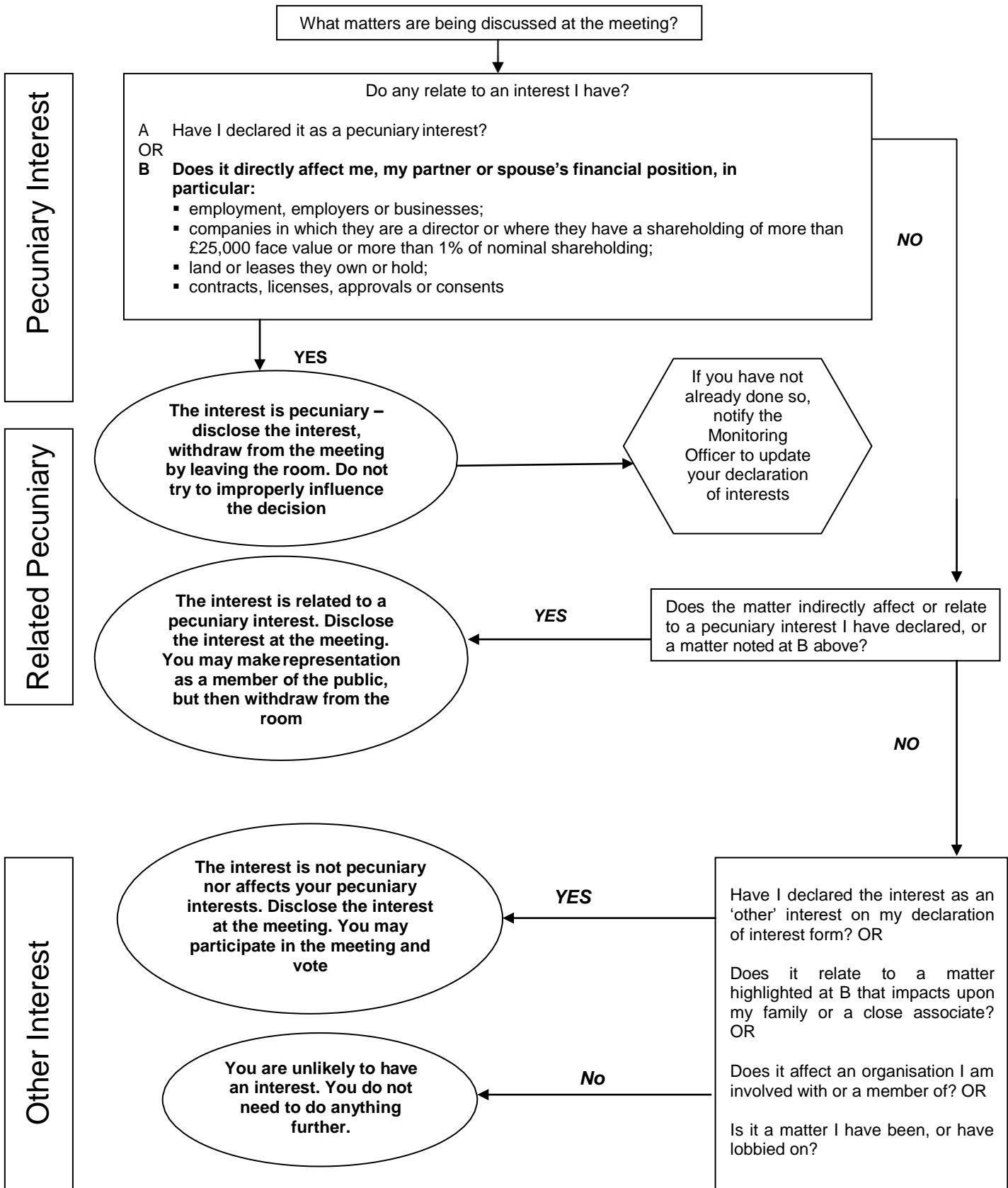
FOR GUIDANCE REFER TO THE FLOWCHART OVERLEAF

PLEASE REFER ANY QUERIES TO THE MONITORING OFFICER IN THE FIRST INSTANCE

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS SHOULD ALSO REFER TO THE PLANNING PROTOCOL

Declarations of Interest at Meetings

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

22 June 2022

COUNCILLOR TIM ADAMS – LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

For the period 17 June 2022 – 15 July 2022

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Elections

The preparations for the 2022 Annual Canvass are progressing well with the data matching exercise once again providing a good result in terms of the number of properties who will receive a 'light touch' canvass. Initial letters will be despatched on 8th August and the team will then work at delivering the usual high return rate from households within the district.

The informal polling place review has been a success and is now drawing to a close with only a few more wards left to visit this month. A very small number of changes will be proposed where necessary and these will be consulted on with members, parish councils and electors later in the year in a small interim review. Any adopted changes will be implemented at the next scheduled elections in May next year.

Further preparations for May 2023 will shortly be escalating and internal staff will soon have the opportunity to advise on their availability to work at these elections in a variety of roles. We will also be shortly attending a seminar in Birmingham to learn more about the implications of the 2022 Elections Act so we can factor this into our planning for these elections.

Communications

The Communications Team have made progress increasing the Council's social media following, growing Facebook by 420 followers and Twitter by over 220 followers, improving the Council's reach in the district.

We currently have a combined social media following of 38,189 people directly consuming regular content about the Council's activities on our channels – a monthly increase of over 900 across channels - though it's important to note there is some overlap between channels with some residents following us on more than one platform.

The team ran a successful social media competition for to win a week's use in one of the Council's beach chalets, which had over 2000 entrants and reached over 22,000 users, representing a successful first larger scale marketing competition through social media and an innovative way to advertise the Council's beach huts and chalets.

As the peak summer months approach, the team continue to post important summer safety messaging, such as beach safety, weather warnings, safe use of jet-skis, seal safety, safe use of beach BBQs and supporting messaging from partner agencies, such as RNLI.

The Council's re-launched Outlook magazine was successfully delivered to c50,000 North Norfolk households. The 24 page magazine, produced on recycled paper is also available as a digital download and in accessible formats.

Following on from Net Zero, the team will look to begin promoting the Council's sustainability event Greenbuild, announcing the speakers and hosts, and promoting the

return of the physical festival to North Norfolk, which will be held in Fakenham.

As in the previous reporting period, work continues on the promotion and communication on the progress of the North Walsham Heritage Action Zone programme where good progress has been made on works to the new bus interchange facility and cultural programmes, The Cedars building and the Church approach area before works to the Market Place commence in the autumn.

HR

The HR team has welcomed a new HR Advisor to the team, Tracy joined the team late June, and will be supporting the Resources Directorate.

As the media is reporting, the COVID rate is increasing, both regionally and nationally. The HR team is continuing to monitor COVID related absence; this is currently not impacting service levels.

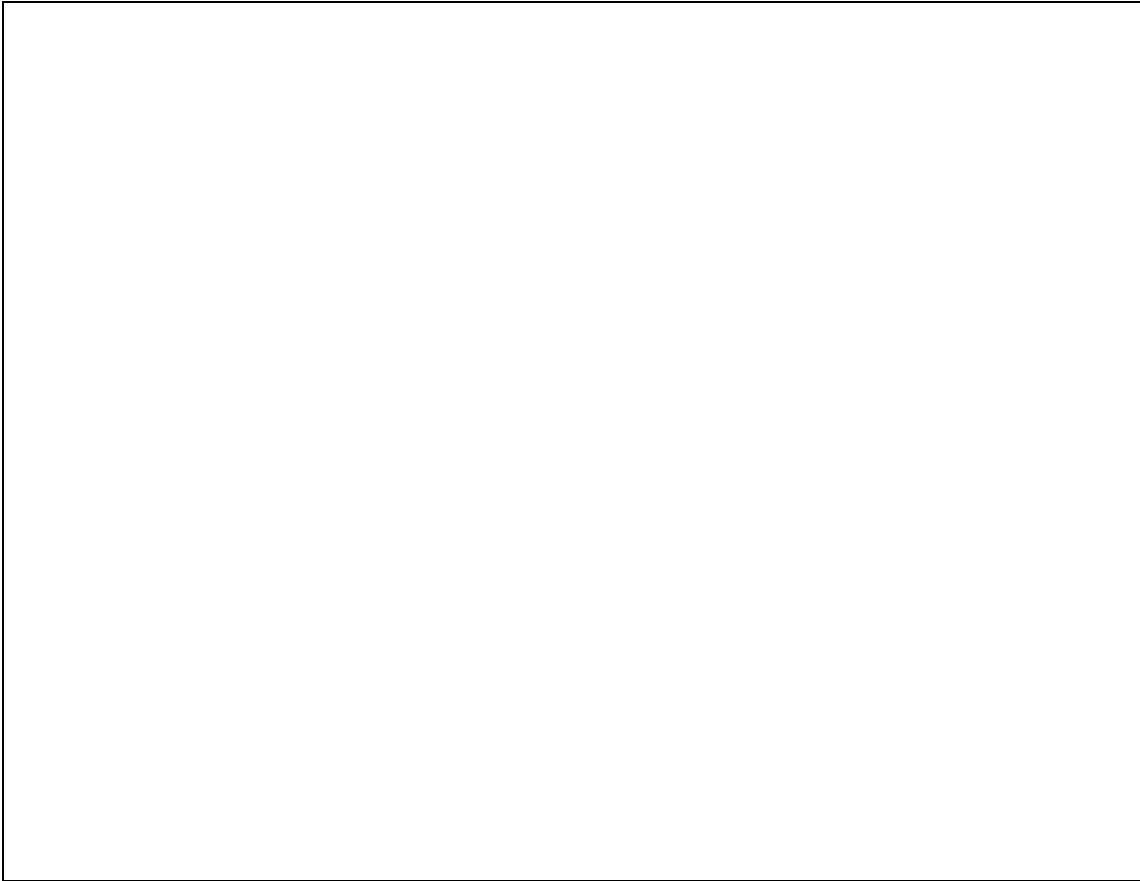
The council has a new benefit that is available to both Officers and elected members, through the employee assistant programme. This benefit is a private GP referral service, for consultations, which are available both evenings and weekends, via a video conferencing scheme.

