

# Overview & Scrutiny Committee



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Tuesday, 9 April 2024

A meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** of North Norfolk District Council will be held in the **Council Chamber - Council Offices** on **Wednesday, 17 April 2024** at **9.30 am**.

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 notify the committee clerk 24 hours in advance of the meeting and arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of the meeting. 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 516047, Email: [neil.white@north-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:neil.white@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 must 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.

Please note that Committee members will be given priority to speak during the debate of agenda items

**Emma Denny**  
**Democratic Services Manager**

**To:** Cllr N Dixon, Cllr S Penfold, Cllr M Batey, Cllr J Boyle, Cllr S Bütikofer, Cllr C Cushing, Cllr A Fletcher, Cllr M Hankins, Cllr V Holliday, Cllr N Housden, Cllr R Macdonald and Cllr L Vickers

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

**Chief Executive:** Steve Blatch  
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## A G E N D A

- 1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. SUBSTITUTES**
- 3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS & STATEMENTS**

To receive questions / statements from the public, if any.
- 4. MINUTES** 1 - 6

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 20 March 2024.
- 5. 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.
- 6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** 7 - 12

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.
- 7. PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

To consider any petitions received from members of the public.
- 8. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY A MEMBER**

To consider any requests made by non-executive Members of the Council, submitted to the Democratic Services Manager with seven clear working days' notice, to include an item on the agenda of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 9. RESPONSES OF THE COUNCIL OR THE CABINET TO THE COMMITTEE'S REPORTS OR RECOMMENDATIONS** 13 - 14

To consider any responses of the Council or the Cabinet to the Committee's reports or recommendations.
- 10. ANNUAL REVIEW OF BEACH HUTS AND CHALETS** 15 - 28

To consider an annual review of Beach Hut and Chalets service, for a 12 month period following the previous 2021/22 review.
- 11. EAST OF ENGLAND WATER SUMMIT** 29 - 30

To consider a briefing on the East of England Water Summit.

- 12. REPORTING PROGRESS IMPLEMENTING CORPORATE PLAN 2023-27 ACTION PLAN 2023-24 – TO END OF QUARTER 3 – 31ST DECEMBER 2023** 31 - 38

To consider the progress being made in implementing the Council's Corporate Plan 2023-27.

- 13. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND UPDATE** 39 - 44

To receive an update from the Scrutiny Officer on progress made with topics on its agreed work programme, training updates and to receive any further information which Members may have requested at a previous meeting.

- 14. EXCLUSION OF THE 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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph \_ of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act.”

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## OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday, 20 March 2024 in the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 9.30 am

<b>Committee Members Present:</b>	Cllr N Dixon (Chairman)	Cllr S Penfold (Vice-Chairman)
	Cllr M Batey	Cllr J Boyle
	Cllr C Cushing	Cllr A Fletcher
	Cllr M Hankins	Cllr V Holliday
	Cllr N Housden	Cllr L Vickers
<b>Members also attending:</b>	Cllr A Brown	Cllr L Shires
	Cllr A Varley	Cllr L Withington
<b>Officers in Attendance:</b>	Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny, Director for Place & Climate Change, Programme & Projects Manager, Director for Resources / S151 Officer, Assistant Director for Sustainable Growth and Policy and Performance Management Officer	

**Also in attendance:**

### 133 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillors Garry Bull and Roy MacDonald.

### 134 SUBSTITUTES

There were no substitutes at the meeting.

### 135 PUBLIC QUESTIONS & STATEMENTS

None received.

### 136 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th February 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Chair of the Homelessness Task and Finish Group, Councillor Holliday, updated the Committee on its work and advised that the group was about halfway through its gathering evidence from internal and external witnesses. It was hoped that this would be completed by the end of May.

### 137 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None received.

**138 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None received.

**139 PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

None received.

**140 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY A MEMBER**

None received.

**141 RESPONSES OF THE COUNCIL OR THE CABINET TO THE COMMITTEE'S REPORTS OR RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Democratic Services (Scrutiny) Officer advised that in respect of the Peer Review Action Plan the Overview and Scrutiny element of it was to be covered by training on Monday 25 March 2024 with specific sessions set aside for Senior Officers, Cabinet Members and then all non-Executive members of the Council.

That would be followed by a plenary session to follow up on the points raised in the sessions and develop a plan for developing Overview and Scrutiny at the council. The date for the plenary session was expected to be in mid April.

**142 BUDGET MONITORING PERIOD 10**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates & Property Services, Councillor Shires, presented a report on the Council's on the Council's financial performance and projected outturn for 2023/24 for the revenue account, capital programme and reserves statement as at the end of January 2024.

Cllr Shires commented that there was a projection for a General Fund Deficit of £0.986m at 31 March 2024. The need to provide temporary accommodation for an unanticipated number of people who had been made homeless had significantly raised the council's expenditure during the financial year.

Cllr Shires drew the Committee's action to the work that had been done to deal with this overspend which had been considered and approved by the Cabinet at its meeting on 11 March 2024.

The Director of Resources in response to Cllr Dixon's question stated that it was anticipated that there would be some variance to the end of year budget figure but it was not expected to be significant.

The Director of Resources in response to Cllr Penfold's question stated that the level of additional borrowing that the council had to undertake was of a short-term basis that the council had to do and carried little risk.

The Director of Resources in response to Cllr Cushing's question advised the final outturn figures would be by the end of May and go to cabinet in July with the closure of the accounts to be considered by the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee.

The Director of Resources in response to Cllr Housden's question stated that in respect of the three capital schemes for major coastal projects they were almost all

Government grant funded and the Council contribution was just £600k.

Cllr Shires in response to Cllr Dixon's question advised that the budget overspend due to higher car park receipts at the car parks where this income is shared with relevant parishes was due to how the agreement with the Parish Councils was worded. The Council was currently negotiating with the Parish Councils to see if it was possible to change the agreements.

The Director of Resources in response to Cllr Dixon's question advised that the overspend from the Communities Fund using £125,000 of the UK prosperity fund in 2023/24 before it had been allocated was due to a miscommunication between the Council and the government department on the funding.

The Director of Resources in response to Cllr Housden's question stated that there was provision made in the Council's budget for the expected number of vacancies across the council's services. The Council at the moment, unlike some local authorities, did not hold posts vacant for budgetary reasons.

The Committee in noting that the Council was developing a Workforce Development Strategy would like to consider at a future meeting so that it could understand how vacancies are managed, how agency staff are used, what work the council does to recruit staff as well as the impact of vacancies especially key staff on the Council's service delivery and budget.

Cllr Shires in response to Cllr Cushing's question advised that the £63,000 variance in rental income from investment properties related to the units at The Cedars, North Walsham and was due to internet not been installed. The Council was seeking compensation from Openreach and all but one of the units were shortly to be filled and be in use.

The Director of Resources in response to Cllr Holliday's question stated that it was projected that the increase in the Local Housing Allowance for next year announced in the budget would have a 370k effect on the council's budget but it was only as an estimation at this stage as there are a number of factors involved.

**Resolved – that a report on the Council's Workforce Development Strategy be submitted to a future meeting to include how vacancies are managed, how agency staff are used, what work the council does to recruit staff, as well as the impact of vacancies, especially key staff, on the Council's service delivery and budget.**

#### **143 CAR PARK INCOME ANALYSIS - APRIL TO DECEMBER 2023**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates and Property Services, Councillor Shires, presented a report that detailed the level of car park income generated by the Council for the period 1 April to 31 December 2023 compared to previous years income.