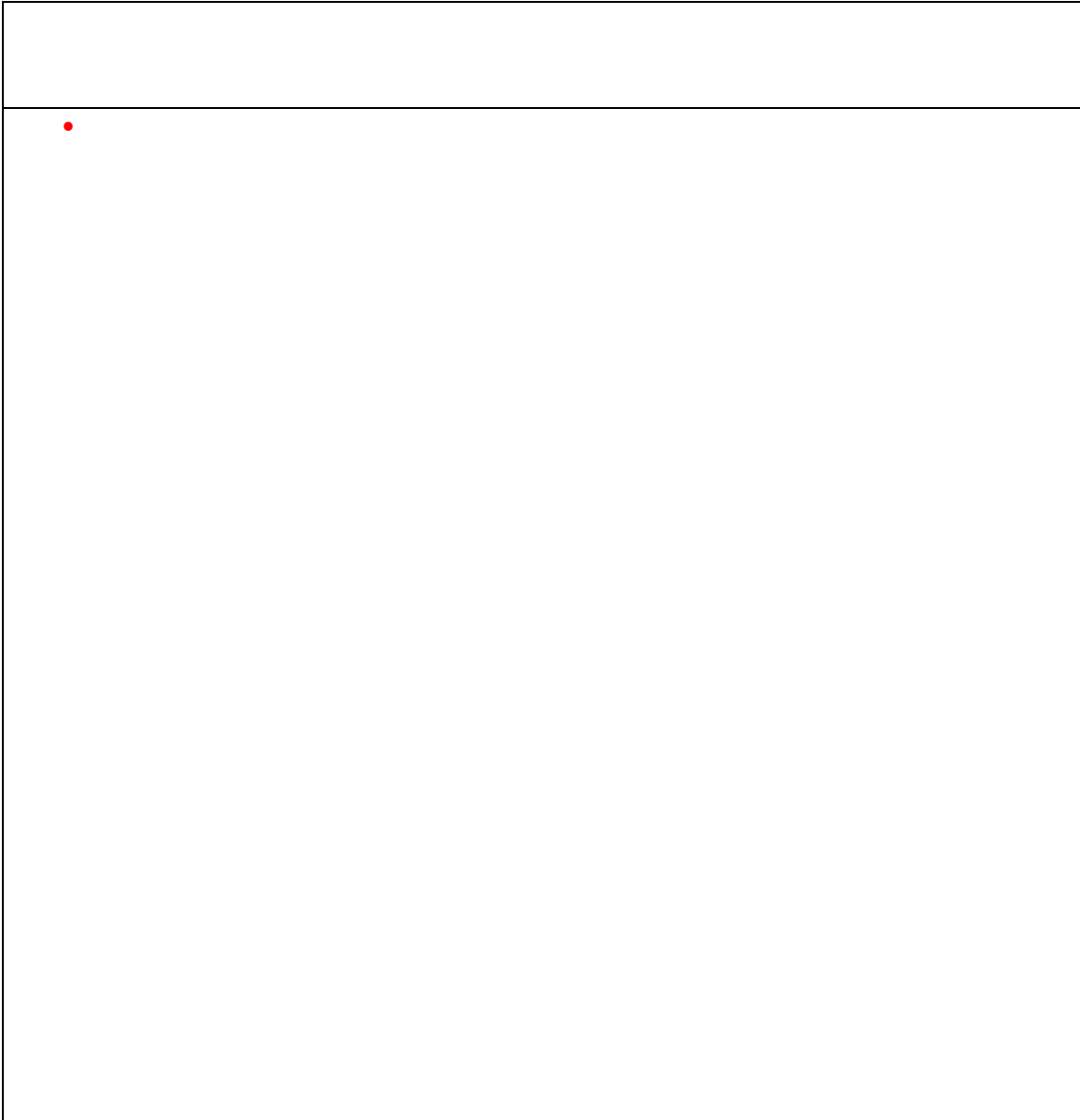
Corporate Delivery Unit

The Corporate Delivery Unit continues to support the Corporate Leadership Team, Management Team and Service Managers to embed project management and governance arrangements for large and medium projects across the organisation.

Corporate PA Team

The Corporate PA Team provide on-going support to the Chief Executive and Directors as well as Management Team with a huge number of projects across the organisation, including the Levelling Up bid. The portal for applications opened on the 15 July and will remain open until 12 noon on the 2 August.





CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

July 2022

COUNCILLOR A BROWN - CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING & ENFORCEMENT

For the period July 2022

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

General overview.

Previous Portfolio Holder reports have advised as to the guidance received on 16 March from Natural England regarding Nutrient Neutrality for the River Wensum and Broads Catchment Areas. In this regard the Council continues to work positively in partnership with other Norfolk Councils on this matter.

Royal Haskoning (RH) were appointed to deliver consultancy support and are in the process of producing a nutrient calculator and detailed catchment level plans, with engagement with Natural England.

RH continue to provide regular updates with a commitment to complete a short term strategy for Nutrient Neutrality by August, and delivery of the long term strategy no later than February 2023.

Our officers have been reviewing the application types that can be determined where located within the sensitive catchments, Counsel advice has been received in relation to the application types that can be determined, with the majority of applications within the sensitive catchment areas still able to be determined (householder applications account for over 80% of all applications submitted to the Council - and most forms of commercial development can also be determined for local businesses). The situation remains that new housing and tourism development (overnight accommodation) remain restricted until the mitigation detailed above is available to offset nutrient impacts.

A members briefing on Nutrient Neutrality was held on 23 June.

At the time of writing a Written Ministerial Statement has just been released setting out measures for improving water quality and tackling nutrient neutrality. Officers will prepare a Member Briefing Note on this matter.

I will continue to report on the issues surrounding Nutrient Neutrality and implications for development and planning in our district over the coming meetings.

Development Management & Major Projects Performance

Detailed reports are provided to Development Committee on these matters, please refer to these reports for any detailed consideration on matters of speed and quality of decision to the Development Committee. In headline terms, 87% of Major applications and 80% of non-major applications are being determined within statutory timescales.

Our Director continues to work on for the Planning Service Improvement Plan, with all service officer meeting and individual team meetings having being held across the past few weeks. The Customer satisfaction survey, Agent & Developer forum and Parish / Town Council liaison meetings will follow (surveys timings dependent of Nutrient Neutrality outcomes). The draft strategy is to be reported to the September meeting of O&S, with a detailed action plan to follow in December 2022.

Planning Policy & neighbourhood planning

Our team have finalised collating the Regulation 19 consultations received, all those who made comments have been acknowledged and thanked and the responses are now published and available to view on the consultation portal <https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/planning-policy/local-plan-consultation/>

The team will be reporting the responses, outcomes and recommendations to coming meetings of the Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party (PPBH) which will consider the need to request that the Inspector incorporates any further modifications as part of the examination process.

The Blakeney Neighbourhood Plan is nearing its final stages. A six-week consultation on the draft Plan was completed on 9 May, 2022. The plan is now being considered by an independent examiner who has asked both the Council and Blakeney PC to respond to a number of initial questions. If the examiner approves the draft Plan, the next stage is to put the Plan, along with the examiner's recommendations, to a public referendum. If accepted, the Council must make the draft Neighbourhood Plan within eight weeks after the referendum.

Once the Neighbourhood Plan is made, it will form part of the district-wide planning framework. It will become a material consideration (meaning it must be taken into account) for future planning applications in the Blakeney Neighbourhood area.

Details of the plan and schedule for submission are available via this link:

<https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/news/2022/march/draft-neighbourhood-plan-for-blakeney-reaches-final-stages/>

Both Holt and Wells Next the Sea will shortly reach a similar stage with their draft Plans.

Conservation, Design & Landscape

Conservation Area Appraisals (CAA) following the recent consultations were reported to the May PPBH Working Party. Brinton with Thornage; Sharrington; Hunworth; Edgefield, Stody were previously reported to this meeting and agreed for adoption. Work on the wider Glaven Valley Conservation Area Appraisal is due to be reported shortly.

Building Control

Workload remains higher than usual for the corresponding time last year. Regularisation works associated with house sales are increasing and can only be undertaken currently by the Local Authority, and not Approved Inspectors.

Building Control applications continue to be determined within the statutory timescales, on site checks and registration remain well within statute time limits. The recruitment campaign is complete we await confirmation of the appointment. Short term locum support is available to ensure performance and delivery of the services are not impacted in the interim.

Our mobile working app has undertaken final field tests with a view to adopting a paperless procedure after the summer holiday season. Such an approach reduces both cost and importantly, our environmental impact. I will ask the team to monitor and report outcomes to this meeting following introduction.

Enforcement

The team have 250 current live cases; 213 have been created this year with 220 cases having been closed so far in 2022. The harm assessment form has enabled officers to make clearer and quicker assessments as to expediency / action and where possible case closure.

Job Evaluation will be taking place for the new roles of Condition Compliance Officer and Trainee Planning Enforcement Officer, and officers will commence recruitment when the process is completed by end of September.

Currently operating with two Enforcement Officers and a single visiting officer, although one officer is still on a phased return due to his injury.