The Committee considered that the report did not include the information it would like to see and there was some missing data. This was the Council's expenditure for each of the car parks set aside the income it received so that it showed the surplus or loss for that car park.

It agreed that the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee arrange a meeting with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates and

Property Services and appropriate officers to consider the information that should be considered.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates and Property Services in response to Cllr Housden's question stated that the car park enforcement was undertaken by outside contractor and there was a question over the viability of an in-house service being created.

The Director of Resources added that a review of the car park service was to be undertaken with the expectation that it would be completed in October and would also review potential car park charges for next year.

**Resolved – that the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee arrange a meeting with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates and Property Services and appropriate officers to consider the information that should be considered in a future report to the Committee on the Council's Car Parks.**

#### **144 PROGRESS REPORT ON NET ZERO TARGET**

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Net Zero, Councillor Varley, presented a report on the progress being made against the Net Zero Action Plan which accompanies the Council's Net Zero Strategy.

Cllr Varley reminded the Committee that the Council had declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and took a benchmark figure for the Council's carbon footprint in 2019/20. The trajectory for reducing the carbon emissions was moving in the right direction with the rate of reduction exceeding the expected profile.

Cllr Varley added that there had been an increase in carbon emissions in 2022/23 but this was largely due to the construction of the Reef Leisure Centre in Sheringham. The Council was now taking significant steps to reduce the impact that leisure centres were having on the Council's carbon footprint.

Cllr Varley in response to Cllr Dixon's question advised that the interventions made for the Solar Car Port at the Reef and the insulation added at the Cromer Offices will be quantified and will seek to make both buildings more energy efficient and sustainable. The data showing how successful they have been will be available in next year's report.

The Climate and Environmental Policy Manager confirmed in response to Cllr Dixon's question that the Council was looking at internal Carbon Pricing models used by other local authorities to introduce decision wheels to help inform the cabinet of the environmental consequences of its decisions. It was expected that this could take 3 to 6 months to be fully implemented.

Cllr Varley in response to Cllr Dixon's question stated that the Net Zero Strategy covered the years 22/23 and 23/34 and the work on reviewing it was now happening.

Cllr Varley replied to Cllr Penfold's question by stating that the data for carbon emissions would vary and there would be years when it would go up and years when it would go down and he was comfortable with the overall direction but there was a long way to go to reach the net zero target.

The Climate and Environmental Policy Manager confirmed in response to Cllr



Penfold's question that there were other greenhouse gases included with the council's emissions calculation.

Cllr Varley in response to Cllr Holliday's questions stated that the Council's £500K reserve was for a carbon busting project which could have a significant impact on the reduction of emissions. It was important to reduce carbon emissions through driving down vehicle usage, the Council has 46 electric charging points and was looking to roll out more in the future.

The Climate and Environmental Policy Manager confirmed in response to Cllr Fletcher's question that the Local Government Association model that the Council followed did not allow the carbon benefits of the Council's existing natural assets to be included in its overall footprint calculation. It will be though something that the Council will need to consider in the future.

Cllr Varley in response to Cllr Hankin's questions agreed to provide a written response to the committee on the process that has been taken with the contractor to ensure that the upcoming changes to the waste contract rounds would reduce the overall carbon emissions.

Cllr Varley in response to Cllr Withington's question agreed to provide a written response on the update of the salary sacrifice scheme to use electric vehicles.

Cllr Varley in response to Cllr Dixon's question stated that there was a net zero target for the Council of 2030 and for the whole of North Norfolk it was 2045. For the whole district the council was already showcasing and signposting various grants for insulation and retrofitting as well as working with local businesses.

Cllr Varley in response to Cllr Dixon's question felt that climate change needed to be at the forefront of the council's decision-making process and then the need to strive to reach net zero was fundamental.

The Assistant Director Sustainable Growth reminded the committee in response to Cllr Dixon's question that the Council's Environmental Charter set out three Chapters – dealing with the Council's own emissions; acting as a community leader to reduce emissions outside of the council and holding events to encourage people to reducing their own emissions.

Cllr Varley stated that he was happy to consider Councillor's Dixon's suggestion about what further work the Council can do to promote carbon footprint reductions to business, the public to better prepare for the adverse effects of climate change locally but it was the collective responsibility of everyone on the council to ensure that reductions are made.

Cllr Holliday proposed and it was seconded by Cllr Cushing that all reports include a section on net zero impact so that a change in the carbon footprint is highlighted and explained.

**Resolved – that (A) the progress towards and the challenges of the Council's Net Zero target is noted,**

**(B) the planned projects and interventions for 2024/25 to help reduce the Council's carbon footprint and wider district emissions be welcomed, and**

**(C) all reports to the Council's decision-making bodies should include a**

**section on net zero impact so that a change in the carbon footprint is highlighted and explained.**

**145 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND UPDATE**

The Democratic Services (Scrutiny) Officer advised that the items that needed updating in the workplan had been covered elsewhere during the meeting.

**RESOLVED**

**To note the update.**

**146 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The meeting ended at 1.00 pm.

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Chairman

## Registering interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

**"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest"** means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

**"Partner"** means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

## Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.
5. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it

## Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

## Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
  - a. your own financial interest or well-being;
  - b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative, close associate; or
  - c. a body included in those you need to disclose under Other Registrable Interests as set out in **Table 2**

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied

9. Where a matter **affects** your financial interest or well-being:
  - a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
  - b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

10. Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you have made an executive decision in relation to that business, you must make sure that any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of your interest.

**Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation</b>	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]
<b>Sponsorship</b>	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
<b>Contracts</b>	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the

	<p>councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council —</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
<b>Land and Property</b>	<p>Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council.</p> <p>'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.</p>
<b>Licenses</b>	<p>Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer</p>
<b>Corporate tenancies</b>	<p>Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)—</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the council; and</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.</p>
<b>Securities</b>	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were</p>

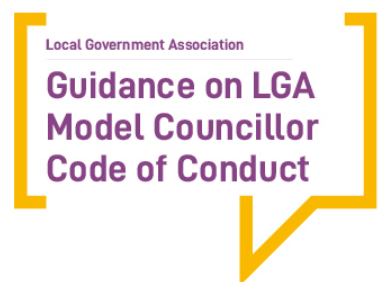
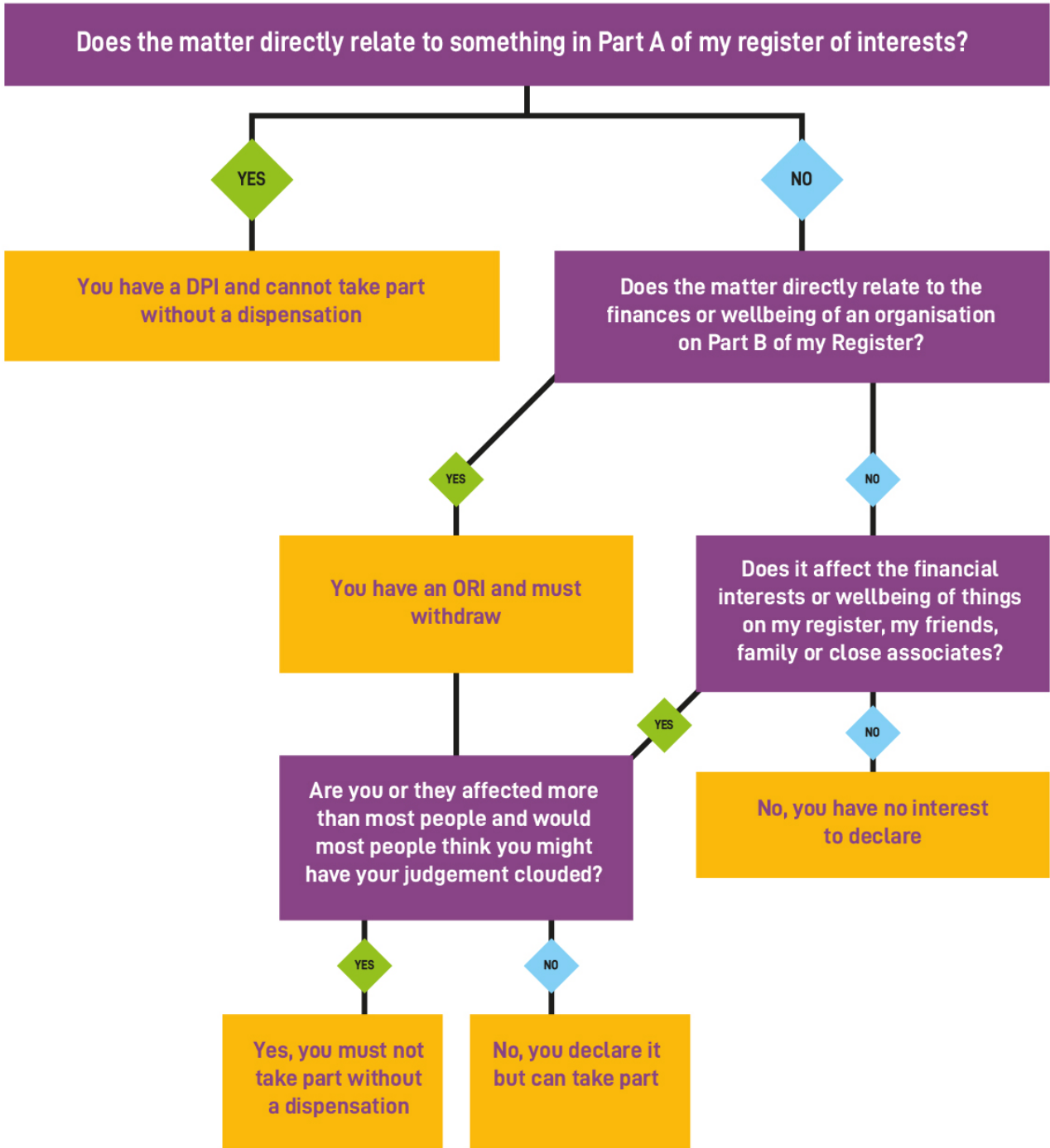
	spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.
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\* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

\* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

**Table 2: Other Registrable Interests**

<p>You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority</li> <li>b) any body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) exercising functions of a public nature</li> <li>(ii) any body directed to charitable purposes or</li> <li>(iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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**North Norfolk District Council**

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee Recommendations Tracker**

Ref	Scrutiny Recommendation	Decision Maker	Cabinet Decision	Implemented
24/01/24 Draft Revenue Budget for 2024/25	(A) council's budget monitoring to include the expected level income streams within the council budget should be reported in future to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and  (B) the Director of Resources be requested to produce at the start of the new financial year a timetable that sets out the key events as the budget is developed throughout the year such as which committee meetings it will be reported to and periods of public consultation.	Cabinet	Agreed by Cabinet	
24/01/24 Peer Review – Action Plan	(A) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees that the Peer Review Action Plan be presented to Cabinet for agreement and adoption, and  (B) a report be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee following the Local Government's Association revisit to the Council on the progress that had been on the changes proposed with thin the Action Plan.	Cabinet	Agreed by Cabinet	
14/02/24 Local Economic Strategy	that (A) that an appendix to the full strategy and action plan be produced to show all the different sectors to the economy in North Norfolk and when available information be provided in the document that sets out the value of each sector to the local economy, and  (B) the strategy part is extracted from the full document into a shorter summary form that could be more quickly read.	Cabinet	Agreed by Cabinet	
14/02/24 Food Waste	Full Council be requested to agree to write a letter to Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs setting out the evidence associated with the shortfall in allocation and the anticipated capital costs that the Council will incur in relation to food waste collection.	Full Council	Went to Full Council on 27 March 2024	

20/03/42 Net Zero	All reports to the Council's decision-making bodies should include a section on net zero impact so that a change in the carbon footprint is highlighted and explained		Going to Cabinet on 15 April 2024	
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<b>Annual Review of Beach Huts and Chalets</b>	
<b>Executive Summary</b>	This report provides an annual review of Beach Hut and Chalets service, for a 12 month period following the previous 2021/22 review.
<b>Options considered</b>	Options around booking restrictions and new site locations have been considered and are outlined in the report.
<b>Consultation(s)</b>	No consultation has been undertaken.
<b>Recommendations</b>	To receive and note the update
<b>Reasons for recommendations</b>	N/A
<b>Background papers</b>	Beach Hut and Chalet Review 2018

<b>Wards affected</b>	Cromer, Mundesley, Overstrand, Sheringham
<b>Cabinet member(s)</b>	Cllr Lucy Shires. Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates & Property Services
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Renata Garfoot, Asset Strategy Manager tel: 01263 516086. Email. Renata.Garfoot@north-norfolk.gov.uk

<b>Links to key documents:</b>	
Corporate Plan:	A Strong, Responsible, & Accountable Council
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	Income generation from rental income and rent reviews.
Council Policies & Strategies	Asset Management Plan 2018 -2022

<b>Corporate Governance:</b>	
Is this a key decision	No
Has the public interest test been applied	N/A
Details of any previous decision(s) on this matter	N/A

Conclusions: It continues to be a challenging period since the 2018 Beach Hut and Chalet review was completed due to the covid pandemic and the current economic

situation (cost of living crisis) impacting on discretionary spend.

Income during this period of review from leases has been static due to their being no rent review provision for 2023 and whilst fees and charges increased for weekly lets, there has been a small reduction in the income due to less bookings in peak weeks.

The proposed future strategy will seeking to improve income and booking numbers of weekly lets and seek to reduce operation costs where possible.

## 1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update on the previous period following the Beach Hut and Chalet Review 2018.

## 2. Introduction & Background

- 2.1 In 2018 an Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group was set up in order to review the Council's beach hut and chalet service. The review included the weekly and annual lets, with a full review of all processes, fees and charges in order to identify operational improvements and highlight options for future efficiencies and service enhancements.
- 2.2 Since the review was undertaken annually and this report covers the period from September 22 – October 23, to enable any recommendations to be implemented for the forthcoming season.

## 3. Booking Performance – Weekly lets

- 3.1 The Council has a total of 17 beach huts (7-Mundesley, 7-Sheringham, 3-Cromer) and 16 chalets as weekly lets (12-Cromer, and 4-Sheringham), which is an increase of 3 from the previous year.
- 3.2 Summary of bookings for 2023 were taken as at 04.09.23.