Staffing

It is a pleasure to announce that Maxine Collis has now started in her new role as Planning Support Manager, having previously held a key role in the Corporate Delivery Unit. Maxine will be working closely with the service managers and officers in developing the customer facing elements of the service, including the ICT systems and software development – in alignment with the Planning Service Improvement Plan actions as they are identified.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

- Development Committee – 4th August
- Planning Policy & Build Heritage Working Party – 15th August

3 Meetings attended

- Town and Parish Council Forum – 4th July
- Effective Planning in Flood Risk Management with the Town & Country Planning Association – 5th July
- Development Committee - 7th July

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

27 July 2022

COUNCILLOR A FITCH-TILLET - CABINET MEMBER FOR COAST

For the period June – July 2022

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Cromer Phase 2 and Mundesley Coast Protection Scheme – Progress Update

Scoping queries from the Marine Management Organisation for the draft Environmental Statements have been considered. There is a requirement to complete a geoarchaeological statement which is now being considered by the consultants before this is completed. Documentation to support the Planning Applications and Marine Licence have been received for review. Discussions are underway with the Environment Agency regarding scheme funds.

Coast Protection Maintenance

Ongoing maintenance works continue, this includes concrete repairs and patching to the Bacton to Walcott Seawall, repair and painting of navigation beacons and replacement of corroded handrails at Bacton and Walcott.

Coastal Transition Accelerator Fund

Project proposal form for internal approval has been drafted. The North Norfolk CTAP has been presented to the national Regional Flood and Coast Committee chairs meeting alongside the Environment Agency and East Riding of Yorkshire Council. An introduction to CTAP was presented to the Norfolk Coastal Forum. NNDC has been involved with Environment Agency meetings in order to identify support and opportunities that may be offered to assist with programme delivery.

Norfolk Coastal Forum

The July forum meeting was split between an online session and visit to Mundesley. The morning session included presentations from Katy Owen, Protected Landscapes Officer, which provided an overview of the work completed including the Wash Partnership and Norfolk Coast Partnership, Kellie Fisher updating on current Environment Agency activities, Karen Thomas updating on Coastal Partnership East and national coastal local government activities and Dr Sophie Day on the completed Coastal Processes Gap Analysis evidence review.

Coastal Loss Innovative Funding and Finance

The final Steering Group meeting was held and agreed that it would be investigated if this could be published alongside the Environment Agency Research and Development projects whilst also on contributing partner websites. A further workshop is to be arranged to explore how the findings can be taken forward in a co-ordinated and joined up way with the Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme and Flood and Coast Resilience Innovation Programme.

Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) Refresh

The status tracker has been completed with Natural England and Environment

Agency agreement. The SMP Management Group has been reformed and an initial meeting held where the Status tracker was considered alongside reviewing the Terms of Reference of the Group. Next steps include updating the SMP Action Plan in line with the updated guidance. Further to this an initial meeting was held of the Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance Coastal Members Group to explore how such a group could contribute to the co-ordination of coastal work such as providing a strategic elected member oversight of the delivery of the SMPs in Norfolk (please note this would be a non-decision making group with all decisions regarding SMP changes to be completed through the approved change process with Local Authority approval).

Marine Licensing

There have been ongoing issues nationally with regards to the timescales and approach for marine license consent. This has impacted on a number of projects for Coastal Partnership East area, as it has across the wider coast. CPE has worked with the LGA Coastal Special Interest Group and the Environment Agency nationally and recently also been raised to MPs nationally.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Development of the Coastal Transition Accelerator Programme and CLIFF initiative.

3 Meetings attended

- Nutrient Neutrality Briefing
- LGA Coastal SIG
- Cabinet x 2
- Broom Boats Site Visit
- Cromer Pier Show
- Chaired LGA Coastal SIG CLIFF Steering Group
- Trimmingham and Northrepps Parish Councils
- Chaired Norfolk Coastal Forum and Site Visit
- ADA Board Meeting
- Development Committee
- Woodland Holiday Park Site Visit and joint meeting with NCP (FIPL) and Coastal Management
- SCAPE Lunch & Learn
- Overstrand and Sidestrand Parish Councils
- Broads IDB
- Informal Cabinet
- Norfolk Coastal Managers Meeting
- Development Committee Site Visit – Overstrand Garden Centre
- Norfolk Rivers IDB
- Regional Flood And Coastal Committee East
- Cabinet Working Party

- Cabinet Business Planning Meeting

Verbal update available or on request

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CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

July 2022

COUNCILLOR WENDY FREDERICKS - CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING AND BENEFITS

1 April to 30 June 2022

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Housing Strategy

New Affordable Homes

The forecast number of new affordable homes to be built in 2022/23 is significantly lower than the numbers achieved in the last few years as a result of fewer sites available and the delay caused by Nutrient Neutrality. We anticipate 52 affordable homes during the current financial year; however, we have a healthy affordable housing schemes pipeline, many of which are Rural Exception Housing Sites at various points in the development process. There are a total of 18 developments which will or could, subject to approvals, yield 354 new Affordable Homes in the next few years.

Currently, with planning permission and due to start on site this year, are developments at Hindringham, Warham, Walcott, Sheringham and Northrepps - which will deliver a total of 69 new units.

Nutrient Neutrality has had a direct impact on a number of sites which have been submitted for planning. These are at Corpusty, Stalham, Catfield and Roughton which could deliver 145 units (including a 61-unit Extra Care scheme at Stalham) once the mitigation matters are resolved. A development at Happisburgh currently at planning submission stage will deliver a further 9 units.

Positive public consultations have been held at Salthouse, West Beckham and Swanton Novers where planning applications are due to be submitted shortly and will, subject to approval, deliver 18 units. A further public consultation at Colby and Banningham will take place in July and is hoped to deliver a further 6 units. Recent discussion with Blakeney and Bacton Parish Councils has met with a positive response where a public consultation will be held hopefully in the next few months and could result in upwards of 57 new units for the villages.

A number of earlier stage developments being discussed with developer Registered Providers could yield a further 50 units.

Grant for Energy Efficiency Improvement Works

North Norfolk District Council (NNDC) as part of the Norfolk Warm Homes Consortium of five Norfolk districts has been successful in a bid for £3.85 million of government grant to provide energy efficiency improvement works to homes

occupied by low-income households. The funding is part of the government's sustainable warmth programme.

Our new Energy Officer started with us in March and has been promoting the scheme through several routes: a "Your money matters" spread in North Norfolk News, a video published on all NNDC social media and our website, a leaflet sent to all parish councils, followed by attendance at many parish council and other public meetings, and an article in the Council's Outlook magazine.

To date 60 Home Upgrade Grant applications have been received since March '22 and 22 have so far been approved, totaling £33k of grant works. The grants approved will deliver 2 x storage heat pumps, 10 x cavity wall insulations, 16 x loft insulations, 4 x external wall insulations and 1 x windows/door replacement. For further information on grants: <https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/news/2022/april/warm-homes-grant-available-after-successful-bid/>

Repairs Grant

As part of the Housing Strategy we identified a need to help low-income households with repairs to enable them to remain in their homes. The Council has made a successful bid to the North Norfolk Health and Wellbeing Partnership for £50,000 to run a pilot scheme to run to March 2023. The IHAT will administer the pilot scheme and will work with Property Servies. We will take referrals from internal teams and external partner organisations. If the pilot is successful, we will seek funding to extend the scheme into 2023/24 and beyond.

Your Choice Your Home

As at the 30 June 2022 there were **2575 households** on the housing waiting list of whom **485** were on the Housing Register (highest priority) broken down as follows:

- Priority Card x **1**
- Band 1 x **261**
- Band 2 x **223**

68% (**1,771**) of applicants are on the Housing Options waiting list and 12% (**319**) are on the transfer list.

Bedroom Need

	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5 Bed	8 Bed	Total
Priority Card	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Band 1	128	66	39	23	1	4	261
Band 2	91	46	38	45		3	223
Housing Options	1,111	419	118	109	1	13	1,771
Transfer	148	90	36	39	2	4	319
Total:	1478	622	231	216	4	24	2575

Homes Let

QTR 1 01 Apr 2022 to 30 June 2022:

- 80 Households have secured social housing
- 28 Households have secured *Shared Ownership.

*During QTR 1 Meadow Walk an Extra Care living development (housing 21) for people over the age of 55 in Fakenham was completed.

Temporary Accommodation

At the end of Quarter 1 (30th June 2022), there were **42** households in Temporary Accommodation, of which:

3 (7%) were other households (e.g., couples with no Children)

15 (36%) were single adult households

24 (57%) were households with children

The number of households with children being housed in temporary accommodation has risen, contributing factors include an increase in the number of people fleeing Domestic Abuse and an increase in Assured Short Hold Tenancies ending. To provide direct support to these households we have recruited a Living Well Officer on a 1-year fixed term contract (using Homelessness Prevention Grant). The focus of the role is to provide hands-on support to families, empowering them to address various challenges and reducing problems and risks. The role will work closely with the Early Help Hub/Social Services and make necessary referrals through to support providers for example NIDAS.

Our five units of move on accommodation for former rough sleepers or those at risk of rough sleeping are all being used. Works to the conversion of a property in Sheringham. which was being used as storage, have been completed and our first tenant moved into the property in July. Accommodation is let to the occupant via a non-secure tenancy for up to two years, which offers tenants the security of knowing that they can make it their home and begin to rebuild their lives and plan for the future. Wraparound support is provided by members of our Accommodation and Support Team. Support is individual to the person's needs and includes helping tenants engage and access support from external agencies with mental health, substance misuse, financial and other life skills needed for independent living.

We have also negotiated with St Vincent DePaul (SVP) church and now have access to both single and family accommodation in Cromer. Cromer is an area that has been very difficult to secure suitable self-contained T/A accommodation, especially peak holiday season.

Homelessness & Rough Sleeping

We continue to support **3** entrenched Rough Sleepers.

Whilst it is not always possible to locate rough sleepers, we respond to reports from the community and via Street Link to quickly identify and verify rough sleepers and help the most vulnerable access the services they need. Within Quarter 1 we verified 5 new Rough Sleepers, 1 has refused the offer of accommodation, 2 are being accommodated at Reeves Court & 2 are being picked up under the homeless legislation.

Households Assessed and Duty Owed

Our Housing Options Service offers advice to anyone who has a housing problem, and offers support and assistance if someone is homeless, or threatened with homelessness, within the next 56 days.