	2023			
Month	Number of bookings	Number of bookings available (stock)	% booked	Comments
January	25	25	100%	Block booking
February	25	25	100%	Block booking
March	25	25	100%	Block booking

<b>April</b>	25	25	100%	Block booking
	2	27	7%	Mundesley only
<b>May</b>	26	54	48%	All
<b>June</b>	22	130	17%	All
<b>July</b>	61	164	37%	All
<b>August</b>	78	132	59%	All
<b>September</b>	25	32	78%	All
<b>October</b>	1	27	5%	Mundesley only
	25	25	100%	Winter/Spring Block Booking 30.09.23
<b>November</b>	25	25	100%	Winter/Spring Block Booking
<b>December</b>	25	25	100%	Winter/Spring Block Booking
<b>Total</b>	390	741	52.6%	

- 3.3 The 2023 occupancy has increased from the 2022 the occupancy rate, which was 40%. During 2022, there had been less availability due to the chalet buildings being closed to enable the works to proceed and the winter/spring block booking also effects how the data is reported through the booking system. In this period, there has been an increase of occupancy rate to 52%, which is predominantly due to the winter/spring block booking, however bookings in July and August were lower than in the previous year. Over the period of monitoring from 2017 the rate has seen an increase year on year.
- 3.4 Whilst there is no data to confirm what has caused the negative impact on the July and August bookings, the reduction could be due to a number of factors:
- Weather conditions
  - Cost of living crisis impacting on discretionary items
  - Increase in weekly booking fee, is beyond what the market will pay.
- 3.5 The block booking option over the winter/spring months continues to be popular with 100% take up.
- 3.6 The check in and out times changed part way through the season to Saturday mid-day check in to Friday mid-day check in to create more time for Sea Front Inspections to respond to change overs.

#### 4. Waiting Lists for 5 year leases

- 4.1 Over the previous period there continues to be strong demand for 5 year leases of beach hut plots and chalets, as demonstrated by the current waiting lists. The waiting lists have grown since the review was undertaken in 2018 with a total of 525 at that time which has increased to 895 for this period.
- 4.2 Beach hut plots at Sheringham East continues to have the largest number of people on the waiting list.
- 4.3 There is no waiting list for weekly lets, which are available on a first come first served basis through an online bookings system.
- 4.4 The waiting list fee increased in 2023 to £50, per list. It is intended to not increase the fee for the 2024/25 period.
- 4.5 The waiting list summary is as follows:

Location	Type	Entries as at 31.12.22	2023 New Entries (to 04.09.23)	Total on list	Oldest Entry
Cromer East	Chalet	120	6	126	16.08.13
Cromer West	Chalet	62	5	67	30.05.17
Sheringham	Chalet	111	10	121	24.03.14
Overstrand	Beach Hut Plot	58	8	66	11.01.18
Cromer East	Beach Hut Plot	98	2	100	24.07.15
Cromer West	Beach Hut Plot	40	6	46	02.05.18
Sheringham East	Beach Hut Plot	165	9	174	17.06.14
Sheringham West	Beach Hut Plot	122	7	129	20.06.16
Mundesley	Beach Hut Plot	63	3	66	10.09.14
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>839</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>895</b>	

#### 5. Turnover of 5 year leases

- 5.1 For the 23/24 season there were the following new leases:

Location	Number
Mundesley	10
Cromer	10
Sheringham	5
Overstrand	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26</b>

- 5.2 At the time of writing the report there have been 10 tenants who have given notice that they wish to relinquish their lease at the end of the 2023/24 season. This figure may rise before the January deadline.
- 5.3 Currently the turnover of leases is not of concern due to the high number of people on the waiting list, however the lease is being amended so that notice is given earlier to give officers additional time to manage the re-letting process.
- 5.4 Where leases are relinquished Officers consider if there is any merit in adding to the weekly let portfolio, repositioning weekly lets (switching with the leased site) to improve their location and desirability for bookings.

## **6. Booking Restrictions**

- 6.1 There have been queries raised, asking if it is possible to restrict bookings or leases to only those who live in the locality as there is a continued perception that the local community would make more use of these facilities. The leases current application process is open to anyone to apply to join a waiting list.
- 6.2 There continues to be void periods in weekly lettings, therefore there is availability for the local community to make use of these facilities, albeit for shorter periods of time.
- 6.3 The chalet and beach hut plots leases are expected to have a higher than normal turnover as the original 5 year leases will come to an end and some existing tenants will not wish to renew creating opportunity for those on the waiting list to apply.
- 6.4 The majority of applicants on the waiting lists are from the District and wider Norfolk area and these people will be contacted to see if they wish to remain on the waiting list. As some have been on the waiting list for many years it is anticipated that circumstances may have changed and a number will no longer be wanting a lease. With this information, we may find the waiting list shortens.
- 6.5 It has been considered if the criteria for applying to join the waiting list could be changed to restrict only one application per household and for entry to one location list only. Whilst it could be adopted it is expected that enforcing this criteria would be difficult and due to these factors, it is not considered to represent best value to implement and may not achieve the desired outcome.

## **7. Update from 2022**

- 7.1 A number of proposals were made in the 2022 review and an update is provided below.
- 7.2 Levelling up initiative. The Council was unsuccessful in securing funding for Levelling up for Cromer. It had been intended to make significant improvements to the seafront area that could have encouraged more visitors to the area and in turn bookings of nearby beach huts and chalets.
- 7.3 Additional weekly lets and beach hut plots. See section 7
- 7.4 Customer Service. Further considerations to improved customers services has been undertaken and will be implemented for 2024/25 season.

- 7.5 Marketing. – Officers continued with a marketing programme advertising monthly in free magazine Just Regional and through the Council's outlook Magazine. In addition to this postcards were printed with booking system details. These were provided to customers when they collected keys so that they could send this on to friends and family to encourage more bookings.
- 7.6 Management Consider has been undertaken for the separation of the service (leases and weekly lets) with different services taking a role in managing the service, in order to share knowledge and enhance customer service.
- 7.7 Repairs Sheringham West chalet roofs repairs and also the Art Deco block, gained capital funding for roof repairs and a project has been established to deliver the repairs. Further consideration to works at the Donkey Shelter is being undertaken.
- 7.8 Climate Change. Monitor storms surges and adverse weather conditions which may damage the current portfolio and tenants huts. If they continue to grow the viability and feasibility of this service may become too challenging.
- 7.9 Green levy. Initial paper prepared which highlights possible opportunities. To be further considered.
- 7.10 Income/Rent Reviews. Legal and Estates officers are preparing to undertake approx. 300 lease renewals in readiness for April 2024 and it is intended to update these leases at the same time to include the annual rent review provision to enable the Council to undertake annual rent reviews if considered appropriate at that point in time. Officers are seeking to use a digital lease signing process to improve efficiency of this process.

## **8. Additional Beach Hut Plots**

- 8.1 A review of possible locations for additional huts has been undertaken in recent years and identified 1 additional plot at Cromer and 5 at Mundesley which have been let on 5 year annual leases for the 2022/23 season.
- 8.2 A further outbuilding at Sheringham prom became surplus to requirements and was consider as a potential chalet opportunity, however its configuration does not work well for such use and a rent for commercial storage would potentially be higher. Due to this the building was discounted for chalet purposed.
- 8.3 The 3 additional beach huts at Cromer West identified during the previous review have joined the weekly lets portfolio. No further weekly lets have been identified during this period.
- 8.4 There will be one less 5 leased hut site at Sheringham for the next season to enable access to underground drainage systems.

## **9. Condition and Maintenance**

- 9.1 Capital budget was secured for further repairs to chalets, including roof replacement at Sheringham, general improvement works to Donkey Shelter Cromer and Art Deco roof and railings replacements. At the time of writing the roof works are progressing through the procurement process with works expected to start when weather conditions allow.



- 9.2 Some weekly beach huts are now in need of redecoration and other repairs including weather boards to doors, door handle replacements, which is intended to be undertaken during 2024/25.
- 9.3 Some chalets are suffering from damp causing peeling paint from walls and floors, which is causing some customer complaints. Investigation in how to reduce damp is being undertaken.
- 9.4 The November storms has resulted in some damage and movement of Council and private beach huts at Sheringham. At the time of writing the cost of responding to this issue has not yet been calculated.

## 10. Medium Term Financial Strategy

- 10.1 In terms of the current position of income the table below represent data from the booking system showing the gross income from weekly lets and leased beach hut and chalet income over a 12 month period.

Location	Weekly Lets 01.01.23 – 06.09.23 Beach Huts and Chalets		Leased (22/23) Beach Huts and Chalets	
	No. available	Income (gross)	No. available	Income (gross)
Cromer Chalets (East and West)	12	£15,345 (E) £3475 (W)	52	£26,908 (E) £19,637 (W)
Cromer Huts (East and West)	3	£3,095	120	£47,386 (E) £19,686 (W)
Mundesley Beach Huts	7	£7,400	55	£33,330
Sheringham Chalets	4	£6,090	25	£27,775
Sheringham Huts (East and West)	7	£14,400	88	£43,529 (E) £5,211 (W)
Overstrand Huts	0	£0	50	£30,300
Total	33	£49,805	390	£253,492
Average income per unit per annum		£1509		£650

- 10.2 The weekly let average income for the last period was £1,658 has seen a reduction this year, which was an average of £1,509 per booking.
- 10.3 Whilst weekly lets per unit average is higher than a leased unit it is important to note that this is a gross figure and doesn't take into account resources required to manage the weekly lets which are generally more management intensive and require repairs and maintenance.
- 10.4 Out of all the types, the beach hut plots continue to be the least management intensive as generally only require repairs and maintenance expenditure when adverse weather conditions damage the site (promenade) and the majority are expected to continue until lease expiry.

- 10.5 Income growth can be achieved from additional sites, however no new plots have been identified during the period.
- 10.6 Due to limited bookings during the peak weeks and cost of living crisis that may have impacted on that, it is not intended to increase the rate for weekly let hire during this same period on 24/25.
- 10.7 A rent review on the annual leases has been undertaken for 2024/25 season. There is an annual rent review provision included in the new lease documents, which enables the Council to increase the rent each year, if it deems reasonable to do.
- 10.8 The Council was not successful in its bid for Levelling up funding for Cromer, which was hoped to provide 2 accessible beach huts to the portfolio.
- 10.9 Leased beach hut sites rental summary

PRICES INCLUDE VAT	CROMER		SHERINGHAM		MUNDESLEY	OVERSTRAND
	WEST PROMENADE	EAST PROMENADE	WEST PROMENADE	EAST PROMENADE	PROMENADE	PROMENADE
2019/20	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 500.00
2020/21	£ 525.00	£ 500.00	£ 525.00	£ 500.00	£ 550.00	£ 550.00
2021/22	£ 551.25	£ 525.00	£ 551.25	£ 525.00	£ 577.50	£ 577.50
2022/23	£ 579.00	£ 551.00	£ 579.00	£ 551.00	£ 606.00	£ 606.00
2023/24	£ 579.00	£ 551.00	£ 579.00	£ 551.00	£ 606.00	£ 606.00
2024/25	£ 613.74	£ 584.06	£ 613.74	£ 584.06	£ 642.36	£ 642.36

10.10 Leased chalet rent summary

PRICES INCLUDE VAT	CROMER				SHERINGHAM		
	WEST PROMENADE		EAST PROMENADE		WEST PROMENADE		
	33-39	126-142	15-42	43-46	CHALETS 1-13	14-18	19-29
2019/20	£ 696.00	£ 750.00	£ 775.00	£ 800.00	£ 900.00	£ 900.00	£ 900.00
2020/21	£ 696.00	£ 885.00	£ 775.00	£ 895.00	£ 1,017.50	£ 1,085.00	£ 997.00
2021/22	£ 727.05	£ 925.50	£ 807.50	£ 955.50	£ 1,054.63	£ 1,125.50	£1,145.60
2022/23	£ 763.00	£ 972.00	£ 848.00	£ 1,003.00	£ 1,107.00	£ 1,182.00	£1,072.00
2023/24	£ 763.00	£ 972.00	£ 848.00	£ 1,003.00	£ 1,107.00	£ 1,182.00	£1,072.00
2024/25	£ 808.78	£ 1,030.32	£ 898.88	£ 1,063.18	£ 1,173.42	£ 1,252.92	£1,136.32

10.11 Summary of total leased income

<b>Rental Income Anticipated for 2024/25</b>	
Beach Huts	£195,266
Chalets	£78,548
Waiting list	£1,500
<b>TOTAL RENT DUE</b>	<b>£275,314</b>

10.12 It was stated in the previous annual review that *“With the current economic climate it is difficult to predict the impact on weekly lets for the next season. There is a possibility that tourism overseas has a greater impact due to the higher cost to travel overseas and consumers seek a UK based holiday as an alternative. Even if tourism remains strong in the district, hiring a beach hut or chalet, may not be deemed an essential part of the holiday experience and if consumer expenditure reduces it could have a negative impact on the number of bookings”*. The Council has seen a reduction in the number of bookings this year, including peak summer weeks. The weather during the summer period may have impacted on the number of bookings with 97 days of rain in the first 9 months and 24 of those during the peak months of July and August.

10.13 The total income for 2024/25 for weekly lets has been estimated below.

<b>Estimated Income</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
Weekly Lets	£50,000

10.14 The weekly beach hut and chalet hire fees increased in 2023/24 and it is intended to only increase in 2024/25 where there is strong demand for those specific hire periods.

Type/Period	Fees 2023/24	Fees proposed 24/25
Chalets - Peak unserviced Per Week	£235	£235
Chalets - Peak serviced Per Week	£290	£290
Chalets - Mid unserviced Per Week	£135	£135
Chalets - Mid serviced Per Week	£150	£150
Chalets - Low unserviced Per Week	£95	£95
Chalets - Low serviced Per Week	£105	£105
Chalets - Winter season unserviced Per Season	£380	£400

Chalets - Winter season serviced Per season	£420	£450
Beach Huts - Peak per Week	£215	£215
Beach Huts - Mid per Week	£115	£115
Beach Huts - Low per week	£80	£80
Beach Huts - Winter season	£380	£400
Beach Huts – Mundesley Autumn (up to 2 months)	N/A	£185

10.15 Total income predicted for 2024/25 is £325,314

## 11. Financial and Resource Implications

11.1 The expenditure for 2023/23, which has increased on the previous year, is shown below along with previous years. The full data for 2023/24 is not complete at the time of writing the report.