At the end of Quarter1, there were **88** live open cases:

- Prevention duty accepted: **25**
- Relief Duty accepted: **38**
- Decisions **2**
- Reviews: **0**
- Triage (mixture of new cases, rough sleepers, clients being supported through out-reach): **23**

For the same period **147** cases were closed, the majority of these were Triage Cases (127) where applicants were provided with support and advice. For all other cases the following outcomes were achieved:

Prevention Cases Closed: **8**

- Supported Housing: **1**
- Registered Provider Tenancy: **4**
- Private Rented Sector Tenancy: **2**
- Staying with family: **1**

Relief Cases Closed: **7**

- Activities were attempted to secure accommodation but unsuccessful due to non-Engagement: **1**
- Supported Housing: **1**
- staying with friends: **1**
- Private rented sector: **2**
- Other: **2** (cases were closed but subsequently re-opened due to a change in circumstances)

Decisions: **4**

- No Duty owed and no accommodation provided: **4**

Final Duties accepted: **1**

- Fully Duty Accepted and ongoing outreach is being provided.

Domestic Abuse

Work has commenced towards Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) accreditation for the Housing Service. We are in the process of creating both a strategic and operational project group,

Housing Officers have attended training in June which was delivered by Shelter which explores housing problems associated with domestic abuse and provided an overview of the legal, and housing options available to support clients, the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Additionally Housing Staff have attended a briefing to discuss the requirements of the county wide Domestic Abuse Housing Protocol which is an agreement between the County Council, local housing authorities, registered providers and domestic abuse service providers in order to support those accessing housing services as a result of domestic abuse. This includes at the point of seeking support, fleeing a relationship or when moving on from safe accommodation.

Tenancy Sustainment

We support first-time tenants, rough sleepers and those with arrears with the tools to help them successfully sustain their tenancies. This has been delivered through working with Your Own Place CIC to deliver Tenancy and independent living skills (TILS+) through a series of face to face and digital workshops. Between August 2021 and March 2022, 27 referrals have been made for individuals to attend a tenancy and Independent Living Skills Plus (TILS+) workshop. These workshops help people to sustain their tenancies by drawing out their skills, confidence, resilience, knowledge and life experiences. For 2022/23 we are looking to explore how we can support more individuals during this cost-of-living crisis and are joining up with the DWP, Benefits, Social Prescribing team to identify different referral pathways.

Integrated Housing Adaptations Team

IHAT continue to make progress with reducing client wait times, increasing client contact throughout the process and reducing overall end to end timescales.

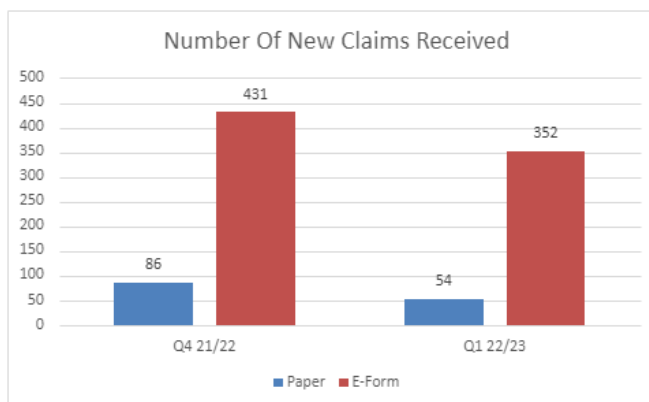
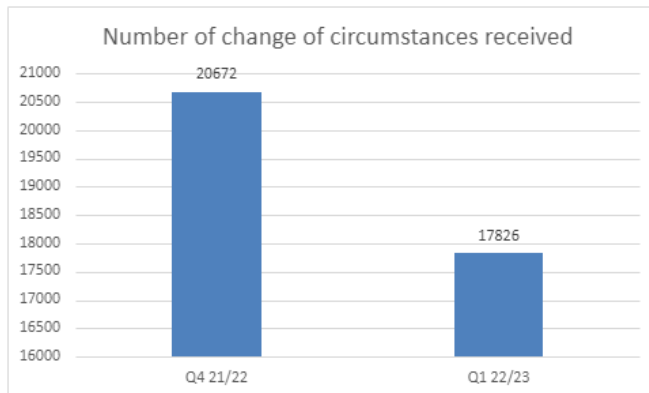
There continues to be an upward trend in the number of DFG approved cases 47 in the first quarter of 22/23 compared to 27 in 21/22. The number of adaptations completed is currently the same for both years at 21. The new partnership arrangement with Flagship Housing continues to have a positive impact on DFG applications in terms of approvals and also have now completed a number of adaptations which are due to be signed off by IHAT imminently and will increase the completions figures in the coming months.

The value of approvals in the first quarter of 22/23 is £348,686 compared to £224,367 in 21/22. Spend is slightly down on 21/22 at £217,036 compared to £237,123. Enquires are slightly up of 21/22 at 128 compared to 121.

The team has made a successful bid to the Community Transformation Fund administered by the North Locality Place Board to deliver the 'Waiting well' project, to promote the DFG alongside looking at how customer's needs might be best met in the short and long term. We will be recruiting for this role over the next couple of weeks and looking to roll the project out as soon as possible.

Benefits

For the period 1st April to 30th June (Q1), the Benefits team received 18,232 work items compared to 21,189 in the previous quarter (Q4). Work during Q4 increased due to annual rent increases, changes to Universal Credit awards following the removal of the £20 uplift, and an Employment Support Allowance re-assessment exercise carried out by the DWP.



Workloads are expected to increase over the next quarter due to tax credit renewals, seasonal work changes, self-employed annual income reviews, and further rent increases.

The Benefits team are leading on the administration of the **Household Support Fund**. Working with the Early Help & Prevention Team we will be distributing funding of £90,318 to potentially vulnerable older residents in the district. Using provisional figures whilst we set up the fund, we are estimating to target 491 households with a payment of approx. £180 per household. There will also be an emergency fund of £22,382 which will be used to support households in need of immediate support with essentials linked to food, water, and energy.

The Benefits team are also leading on the **Energy Rebate (Discretionary) Scheme**. The scheme policy has been agreed and work is underway to start making payments to households eligible for a payment under the scheme. The funding of £226,350 will be targeted at low-income households across the district to help with the rising cost of household bills.

We are continuing to administer **Discretionary Housing Payments** to support tenancy sustainment and to support people to stay within the community. Cases are worked on as a panel which includes officers from the Benefits team and Housing

Options. For 2022/23, North Norfolk has been allocated funding of £110,945. So far this year we have spent 62% of our allocation across 94 households and a further 69 applications have been refused as the circumstances of the household are outside the scope of the scheme.

We have started to review the **Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme for 2023/24**. CTS provides an ongoing financial support to households on low incomes. Councils have the flexibility to design their own schemes and with the steep rise to the cost of living, we want to ensure our scheme continues to be cost effective to administer and continues to be effective in targeting households that are falling into poverty. The review will involve modelling the impact assessment of changes to the scheme, member consultation, and public consultation. Work is underway around modelling the scheme and the end-to-end process is likely to finish in late Autumn.

We will be using data analytics to provide us with powerful insights into how individual households are impacted by welfare changes and the cost-of-living crisis. We will use the data to pro-actively target at risk households to tackle problem debt, rent arrears, maximise income, prevent homelessness, and to also understand current and future demand on our services.

We are in the process of setting up a new Financial Inclusion Team which will be located within the Benefits Service. The team will consist of a Financial Inclusion Officer and a Welfare & Debt Advisor. Their focus will be to reduce financial exclusion across the district offering debt advice, welfare advice, and support tenancy sustainment. These posts are being funded from Homelessness Prevention Grant.

2	Forthcoming Activities and Developments.
3	Meetings attended

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CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

June 2022

**COUNCILLOR VIRGINIA GAY - PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR LEISURE,
WELLBEING & CULTURE**

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters – Well Being

North Norfolk Health & Wellbeing Partnership

Chaired by Cllr Virginia Gay the focus of the multi agency Partnership includes promoting residents' health and wellbeing, addressing wider determinants of health, tackling health inequalities, increasing community resilience and connectivity and aligning commissioning and services.

Based on public health data the three priorities for the North Norfolk Partnership are:

Older People
Mental Health
Inequalities

Covid Recovery funding of approximately £347,250 which must be spent by 31st March 2023 has been allocated to the Partnership.

At its second meeting on 15th June 2022. The partnership approved grant applications for:

- Home Repair Pilot – Funding of £50,000 was awarded to NNDC to provide a repairs service to enable low income owner occupiers/private sector tenants particularly those with long term health conditions to remain in their home, return to live in their home or make their home more suitable.
- Norfolk & Suffolk Care Support Funding of £15,500 for a North Norfolk Care Academy to attract and support people interested in a career in health & social care.
- Community Action Norfolk – Funding of £32,488 for a range of projects to support communities, establishment of new community groups and the community connector service.

Homes for Ukraine

Seventy seven accommodation checks and fifty nine welfare checks have been under taken. Based on the data from hosts we know that ninety six adults and sixty three children have applied to come to North Norfolk. A significant number of these guests have arrived as the process to grant visas has improved.

There has been a drop in the numbers of people arriving and this is reflected in attendance at the Ukrainian Welcome meetings at NNDC and across the county. From 18th July the NNDC welcome meetings will reduce to once a week.

Carer Friendly Tick Award

A focus is being made on first working towards the employer element of this award, with the community element following once this has been achieved.