Budget	2019/20	2020/21	2020/22	2022/23
Staff salaries and other expenses	£37,863.69	£43,187.44	£20,355.22	£18,203.18
Repairs and maintenance	£12,192.23	£3,287.92	£13,045.78	£21,145.11
Business rates	£4,761.74	£4,756.65	£5,205.95	£5,768.66
Electric	£287.43	£817.69	£439.36	£902.51
Insurance	£2,692.37	£2,749.72	£2,895.77	£3,430.52
Other Services Recharge	£140,380.00	£104,015.00	£97,284.00	£117,946.00
Beach hut removal	£14,495.00	£15,003.00	£15,184.00	£13,965.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£212,672.46</b>	<b>£173,817.42</b>	<b>£154,410.08</b>	<b>£181,360.98</b>

11.2 Please note:

- The repairs and maintenance budget is for revenue not capital expenditure.
- Some staff salaries have been reallocated following the restructure and the expenditure in this budget is predominantly one part time administrator and salary on costs.
- Seafront inspectors and tourist information staff who have some involvement in the management in the beach hut and chalet service are not included.
- The majority of these costs relate to the management of weekly lets.
- Expenditure for 2022/23 has seen an increase of approx. £11,000, which was due to unexpected costs of repositioning beach huts at Overstrand following adverse weather conditions.
- Other services recharges are the resource costs of other teams that are allocated to all budgets for accounting purposes. These teams may or may not have direct involvement in that particular service.

11.3 It is not expected for forthcoming season that there will be any reduction in expenditure.

## 12. Future Strategy 2024

- 12.1 Additional sites plots. Officers will continue to review locations for additional sites, but is limited on the availability of new opportunities with existing sea front landholdings. Availability of seafront land is rare and the cost of acquiring land would impact on viability. With the original 5 year leases coming to an end (April 24) there would be opportunity for some of these to become weekly lets that would generate a high rate of income. This would need to be considered alongside the increased cost of managing the service.
- 12.2 Customer Service. It is intended to provide greater clarity to customers seeking to apply for the waiting list giving an indication of how many entries there are on the waiting list and a predict waiting time. Officers are also seeking to provide more information to customers in the online booking system, so that they can make informed choices prior to booking. A feedback printed envelope is being designed that will be given to customers to use when they return keys at the end of their booking. Feedback will be collated and used to improve the service where possible.
- 12.3 Marketing. The storm boards for the chalets have needed replacement and officers are considering options to utilise these for marketing or information purposes. Officers are also investigating using QR codes to link customers to the booking system that will be placed on or near the beach huts. Increased use of the visitor newsletter, flyers/posters and competition to encourage more bookings.
- 12.4 Management Further consider separation of the service (leases and weekly lets) to establish feasibility of different services taking a role in managing the service (to share knowledge and enhance customer service) and/or viability of appointing external managers for weekly lets.
- 12.5 Repairs Donkey Shelter refurbishment, Sheringham West chalet roofs, were successful in obtaining a capital bid and works have commenced with roof repairs, which are due to be completed early 2024. Consideration to the Donkey Shelter refurbishment is underway.
- 12.6 Climate Change. Continue to monitor storms surges and adverse weather conditions in November and December, has damaged the current portfolio and tenants huts. Continuation of this will have a negative impact on viability and feasibility of this service.
- 12.7 Green levy. Further consider feasibility of such a levy will be undertaken
- 12.8 Income/Rent Reviews. Changes made to the rent review provision enables the rent to be reviewed on an annual basis. With this provision it gives the Council greater scope to review the rent in line with market conditions at that time and increase the rent if appropriate. Approx. 300 lease renewals will be due April 2024 and it is intended to update these leases at the same time with the annual rent review provision. This is the next opportunity for the Council to complete rent reviews.
- 12.9 There were 9 weekly bookings during September and October for the 7 Mundesley huts, equating to an average fee of £124 each. It is proposed to trial an autumn block booking covering this period at £185, to establish if this might be more desirable for customers particularly as this also reduces the resource needed to manage change overs that are required more frequently with weekly lets. If there was limited demand or the income didn't increase then Council could revert back to weekly bookings.

- 12.10 Consideration to allowing tenants to widen their use of their beach hut/chalet at a higher rent to increase income levels from this service to the Council. Currently “charging a fee” is not allowed, including for the purpose of independent hire of the Beach Hut/chalet and they cannot be a benefit included with the letting of another property or accommodation. The Council could agree to formally allow a tenant to use the facilities as part of their holiday accommodation as a more commercial arrangement.
- 12.11 Operational costs – seek to reduce operational costs where possible.

### 13. Corporate Priorities

- 13.1 The key corporate priorities as contained within the current Corporate Plan that relate to this project are:
- A Strong, Responsible, & Accountable Council, in utilising property assets to generate revenue income.

### 14. Financial and Resource Implications

Budget, rental levels and weekly let income and expenditures are detailed throughout the report.

#### Comments from the S151 Officer:

*The S151 Officer (or member of the Finance team on their behalf) will complete this section.*

### 15. Legal Implications

- 15.1 The original 5 year leases are due to be renewed for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 and there are approx. 300 to do. A review of the lease has been undertaken with amendments made to further protect the Councils interests.

#### Comments from the Monitoring Officer

*No specific governance risks raised. The MO and the legal team are assisting with the lease renewals and are available should any legal or governance issues arise.*

### 16. Risks

- 16.1 The current economic situation may continue to have a negative impact on bookings for the forthcoming season and impact on income generation and cause rent arrears.
- 16.2 Adverse weather conditions and storm surges continue to causing damage the portfolio and tenants huts.
- 16.3 Repair works required to improve the chalets become not financially viable.

## **17. Net Zero**

- 17.1 Further consideration into possible opportunities of a Green Levey or similar scheme is being undertaken, which could see a small sum added to each lease and/or booking that could be spent on green initiatives in the locality. For example, this might be used to fund sustainable timber and paints when redecorating, green roof installation, additional recycling bins, wildflower planting, water/energy saving measures in nearby public toilets.
- 17.2 The beach huts and chalets are being impacted by adverse weather conditions causing damage to them and the promenade. The cost of the Council rectifying the damage is expected to be not financially sustainable if adverse weather conditions increase in frequency. The leases have been changed to include a clause enabling the Council to remove the beach huts in such an event. If adverse conditions become more frequent to the point it is no longer viable, officers may recommend that no beach huts leases are made available.

## **18. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**

- 18.1 There are no direct implications from this report.

## **19.1 Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations**

- 19.1 There are no direct implications from this report.

## **20. Conclusion and Recommendations**

- 20.1 It continues to be a challenging period since the 2018 Beach Hut and Chalet review was completed due to the covid pandemic and the current economic situation (cost of living crisis) impacting on discretionary spend.
- 20.2 Income during this period of review from leases has been static due to their being no rent review provision for 2023 and whilst fees and charges increased for weekly lets, there has been a small reduction in the income due to less bookings in peak weeks.
- 20.3 The proposed future strategy will seeking to improve income and booking numbers of weekly lets and seek to reduce operation costs where possible.

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## **East Of England Water Summit – briefing note for Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The East of England Local Authority Water Summit was held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at the Nucleus, Chesterford Research Park, Saffron Walden. Delegates from the North Norfolk District Council were the Portfolio holder for Net Zero, Cllr Adam Varley, and the Assistant Director for Sustainable Growth, Rob Young.

The substance of the event included the following addresses, presentations, and panel discussions, in the order they occurred:

**East of England Water: Collaborating for Sustainability** - Daniel Zeichner MP, Member of Parliament for Cambridge and Shadow Minister for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
**Ensuring Sustainable Water Resources for Regional Economic Growth** - Duncan Baker MP, Member of Parliament for North Norfolk

### **Panel Discussion: Exploring Water Issues in the East of England**

Chaired by Cllr Bridget Smith, Leader of South Cambridgeshire District Council

- **Cambridge 2040** - Stephen Kelly, Joint Director of Planning, Greater Cambridge Shared Planning
- **Environment Agency** – Sadia Moeed, Area Director
- **Anglian Water** – Phil Jones, Growth Strategy Manager

The following four workshops were provided, the first two of which were attended by the Assistant Director for Sustainable Growth, the second two by the Portfolio Holder for Net Zero.

- **Future Water Supply to Meet Demand for Growth**

Chris Starkie, Director of Growth and Investment, Norfolk County Council

- **Managing Down Demand**

Richard Tidswell, Interim Head of Commercial Services, Waterwise

- **Biodiversity and River Health**

Cllr Richard Pavit, Utlesford District Council

Dr Claire Tancell, Principal Ecologist, Utlesford District Council

Professor William Sutherland CBE FRS, Director of Research, University of Cambridge

Charlotte Stannard, Cam & Ely Ouse Catchment Co-ordinator, The Rivers Trust

Chris Gerrard, Catchment and Biodiversity Manager, Anglian Water

- **Nature Based Solutions – The Future of Flood Management**

Samantha Kennedy, Director Environment and Climate Action, Essex County Council

Mat Hullis, Head of Environment Strategy, Suffolk County Council

John Hammond, Advisor (Civil Contingencies), MET Office

The full agenda and papers for the event can be accessed here: [Water Summit Information Pack - 8 March 2024 - 1 \(pagetiger.com\)](#)

The slides from the event can be accessed here: [East of England Local Authority Water Summit - EELGA](#)

The event established the water supply challenges faced by this region and the impediments they may pose to sustainable growth in housing and economic development. It also set out the paradoxical challenges of water management posed by both flooding and drought, exacerbated by climate change, and also the environmental problems of poor water quality. Presentations and workshop discussions delved into the topics somewhat and there was a wide appreciation of the perspectives on these diverse subjects from local authorities and water related organisations from across the region.

No clear conclusions came from the summit, but the overriding theme related to the problems caused by fragmentation and benefits of collaboration. The overwhelming view was that local authorities have a crucial role to play in facilitating the relationships that will lead to closer collaboration, that might help drive solutions to the interrelated and knotty problems of water supply, water quality and flooding, overcoming impediments to sustainable growth and the causes of environmental degradation.

<b>Reporting progress implementing Corporate Plan 2023-27 Action Plan 2023-24 – to end of Quarter 3 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023</b>	
<b>Executive Summary</b>	The Corporate Plan 2023-27 Action Plan 2023-24 is being implemented as planned.
<b>Options considered</b>	Not relevant.
<b>Consultation(s)</b>	The lead officer for each action in the Plan has been asked for their assessment of progress, identify issues and propose action they will take to address those issues.
<b>Recommendations</b>	Cabinet is recommended to note this report.
<b>Reasons for recommendations</b>	<b>The Action Plan 2023-24 is being implemented as planned</b>
<b>Background papers</b>	Corporate Plan 2023-27

<b>Wards affected</b>	All
<b>Cabinet member(s)</b>	Cllr Tim Adams
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Steve Blatch, Chief Executive Email:- <a href="mailto:steve.blatch@north-norfolk.gov.uk">steve.blatch@north-norfolk.gov.uk</a>

<b>Links to key documents:</b>	
Corporate Plan:	This report is concerned with ensuring the Corporate Plan 2023-27 Action Plan 2023/24 is being implemented as planned.
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	Ensuring the Action Plan 2023/24 is implemented as planned will ensure the MTFS is also achieved.
Council Policies & Strategies	Corporate Plan 2023-27

<b>Corporate Governance:</b>	
Is this a key decision	No
Has the public interest test been applied	Not applicable. Item is not exempt.
Details of any previous decision(s) on this matter	Corporate Plan 2023-27 and Action Plan 2023-24 approved by Full Council on 17 July 2023.  Corporate Plan 2023-27 Action Plan 2024-25 approved by Cabinet 6 November 2023

## 1. Purpose of the report

The purpose of this report is to present an update on the progress being made in implementing the Corporate Plan 2023-27 Action Plan 2023-24 and to give Cabinet an opportunity to discuss and agree decisions that should be taken regarding any issues raised.

## 2. Introduction & Background

Full Council approved the Corporate Plan 2023-27 and the first annual Action Plan for 2023/24 at its meeting of 17 July 2023. Lead officers then started to work on how the desired outcomes in the action plan would be achieved. This report shows the progress made to the end of December 2023, identifies any issues with individual actions and puts forward proposals for how these would be addressed.

## 3. Overview of progress

### 3.1 Overall progress

The tables below show overall progress in implementing the Action Plan.

Action Plan 2023/24 – Summary

Quarters 2 and 3 from July 2023 to 31 December 2023

RAG status	No. of actions
Red	0
Amber	5
Green	19
NA	4
Missing data	0
Total	28

#### KEY

Red = Actions will not deliver planned outcomes without significant interventions

Amber = Actions off track but with changes being made will achieve planned outcomes

Green = Actions on track and will deliver planned outcomes

NA = Not applicable as not due to start yet

Missing data = Update not provided by the Lead Officer

Stage	No. of actions
Not Started	4
In Progress	22
Completed	2
Cancelled	0
Missing data	0
Total	28

#### Crosstabulation

RAG status/ Stage	Not Started	In Progress	Completed	Cancelled
Red	0	0	0	0
Amber	0	5	0	0
Green	0	17	2	0
NA	4	0	0	0

The progress report shows that the majority of actions are in progress and on track.

### 3.2 Issues raised

Only one action has been flagged as being unable to be completed during 2023/24. This action, is shown as NA and Not Started above, is:

“Work with partners, to agree a programme of investment in local housing initiatives, funded through the local Second Homes Council Tax premium”.

The lead officers for the action have reported that,

“The legislation that allows the Council to charge a premium on second homes does not take effect until April 2025. The proportion of the premium retained by the Council is not yet decided. Therefore, it is not possible to deliver this action in 2023/24.”

Subsequently this action has been moved into the Action Plan for 2024/25 which was approved at the Cabinet meeting on 6 November 2023.

### 3.3 Details of all Actions

To review the updates for all the actions please see Appendix A Action Plan 2023-24 update.

## 4. Corporate Priorities

This report is concerned with ensuring the Corporate Plan 2023-27 Action Plan 2023-24 is implemented as planned. This is a key activity to ensure the goals and objectives in the Corporate Plan are achieved.

**5. Financial and Resource Implications**

There are no financial or resource implications arising from the report.

**Comments from the S151 Officer:**

*The S151 Officer (or member of the Finance team on their behalf) will complete this section.*

**6. Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications from this report.

**Comments from the Monitoring Officer**

*The Monitoring Officer (or member of the Legal team on behalf of the MO) will complete this section. They will outline any legal advice provided.*

**7. Risks**

The purpose of this report is to contribute to minimizing the risk of not implementing the Corporate Plan 2023-27 Action Plan 2023-24. This in turn reduces the risk of not achieving the goals and objectives in the Corporate Plan.

**8. Net Zero Target**

The Corporate Plan 2023-27 Action Plan 2023-24 contains actions, particularly under the theme “Our Greener Future”, that will reduce the emissions of the Council and contribute to achieving the Net Zero Target.

**9. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**

The Corporate Plan 2023-27 Action Plan 2023-24 contains actions, particularly under the theme “Developing our Communities”, that will improve equality, diversity & inclusion. Where individual actions require an equality impact assessment the lead officer will produce and submit one during the development of the action.

**10. Community Safety issues**

This report does not have any impact on community safety issues.