The five key standards are as follows:

- 1. Have a named member of staff as a lead for carers.**
Lucy Cubitt has volunteered to become Carer Champion for the organisation, with the hope we may get additional volunteers to follow. Carer champion training has been identified and enquiries have been made into the funding of this.
- 2. Have a carers' statement to ensure carers know how to access support internally**
A Carers policy has been drafted and submitted to HR, who are checking accuracy against other policies signposted. The required elements of this policy are in the process of being discussed, with membership of 'Employers for Carers' being suggested as a valuable resource for both general guidance and required training for line managers etc. Once this has been provisionally approved by HR it will be submitted for consideration by the appropriate parties.
- 3. Ensure managers have an understanding about carers' responsibilities**
Training for managers is being investigated as part of work towards the carers policy (above).
- 4. Signpost to information and advice**
An internal web page with carers advice is being drafted, and will be added as part of the Health and Wellbeing group's 'A-Z' (currently being created). The addition of carers' signposting and awareness is being discussed for induction and starter packs for new employees. Once approved, the new carers policy will be widely shared with colleagues.
- 5. Raise awareness in Carers Week and on Carers Rights Day**
An intranet article was released on carers week, and leaflets etc. canvassed within the council offices, for this years' carers week. The aim is to have something more concrete in place next year, potentially with resources from 'Employers for carers'. Lucy Cubitt, who is leading on this project, continues to liaise with HR to move this forward.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

At the time of writing preparations for the third meeting of the Health and Well Being Partnership, on July 20th are taking place. At this meeting there will be a focus on Inequalities.

3 Meetings attended

In addition to regularly scheduled meetings within the Council I have attended:
Briefing on Engagement Strategy – 24/06/22
Health and Well Being District Councils' Sub Committee -06/07/22

Health and Well Being Board and Integrated Care Partnership-21/07/22 UK Shared Prosperity Fund Briefing-13/06/22 UK Shared Prosperity Fund Local Partnership - 11/07/22 UK Shared Prosperity Fund Local Partnership -20/07/22
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CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

27 July 2022

COUNCILLOR V GAY - CABINET MEMBER FOR Leisure, Wellbeing & Culture

For the period June 2022

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters - Leisure

Leisure Centres

June saw another 42969 visits across the 6 leisure facilities.

Countryside

We have now received confirmation that we will be able to fly all three Green Flags again this year. This is a wonderful achievement and something to be proud of.

Pretty Corner and Sadler's Wood were mystery shopped and we are still awaiting the reports for these. Holt CP was judged in person and the report was glowing with an overall score of (field and desk assessment combined) of 80+ which is the highest you can achieve. It is down to the hard work of the Countryside team that all three flags have been retained. Part of the judging process relates to continuous improvement and development of sites and the team have worked hard to achieve this. Holt CP is hosting one of the Break Mammoths as part of the County wide trail.

The team have planned and organised a selection of events for the summer, across the three Green Flag sites, catering for families, adults and children. This is always a very busy time of the year.

The team has also supported several Schools' visits towards the end of the summer term. This will generate an income for further site development work.

The Unpaid work unit are currently in the process of re painting the toilet block at Holt CP.

Beaches

To support our Blue Flag work the Leisure Team will be running a 'Safer Seaside' roadshow throughout August, calling in at 4 of our Blue Flag beaches. We will be providing lots of different information about our beaches and how to ensure that people enjoy them safely and get the most out of their visit to North Norfolk. We will be supported on this by the RNLI who are providing a Lifeguard for each day. These will take place on the 3rd, 10th, 17th & 24th and will visit Sheringham, West Runton, Mundesley and Cromer.

As part of the event we have produced a new beach safety flyer which will be made available via all of the usual channels and include lots of useful information for locals and visitors.

Health & Wellbeing/Sports Development

The new Localities Officer, Sean Pasque, has now finished his 'data dive' for the locality and presented his findings to the team. He has identified three key themes: – Aging Population, Health & Mental Wellbeing, and Children & Young People.

The next step will be to start to map current local provision and facilities, and for Sean to make contact with potential stakeholder organisations. From all of this an action plan for delivery will then be created.

Pier

Saturday 2nd of July saw the launch of the Summer Show, feedback from opening night was very positive and tickets sales are comparable to 2019. The team are looking to support Openwide with potential advertising sites across the District.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

As mentioned above, research is beginning on an action plan for sports development In North Norfolk. This work is an important element of the Quality of Life Strategy and it will be jointly funded with Active Norfolk.

3 Meetings attended

Although this was not strictly a meeting, I did attend the opening of the Summer Spectacular at Cromer Pier on July 2nd. It was a very cheerful occasion.

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CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

July 2022

**COUNCILLOR VIRGINIA GAY - PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR LEISURE,
WELLBEING & CULTURE**

Progress on Portfolio Matters – Culture

As has been mentioned in another of these reports, the first performance of Cromer Pier's Summer Spectacular took place on July 2nd. The performance was well reviewed by the North Norfolk News and well attended.

North Walsham Heritage Action Zone

One of the most important threads of this programme has been that of work with children and young people. In the last month there have been projects in music, fashion and photography.

The Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment has conducted musical workshops for children and put on two concerts at St. Nicholas, North Walsham which featured songs composed within those workshops. High School students have worked with one of the town's businesses to present upcycled and recycled formal dresses. Lastly, the students of Paston College have spent their work experience week creating and publishing a students' guide to North Walsham.

Deep History Coast

The GoGo Discover Steppe Mammoth Trail has begun to yield serious attention for the history and geology of our District. Telegraph readers will have noticed the long article about North Norfolk and the Deep History Coast which appeared on July 17th, but there has also been a feature on BBC Radio Norfolk and an inviting piece posted by Visit Norwich.

Meetings attended

Tots Concert at St. Nicholas, North Walsham - 01/07/22
Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment Family Concert - 01/07/22
Summer Spectacular First Night -02/07/22
Return of Diana, Princess of Wales Plaque to Sheringham Museum - 07/07/22
Show of Upcycled and Recycled Fashion - 08/07/22
North Walsham Drama Group Mitre Tavern Yard Play - 16/07/22
Norfolk Arts Forum Executive - 21/07/22
Norfolk Joint Museums Committee - 22/07/22

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CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

27 July 2022

COUNCILLOR R KERSHAW - CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

For the period June to July 2022

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Levelling Up Fund Round 2

North Norfolk was identified as a Priority 1 area for support from the Levelling Up Fund Round 2. This means the Government was keen to see applications for projects from the district, although there is a competitive bidding process.

NNDC will be submitting two exciting projects in the district. These will include a new swimming pool and multi-sports area in Fakenham and the transformation and enhancement of the cliff-top gardens, North Lodge Park and related sites in Cromer to become an accessible 'green tourism' destination. The original deadline for submission of the bids was 6 July, however, the opening of the application portal was delayed (to 15 July) and the revised deadline is now 2 August. The overall response from local residents has been supportive for both proposals. Funding will need to have been spent by 31 March 2025.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the UK Government's Levelling Up agenda and is the successor funding model to the former EU Structural Funds. It will provide £2.6 billion of new funding into the UK for local investment over a three period, through to March 2025.

The intention of the fund is to invest in local priorities, targeted towards a number of areas: building pride in place, supporting high quality skills training, supporting pay, employment and productivity growth and increasing life chances.

North Norfolk's allocation is £1,238,269. Whilst this funding is not subject to a competitive process, local authorities are required to set out their key priorities for this money within an Investment Plan, identifying their interventions and anticipated outputs and outcomes.

A Local Partnership Group has recently been formed, composed of a range of stakeholders and representative bodies. This group has met twice in July

and the feedback from these meetings has helped to inform and shape the submission. Work is currently in progress to finalise the programme. The deadline for submission is 1 August 2022 and it is anticipated that the Council will have Government approval for the Investment Plan in October 2022.

North Walsham Town Centre Heritage Action Zone

A number of key activities have commenced/are presently being undertaken, summarised as follows.

- Repair and restoration work continues on the Cedars building, to which the next pieces of work will address the electric and heating systems. Early conversations are being held with a range of potential future users;
- The majority of the work has now been completed on the Church Approach/Shambles slope, with the upper element now opened up for public access to and from the St.Nicholas precinct/Market Place;
- The Building Improvement Grant scheme has been well received and a healthy number of applications are in the pipeline. The first three grant offer letters have been issued and work on these projects should commence shortly.

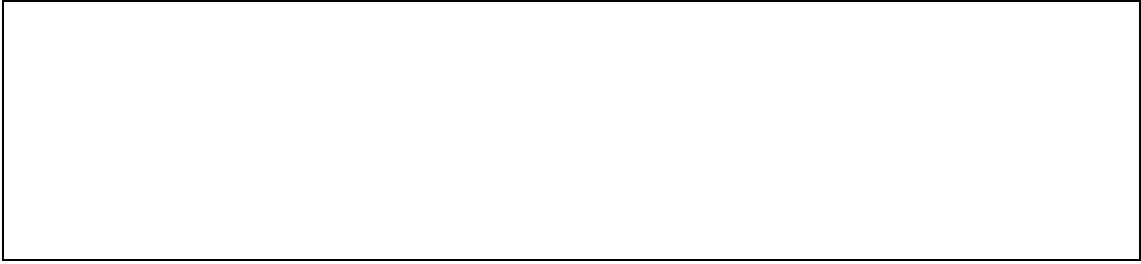
Visitor Economy

The Council has continued to collaborate with Visit North Norfolk and to liaise closely with Visit Norfolk and other local authorities and Destination Management Organisations in the region. This has helped keep local tourism businesses informed and has encouraged greater collaboration and support for collective action. The next campaign film is now live and entitled 'Love North Norfolk beaches'. The film and blog will be promoted via ads on Facebook, Instagram and Google Remarketing as well as e-comms to a database of around 30,000 consumers.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

- 1 August - UK Shared Prosperity Fund deadline
- 2 August – Levelling Up Fund deadline

3 Meetings attended



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CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

July 2022

COUNCILLOR N LLOYD - CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE

For the period June to July 2022

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Environmental Protection

The Environmental Protection Team have successfully collected 12 of our Baggot goats and returned them to Melbourne slope for their summer grazing. This received a high level of public and media interest and has been well received. The goats will remain on the cliff during the summer months ensuring that the vegetation is managed appropriately.

The team completed specialist rodent baiting along the sunken gardens and east cliff in Cromer, with good evidence of bait takes. It is anticipated that this should have a significant impact on the rat population at these locations and a subsequent reduction of sightings and complaints.

EP officers are preparing and putting resources in place to monitor noise arising from Summer events across the district. This involves working closely with the Safety Advisory group and event organisers to ensure that the event has no undue noise impacts on the immediate community.

The team continue to support, Gypsies, Roma and Travellers who are utilising the Council's two temporary supporting places in Fakenham and Cromer. Both sites are currently occupied, the team will visit occupants and link in with the health services to ensure that they and their families receive support and advice during their stay, such as vaccination guidance and check-ups.

The team are currently working with the Norfolk Constabulary to develop a policy around unauthorised encampments and the new powers recently introduced under the Police Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

The team continue to provide advice and guidance to the Planning department on matters of Contaminated Land, Noise, Odour, Dust amongst other things, this month has comments on some high profile cases.

Civil Contingencies

The Civil Contingencies Manager has completed a series of fuel station

forecourt visits to ensure supply for critical workers. NNDC is the first district to do so. Retained all 6 existing stations and added 1 more to improve coverage.

The team met with the new Event Coordinator for Walsingham Shrine re the Tamil 2 Pilgrimage, this event seemed to run relatively smoothly with minor impact to the wider community.

The Civil Contingencies manager has attended numerous meetings throughout the month, planning and contributing to events and forthcoming exercises including:

- Walsingham Parish Council Travellers meeting looking at events in the area as well as arrangements for the Gypsy Roma Traveller community attending the Shrine
- FloodEx 22 Workshop on Multi Agency Information Cells on behalf of the NRF and fed back notes
- Bacton (Gas Terminal) Liaison and Exercise Planning meeting
- NRF Voluntary, Faith & Community Resilience Management Group meeting NRF Severe weather & flood risk meeting
- NRF Norfolk FloodEx 22 planning meeting – focusing on TCG & SCG aspects
- Flood Investigation Reports – new procedures to be put in place (meeting with NCC Flood and Water Management later today to discuss)

Commercial and Public Protection

The valuable work of the team continues with routine food inspections, food complaint investigations and food sampling. They continue to see a high number (25 on average) of new food businesses registering each month. All new businesses are given the support and advice to allow them to produce and serve food safely. The team have recently received praise for this approach, it appears to be highly appreciated by new businesses.

There are several accident investigations being undertaken by the team, which have resulted in injuries such as a chemical burn and broken wrist. These workplace injuries require a thorough investigation.

The caravan site project ensuring compliance with site licenses continues and has revealed some interesting discovers around non-compliance, Officers are working with many site owners to develop action plans to remedy these.

Environmental Services

The team are currently working with the contractor (Serco) on route reorganisation. Giving them the support and attention required to ensure that it is successfully delivered in early September 2022. Leaflet design and wording has been agreed. Member briefings on this subject will occur in the coming weeks and months, once details have been finalised. This project will ensure efficiencies and hopefully deliver improved service.

The team continue to monitor the contract, but over the summer months particular attention will be given to street cleansing and litter bin emptying, ensuring that the district continues to remain an attractive place to visit, work and live.

Positive feedback has been received about the rewilding areas which have been implemented across the district.

Early planning for National Recycling week.

Climate Change

Work continues on the implementation of the NZAP, including prioritising Council assets for decarbonisation and identifying potential funding/financing options.

Working with external consultant on options for ensuring potential new leisure centre at Fakenham has low carbon footprint.

Implementation of our tree planting strategy is being planned for the planting season 22/23. At the time of writing, sufficient projects are in the pipeline to meet the target number which like last year, is challenging. Trees have been ordered to meet our needs to complete this project.

A press release announcing the Jubilee Miyawaki forests project is due for publication on Tuesday 19 July. This invites local communities and organisations to apply for a mini forest.

Greenbuild plans are continuing well with good engagement with Fakenham Town Council and local stakeholders. Local community groups and businesses are confirming their attendance. Staff and Members have been invited to help out on the day. Brief details :

This year Greenbuild will be a hybrid event, offering online and satellite events in the week leading up to Greenbuild Live, which takes place on **Saturday, 10 September**.

This year the live event will take place in **Fakenham Town Centre**.

It will feature speakers and exhibitors who encourage North Norfolk residents to live more sustainably and take action to reduce their carbon footprint

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Launch of Myawaki Jubilee forest competition

3 Meetings attended

Project meetings for Greenbuild, tree planting and climate change.
UK 100 introduction meeting
Meetings with Breckland and KL Councils – Serco contract

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

-27 July 2022-

COUNCILLOR SEWARD - CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, ASSETS, LEGAL, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND REVENUES

For the period June to July 2022

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Finance

Audit 2019/20 – This audit is largely complete but has not been signed off due to late issues regarding the treatment of Infrastructure assets. This is a national issue and is receiving attention from the finance department to work towards sign off.

Audit 2020/21 – A huge amount of resource has been required to provide EY with all the necessary working papers ahead of the commencement of the Audit in July. This has caused pressure in the department which has been short of officers.

Year-end & SOA 2021/22 – Work is still being undertaken to complete all the necessary year end entries.

Civica Finance System Upgrade - the project team has started providing Civica with all the necessary information to build a system for NNDC to test. Progress meetings are held on a weekly basis, so far there are no major issues however we are all mindful of the tight time scales and enormous scope of the project.

New starters – following vacancies in the team, we have had two new group accountants joining the finance team and an interim s.151 officer has stepped into this statutory role.

Estates

Disposal of assets. Solicitors have been instructed to progress the sale of Parklands. Officers attended a meeting with residents and the Parish Council (14th July) to give an update and to respond to queries. Cabinet approved the sale of Beeston Putting Green, Sheringham. Planning application has been submitted by the purchaser of the enabling land adjacent to the Reef.

Vacant Property –Former playgroup building and café at North Lodge Park, Cromer are being advertised to establish interest as part of the Levelling up application. Lease proposals for the collectors cabin, North Lodge Park and

The Cedars, North Walsham, are being considered. The Cedars barns are also being advertised seeking proposals.

Leases - Fakenham Connect lease to physio and Oddfellows Hall nearing completion. Licences for concession sites are due to be completed shortly.

Ground lease approved for Mundesley Inshore lifeboat

Carbon reduction – seeking to establish a priority shortlist of properties that will be assessed in detail to identify carbon reduction measures.

Legal

Demand on service:

The legal service continues to see a year on year increase in requests for advice and assistance (both internal and external) in the form of new instructions. During the first quarter of this year (up to 30 June 2022) the team has been instructed and opened 522 case files. See below for previous years 1st quarters. The team has continued its efforts to provide a good service to its clients despite the loss of several posts and staff during the last couple of years.

2021/22 – 424 cases

2020/21 – 336 cases

Information Requests:

FOI request figures show that the Council's current performance at responding to requests within the statutory 20 working days is at 87.5%. The national target is set at 90%. The legal service continues to provide advice and assistance to the wider Council in order to assist in this area, as well as with data protection, to support the corporate responsibilities.

Democratic Services

The Town & Parish Council Engagement Forum met virtually on 4th July. Attendees engaged well with the topics and feedback subsequently has been very positive.

Work has started, with support from the British Youth Council, on the establishment of the NNDC Youth Council. A steering group of interested young people will be recruited over the summer period and they will work together on the format and membership of the youth council. It is anticipated that it will launch formally in October. The Communications team is providing support to promote and encourage participation from young people across the District.

Revenues

Collection as at 30 June 2022

Council Tax collection was 28.76% against target of 29.15%, shortfall of collection of £324k.

NNDR collection is 35.39% against target of 27.00%, an excess in collection of £2.08M. This is likely to be partly caused by the Covid Additional Relief Fund (CARF)

awards that were applied at the close of 2021/22 and carried forward as a credit to the new NDR 2022/23 annual bills.

Council Tax Energy Rebate Scheme.

We closed our CT Energy Rebate Scheme on 30 June 2022 for those applying online, with final payments made on Friday 1 July 2022.

Out of 40,912 eligible customers, we have paid approx. 95% of our customers entitled to the £150.

The remaining customers have had the £150 transferred against their council tax account on 4 July 2022 with revised demand notices and letters issued.

The total rebate amount awarded to NNDC council tax customers is £6,114,450.

Papers

- Revenues has contributed to the second homes paper.
- Revenues has contributed to the empty homes paper.

Government Returns:

- **Business Grants** – continuing to reconcile these and report data to government on a regular basis.
- **CT Energy Rebate Scheme** - continuing to reconcile these and report data to government each month.
- **CARF & Retail Relief Return** - continuing to reconcile these and report data to government each month.

The QRC1 Return – this has been reconciled and reported to government.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Finance

Audit 2020-21 – The audit is due to commence on the 11th July.

Year end 2021/22 – We continue to review and complete all the entries required to close down the 2021/22 accounts and prepare the SOA.

Budget Monitoring P4 2022/23 – the team will look to prepare a position as at the end of July 2022 to inform members of the current year's financial position.

Civica Finance System Upgrade – work will continue to build a test system after which work will commence on testing and training.

Estates

Investigating a possible purchase of land for tree planting.

Legal

The team is carrying a vacant post at present and will look to fill this. The legal team has taken on a Legal Services Apprentice to support the National Apprenticeship Scheme Programme. The trainee solicitors in the team will soon be undertaking the Professional Skills Course aspect of their training contract with the Council, with qualification expected in 2022/23.

Democratic Services

Two 'Prospective Candidates' events are being held in September and October – one virtual, one in person. Member Development Group is working with the team to arrange these and the Communications Team will promote them via various media channels.

Revenues

Government Returns:

- NNDR3
- Business Grants
- CT Energy Rebate Scheme
- The CARF & Retail Relief Return

Papers

Debt Report for 2021/22 outturn figures

Consultations

- Consultation on the statutory debt plan
- Business Rates Revaluation 2023: Consultation on the transitional arrangements

3 Meetings attended

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

July 2022

COUNCILLOR LUCY SHIRES

CABINET MEMBER FOR ORGANISATIONAL RESOURCES

June 2022 – July 2022

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Information Communications Technology

The IT team hosted 3 work experience students from Cromer High and provided experience in all IT disciplines.

The infrastructure work to support the deployment of the Exacom, Section 106 management system, has been undertaken.

Work has continued on migration of the councils office networks to new equipment with the configuration and testing of new equipment for the Fakenham offices.

The deployment of Bodycams in EH and its associated software and database has been completed.

As a part of the ongoing improvement of the Councils cyber security arrangements further research into security event logging software has continued with a trial of the NCSC recommended system.

Our annual cyber security health check has been completed successfully, with only a small number of potential vulnerabilities reported. None of these were actually able to be exploited by the 3rd party ethical hackers carrying out the assessment.

Work has begun on the roll out Multi-Factor Authentication to improve security of access to the Council's infrastructure and data.

The committee room has been equipped to enable its use for hybrid meetings to allow remote and in person participation.

Provision of equipment and software to new starters and internal staff changing roles continues to demand considerable resources.

The reduced number of higher spec multi-functional devices to replace existing end of operational life equipment have been procured and their implementation is currently being planned. In preparation the Council's "Print Server" has been upgraded.

The intranet SMS app has been re-engineered to use the free to use "gov.notify" gateway.

An enhancement to the customer enquiry management tool "Workbench" which makes new issue notifications more visible has been completed. Additionally work to improve reporting on customer enquiries is being progressed.

Work with the supplier of the Environment Health management system to restore integration with NNDC webforms has been progressed.

One of the two vacant senior web developer posts has been recruited to. The other vacancy remains unfilled and is still advertised,

Work has started on a web form to support outreach to community and special interest groups such as the Town & Parish Council clerks group.

A number of existing webforms have been enhanced and had maintenance carried out on them these include:

- Bulky Waste collection bookings
- Enquiry Management
- Contact Us
- Online Customer Feedback form
- Change of Address notification form

Website content continues to be updated and expanded:

- FAQs for bin collection changes
- Pages of the Youth Council
- Benefits support and advice page additions

The update to the Cash receipting system has been delayed after the 3rd party software failed testing. A new version is expected in the 1st week of August.

The Civica Financial conversion project is now starting to require substantial resources from both IT and the Service. However it continues to progress well.

An e-learning package on Information governance has been purchased with versions for both Officers and Elected Members. This will be available via the Council's virtual learning system "Skillgate" in the near future.

The management information system "Inphase" has been upgraded to the latest release.

Imminent recruitment to commence for to fill the vacant GIS role.

Work continues to support the ongoing enhancement of the Environmental Health management system "Assure".

Customer Services

Whist the Energy Rebate scheme has drawn to a close the Customer Services team continue to be busy managing customer demand with over 4,000 customer enquiries received in June.

Our three new members of the team have been acquiring the breadth of knowledge required and have now begun to take live customer enquiries. Their fresh eyes on the role has also given us lots of new ideas and suggestions on how we might improve our service.

This resource will help improve performance and support the transition of Revenues calls to Customer Services expected to go live from September.

Further training across the team and collaborative working with Revenue Services is currently in place to ensure the smooth transition of these calls. This will deliver further roll out of the 'One Front Door' approach within the CS strategy, and deliver a consistent and efficient experience for the customer.

Property Services

Cromer pier substructure works contract has been awarded. The pre-commencement meeting with the contractors will now take place.

A tender for the pier bar servery and wc refurbishment is currently being prepared.

The PC re-provision in Fakenham has been delayed following the unearthing of an undocumented UK Power Networks cable and the subsequent wait for them to identify the cable and develop a plan for its rerouting.

A number of delays in the supply chain have also delayed the completion of the Stearmans yard PC re-provisioning by approximately 4 weeks. Temporary facilities have been placed on site to cover the delay period.

The refurbishment of the public conveniences in New Road are progressing well and will be complete by the end of July.

The Vicarage Street, North Walsham PC replacement final plans have been received from the architect and are being reviewed prior to the tender being advertised.

Works to support the refurbishment of The Cedars and the wider HAZ project in North Walsham are ongoing.

Work continues on refurbishment and commissioning of temporary accommodation units.

Current tenders in progress include:

Public Convenience re-provision at the Leas in Sheringham.
Fakenham Connect Crinkle Crankle wall remedial/safety works.
Morris Street car park boundary wall, storm damage repairs.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Information Technology

Remediation works for all vulnerabilities identified in the PSN security health check

Work will continue with the equipment manufacturer “Dell” on configuration and testing of the new networking equipment.

Provisioning hardware and software for new starters and department moves.

Installation of anti-malware software on all servers

Programme to update end of life and obsolete display equipment.

Decision on future of security logging software and subsequent procurement and implementation.

Further webforms will be published to support customers self-service.

Work will continue on the implementation of the new Civica Finance system

A number of outstanding software upgrades will be applied to the Planning system “Uniform”

New S106 management software will be integrated with the Councils finance system to ensure accurate reporting of S106 funds and commitments.

Customer Services

The annual canvass begins on the 8th August 2022 and with it the expected increase in customer contact. We are preparing for this by working closely with our colleagues in Electoral Services.

Transfer of Council Tax customer enquiries to Customer service contact centre will be implemented.

Property Services

New Road public Convenience refurbishment will be completed

The contract for the refurbishment of the Lea's will be awarded.

The tender for the Vicarage Street PC re-provisioning will be issued.

Coach bay lining works programmed for the following car parks. Hornbeam Road, Station Approach, Cadogan Road and Runton Road.

Property Services will provide support to Housing Options for the tackling homes in disrepair scheme. This is a pilot scheme and will run until end March 2023. PS involvement is purely administering works and payments via our existing measure term contractors.

3 Meetings attended

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CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY

Minutes of the meeting of the Constitution Working Party held on Tuesday, 7 June 2022 in the remotely via Zoom at 10.00 am

Committee
Members Present:

Cllr V Gay

Cllr L Shires
Cllr A Varley (Chairman)

Officers in
Attendance:

Assistant Director for Finance, Assets, Legal & Monitoring Officer,
Democratic Services Manager

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr E Vardy.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Constitution Working Party held on 21st October 2021 were approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

4 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

5 UPDATE ON REVISIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Chairman thanked the Monitoring Officer for the tracked version of the constitution that had been circulated prior to the meeting. He said that there were a lot of amendments and asked the Monitoring Officer to talk through the key changes.

The Monitoring Officer began by saying that following the recent senior management restructure, several job titles were changed and these needed to be reflected in the constitution. She reminded members that as Monitoring Officer she could only make minor amendments, substantial changes to the constitution had to be agreed by Full Council.

The Chairman referred to changes that had been made during the pandemic regarding virtual meeting protocols. He said that with some working parties and sub-committees continuing to be held online, it might be worth retaining some of the procedures within the constitution. The Monitoring Officer replied that one option would be to have a separate protocol to reflect procedures and practice for working parties. The Chairman agreed that this could be useful.

Cllr V Gay said that she agreed with the Chairman. She referred to the Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party which continued to hold its meetings remotely. It was not decision-making but was of public interest as it was involved in developing

and reviewing the Local Plan and conservation area appraisals. She was concerned that if the procedure rules governing remote meetings were removed from the constitution, then working parties such as this one would effectively 'sit outside' the constitution and the rules of process may not apply. Cllr Gay said that she felt it would be helpful to clarify the position

The Democratic Services Manager suggested that it could be a good opportunity to review the section in the constitution which covered working parties. It was a very brief section currently and it might be helpful to review it to ensure a consistent approach across all of the working parties and sub-committees. For example, the Joint Staff Consultative Committee was currently treated as an Executive sub-committee whereas according to the constitution, it should report directly to Full Council. She suggested undertaking a full review and bringing a report back to the next meeting of the Constitution Working Party. Members agreed.

Cllr Gay commented on the inconsistencies in language in the updated version of the constitution, such as him/her/their. Also, references to Council throughout had now been changed to Full Council and it was not clear why this had been done. She said that a final proof reading was needed to address these issues.

Cllr Gay then referred to section 9.1 'Open Governance and Probity' where the process for excluding the press and public from meetings was set out. She said that there had also been a situation where elected members had been excluded from meetings and there had been a discussion at a previous meeting of the Constitution Working Party that the Monitoring officer would review this and bring back revised wording. She asked whether this had been done and whether it was reflected in the updated version of the constitution which members were currently reviewing as she could not find anything that addressed this. The Monitoring Officer sought clarification as to whether Cllr Gay was referring to the section where non-committee members had to seek permission from the Chairman to remain in the meeting. Cllr Gay confirmed that this was what she was referring to. The Monitoring Officer replied that she recalled that the Working Party had agreed to review this section but had not yet had an opportunity to do this. The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that Cllr Gay was referring to Chapter 5, section 13.1 'Attendance of other members of the Council'.

The Chairman agreed with Cllr Gay regarding inconsistencies in the revised version of the Constitution. He referred to the use of gender neutral terms which occurred in some sections but not others. The Monitoring Officer replied that this had been discussed at a previous meeting and members had not been supportive of using gender neutral terms at the current time. It was agreed to leave it and review it at a future stage. The Monitoring Officer said that she would like members to consider the appointment of an external consultant to undertake a thorough review of the constitution. This would pick up on any changes to the law that may have been missed and address any errors or inconsistencies in the current version. The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that the last full, external review of the constitution was undertaken in 2011.

The Chairman asked whether using an external consultant was standard practice and whether they would be making pro-active changes or just doing a high-level review. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that it would be a full, in-depth review and that many local authorities undertook such reviews every few years. She added that the amendments made by herself and the Democratic Services Manager had taken a long time to do. The Chairman commented that he felt more time was needed for members to review the amended version in full and wondered whether it would be

beneficial for a sub-group of the committee to undertake this work. The Monitoring Officer agreed that this approach could be taken if members so wished.

The Democratic Services Manager explained to members that herself and the Monitoring Officer had undertaken a 'high level' review of the constitution to address inconsistencies in job titles, grammatical errors and section numbering etc. Since the last full review in 2011, there had been several amendments to reflect changes in legislation, various staff restructures and inconsistencies in language but there had not been an opportunity to undertake a deep review of the entire document. It was therefore felt that an external, legal expert could do this and then it would be brought back to the Constitution Working Party for comment before being finalised and any recommendations were made to Full Council.

The Chairman said that it was important that members had more time to review the revised version. He suggested that a hard copy of the document with tracked changes was provided to members of the Constitution Working Party and they could then review it and feed back any comments to the next meeting. Cllr Gay agreed with this approach. She then asked about references within the updated version to a requirement for all members listing outside body appointments on their register of interest. She said that this could be problematic in some cases as sometimes members were appointed to bodies that did not invite them to attend meetings. She queried why it was necessary as members were appointed as representatives of the Council to the outside body and were not lobbying. The Democratic Services Manager replied that this requirement was part of the new Code of Conduct which had been adopted in 2021 and then incorporated into the constitution. She said that she would review this section as she could understand members' concerns and it may be helpful to include some additional guidance. Cllr Gay agreed, she said that she had concerns that members could potentially be accused of failing to declare an interest in relation to something that they were unaware of. The Monitoring Officer added that the LGA had issued useful guidance documents regarding the Code of Conduct and suggested that these were circulated to members.

Cllr Gay sought clarification on the background and experience of any consultant that may be appointed to undertake a review of the constitution. The Monitoring Officer replied that there were legal firms such as Bevan Brittan that specialised in local government law that could undertake this work. Cllr Gay queried what an external consultant could offer that officers working for the Council could not. The Monitoring Officer replied that it would require a considerable time commitment to undertake such work and resources within the Council were limited at the present time.

The Democratic Services Manager suggested that members could be issued with a hard copy, tracked version of the amended constitution and review it and then consider whether they felt a consultant should be engaged to undertake a further review. In the meantime, the Monitoring Officer and the Democratic Services Manager would explore options and costs for consultancy work. The Chairman agreed and said that costs and possible options for consultants would be beneficial before members agreed to progress, if this route was chosen.

It was proposed by Cllr A Varley, seconded by Cllr V Gay and

RESOLVED

To defer this item to allow additional time for members to review and consider the proposed amendments to the constitution

6 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCILS CONSTITUTION RELATING TO ESTATE MATTERS

The Chairman asked whether these changes were coming forwards in response to issues with recent transactions.

The Estates & Assets Strategy Manager said that the proposed changes were not in response to any specific issue, it just felt that the constitution could be strengthened to improve the efficiency of transactions. She explained that the current arrangements, as set out in the constitution, were quite general, and didn't pick up the differences between acquisitions, disposals and leases. For example, when the Council acquired something it was for the long term and it had cost implications and it was thought such transactions should have a higher level of governance, whereas leases were for a shorter period of time and had reduced implications for the Council and they could be progressed more quickly. It was aimed at making the most of the Council's property transactions. She then outlined the proposed changes.

Cllr Gay said that she was supportive of the proposed changes. She asked if the report had been shared with the Portfolio Holder. The Estates & Asset Strategy Manager replied that it had not been shared with him yet. Cllr Gay said she was not against any of the proposed changes but would want the Portfolio Holder to indicate their support before agreeing to approve.

The Democratic Services Manager suggested that members could approve the recommendations, subject to the Portfolio Holder's agreement. She added that, in future, she would ensure that Portfolio Holders were made aware of any changes to the constitution that were related to their portfolio and invite them to attend the meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr V Gay, seconded by Cllr A Varley and

RESOLVED

To support the proposed amendments as detailed in Section 3 and 4 of the report and recommend approval to Full Council, subject to the Portfolio Holder's agreement

7 APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSON

The Monitoring Officer introduced this item. She outlined the background to the appointment of Independent Persons, and explained that they were a requirement of the Localism Act. Their role was to provide an independent view on standards / code of conduct allegations. Councils were required to appoint at least one independent person. To ensure full independence, they could not be linked to the council in any way. The current IP had now served two terms (the maximum time allowed). The Monitoring Officer added that the best practice recommendations report published in January 2019 by the Committee on Standards in Public Life recommends that local authorities should have access to at least two Independent Persons.

The role of the IP had been widened following changes to the disciplinary processes regarding statutory officers. The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2015, also required at least two Independent Persons to be consulted and to sit on the disciplinary Panel when dealing with Statutory Officers disciplinary or dismissal processes.

The Council has been operating with one Independent Person since 2013. Recruiting two new Independent Persons would ensure the Council was following best practice recommendations, is able to call on two Independent Persons should the need arise and would provide more resilience should a conflict or sickness issue arise. The Monitoring Officer said that the role should be publicly advertised and a small stipend was currently paid to the existing IP and this may need to be reviewed and possibly adjusted and then reflected in any advertisement.

The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that the standard term for an IP was four years, which could be renewed for one further term. The Council's IP had been appointed for almost 10 years (some additional time had been added by the pandemic) so the recruitment of a new Independent Person was now needed. She said that a payment was made and that it was on a case by case basis and didn't amount to very much. She added that when the requirement to appoint IPs was first introduced, all local authorities were seeking to appoint and it had been possible to 'pool' resources regarding advertisements. Over time, this had slipped and the Council would now need to go out to recruit on its own rather than alongside neighbouring authorities. She said that she would look back at the previous recruitment pack and panel and share that with members.

Cllr V Gay sought more information on the IP's role in the disciplinary process for statutory officers. She asked whether they would be an active member of the disciplinary panel or act as an external adviser. The Monitoring Officer replied that they sat as part of a panel, which was convened at a late stage in the process, following an investigation, where disciplinary action was recommended. They would consider the allegations against statutory officers and then reach a decision which would be reported to Full Council which would then decide how to proceed.

The Chairman asked the Monitoring Officer for her view on whether most authorities had two IP's or if they had one and then consulted with the IP of a neighbouring authority as and when required. The Monitoring Officer replied that most currently just had one but more were considering recruiting two, mainly for resilience purposes.

Cllr Gay said that she was supportive of recruiting two IPs as their input was often required at short notice and it might be beneficial to have the flexibility of using either IP. She added that it was important to attract candidates who wanted undertake the role for the right reasons rather than for payment and for this reason she didn't feel that small amount of income from the post should be an issue. The Chairman agreed, saying that he felt more comfortable appointing two IPs rather than approaching another authority for support if required.

It was proposed by Cllr A Varley, seconded by Cllr V Gay

RESOLVED

To recommend to Council that the process for recruitment of two Independent Persons should commence.

8 UPDATES TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Monitoring Officer advised the Working Party that there were some changes in the law regarding contract and procurement legislation and she would be bringing a report forward on that.

The Governance, Risk & Audit Committee had made a recommendation at their last meeting that there should be a separation of roles of those presenting, advising and investigating disciplinary matters relating to statutory officers. This would be coming forward to the next meeting of the Constitution Working Party for consideration, following confirmation that ACAS requirements were not breached.

The Democratic Services Manager suggested that the public speaking procedures were reviewed as they were currently not consistent across all committees, with Development Committee requiring 48 hours' notice and other committees requiring 24 hours' notice. It was causing some confusion and leading to late submissions for Development Committee which could be difficult to accommodate. She suggested reviewing practice at other authorities and bringing a short report to the next meeting. The Chairman agreed that this was a matter that should be reviewed, to address any issues that were causing confusion and ensure a consistent approach.

The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that a review of the procedures for working parties and sub-committees would also come to the next meeting, as well as the matter of addressing the exclusion of non-committee members during exempt business.

The Chairman said that he would like to review the role of the Constitution Working Party and the frequency of meetings. The Democratic Services Manager suggested that the terms of reference could be reviewed at the next meeting. This was agreed.

The meeting ended at 11.15 am.

Chairman

4 July 2022

Head of Democratic Services
North Norfolk District Council
Council Offices
Holt Road
CROMER
Norfolk NR27 9EN

Dear Sir/Madam

RECONSTITUTION OF NORFOLK RIVERS INTERNAL DRAINING BOARD (NRIDB)

I would like to inform you that the reconstitution of membership for the NRIDB has now been approved by DEFRA, reducing the number of both elected and appointed Board members. The new statutory instrument came into force on 29 June 2022 and can be viewed here:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2022/714/signature/made>

I have listed below the revised entitlements to appoint members to the Board for each council below:

Entitlement to individually appoint members = 9 (a reduction of 4)

Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk: 0 (no change)

Breckland District Council: 1 (a reduction of 1)

Broadland District Council: 2 (a reduction of 1)

North Norfolk District Council: 4 (a reduction of 1)

Norwich City Council: 0 (no change)

South Norfolk District Council: 2 (a reduction of 1)

(+) Entitlement to jointly appoint members = 2 (a reduction of 1)

(=) Collective entitlement to appoint members: 11 (a reduction of 5)

In advance of the next Board meeting, on Thursday 21 July 2022, I would be grateful if you would advise your revised membership to the Board for your own Council, as well as agreeing with the other Councils to confirm the jointly appointed members.

If you have any queries, please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely



P J CAMAMILE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

John Carrick (Chairman) Gordon Bambridge (Vice-Chairman)

Phil Camamile (Chief Executive)

Constituted by The Broads and Norfolk Rivers Internal Drainage Boards Order 2005
Statutory Instrument 2005 No 429. Re-constituted in 2022. Statutory Instrument 2022 No.714.

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