**11. Conclusion and Recommendations**

The Corporate Plan 2023-27 Action Plan 2023-24 is being implemented as planned.

**Cabinet is recommended to note this report.**



Action	Lead Officer	Corporate Plan objective	Stage	RAG Status	Lead Officer comment (required if RAG status is Amber or Red or Stage is completed or cancelled in this quarter)
	Use the filter to find your name		Use Drop Down	Use Drop Down	
1 Provide the solar car port at the Reef	Kate Rawlings	Greener: Net Zero: 2 Introducing significant new projects which deliver on our Net Zero ambitions	Completed	Green	The solar car port is complete and providing electricity to the Reef. Performance will continue to be monitored against original business case and lessons learned have been collated to provide learning to future projects
2 Develop a response to the Waste and Resources Strategy	Scott Martin	Greener: Waste: 3 Engaging with businesses, residents and partners to develop campaigns, actions and investment in infrastructure to reduce waste and litter	In Progress	Green	Following further government announcements regarding future requirements for waste and recycling services in England, NNDC has engaged consultants to assess and model options for future service delivery around food waste collections and collection frequency for residual waste.
3 Local Plan examination	Mark Ashwell	Greener: Waste: 4 Identifying solutions to nutrient neutrality that will enable key watercourses to remain healthy ecosystems, whilst ensuring necessary development can take place	In Progress	Amber	Discussions continue with partners on the matter of nutrient neutrality. The subject is also being discussed at the Local Plan Examination.
4 Launch CoastWise	Rob Goodliffe	Greener: Coast: 1 Realising the opportunities of external funding to secure a sustainable future for our coastal communities through transition and adaptation responses	In Progress	Green	Coastwise Cafe's, the first community events have been successfully completed and well received. Initial discussion with those at immediate erosion risk underway.
5 Commence delivery of Cromer and Mundesley Coast Protection Schemes	Tamzen Pope	Greener: Coast: 2 Implementing the Cromer and Mundesley Coast Protection Schemes	In Progress	Green	Full funding package has been approved for the Mundesley scheme. The application for additional funding for Cromer has been submitted and ongoing discussions are taking place with the Environment Agency. Consents for both schemes – all information requested has been submitted. Marine Management License anticipated.
6 Promote the development of Neighbourhood Plans	Mark Ashwell	Communities: Engaged: 1 Ensuring that people feel well informed about local issues, have opportunities to get involved, influence local decision making, shape their area and allow us to continue to improve services they receive	In Progress	Green	Holt and Blakeney Plans were both formally 'made' following Local Referenda. Wells-Next-The-Sea is currently with the Planning Inspector. The benefits of Neighbourhood Plans are being promoted at our Town and Parish Council Planning Roadshow sessions.
7 Develop a Rural Strategy	Steve Hems	Communities: Engaged: 1 Ensuring that people feel well informed about local issues, have opportunities to get involved, influence local decision making, shape their area and allow us to continue to improve services they receive	Not Started	NA	

	Action	Lead Officer	Corporate Plan objective	Stage	RAG Status	Lead Officer comment (required if RAG status is Amber or Red or Stage is completed or cancelled in this quarter)
8	Further develop and embed our Youth Council work	Emma Denny	Communities: Engaged: 2 Ensuring that the needs of harder to reach groups are not overlooked; through identifying, understanding and removing the barriers that might hinder engagement with the council.	In Progress	Amber	The Youth Council is currently only meeting occasionally due to a lack of resource to provide support to it. Long-term solutions are being sought.
9	Completion of new/ refurbished toilets at North Walsham Sheringham and Holt	Russell Tanner	Communities: Accessibility: 2 Continuing our record of investment in the provision of inclusive public toilet facilities	In Progress	Green	North Walsham completed. Tenders are back for Holt. Sheringham under review due to structural issues.
10	Develop an Active Environments Strategy	Colin Brown	Communities: Accessibility: 3 Creating active environments for all ages and abilities	In Progress	Amber	Meetings held with Cllr Adams and Cllr Withington, seeking clarity on scope and expectations. Still trying to confirm the scope with interested parties.
11	Submit quality bids to available Government funding opportunities	Tina Stankley	Communities: Culture: 4 Developing further the leisure facilities provided across the District	In Progress	Green	The Council has recently received funding for the Fakenham Leisure and Sports Hub. We will continue to submit bids for Government funding and other external funding where appropriate to further enhance the leisure facilities on offer throughout the District.
12	Encouraging those in our communities eligible for financial support through the benefits system to claim all they are entitled to	Trudi Grant	Communities: Health: 2 Growing the work done in reaching out to our communities and provide additional focus to the work being undertaken to support the most vulnerable	In Progress	Green	Through the work undertaken across People Services, we have so far claimed over £680k of unclaimed benefits and premiums for residents across North Norfolk.
13	Develop 38 affordable housing units	Nicky Debbage	Housing: Housing Need: 1 Supporting the delivery of more affordable housing, utilising partnership and external funding wherever possible	In Progress	Green	We expect 38 affordable homes to handover by 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024. (This include seven already delivered). However as most are due this quarter (Jan to Mar 24) it is possible some will handover in 2024/25.
14	Realise the Councils contracted commitment under the Local Authority Housing Fund	Nicky Debbage	Housing: Housing Need: 1 Supporting the delivery of more affordable housing, utilising partnership and external funding wherever possible	In Progress	Green	Fifteen properties in two phases are all due to handover by end of March 2024 (including three already purchased by the Council). Flagship will own 10 homes and the Council the remaining five.
15	Work with partners, agree a programme of investment in local housing initiatives, funded through the local Second Homes Council Tax premium	Nicky Debbage/ Graham Connolly	Housing: Housing Need: 1 Supporting the delivery of more affordable housing, utilising partnership and external funding wherever possible	Not Started	NA	The legislation that allows the Council to charge a premium on second homes does not take effect until April 2025. The proportion of the premium retained by the Council is not yet decided. Therefore, It is not possible to deliver this action in 2023/24.
16	Deliver additional units of Temporary Accommodation	Lisa Grice	Housing: Housing Need: 3 Increasing our portfolio of Temporary Accommodation to support residents in crisis	In Progress	Green	



	Action	Lead Officer	Corporate Plan objective	Stage	RAG Status	Lead Officer comment (required if RAG status is Amber or Red or Stage is completed or cancelled in this quarter)
17	Take forward the recommendations of the Stalham High Street Task Force Action Plan	Stuart Quick	Economy: Thriving Business: 1 Working with our Market and Resort Towns to reinforce their roles as local service centres, centres of employment, financial services and business activity, served by public transport	In Progress	Green	The first 'Stalham Town Team' meeting (post the HSTF workshops) was held on 5 February with a variety of local stakeholders attending. Draft Terms of Reference were presented and it was agreed that meetings would occur monthly. Additional representatives have been identified and will attend future meetings.
18	Facilitate the provision of at least one Banking Hub in the district as a model to retain access to cash and financial services in our key settlements	Stuart Quick	Economy: Thriving Business: 1 Working with our Market and Resort Towns to reinforce their roles as local service centres, centres of employment, financial services and business activity, served by public transport	In Progress	Green	LINK have proposed Holt as location for the first Banking Hub in North Norfolk. The Council supported the process by providing local statistics and data around banking usage and demographics, which demonstrated the importance of access to these services for local residents. The banking hub will be delivered by Cash Access UK, which is a not-for-profit company providing cash and basic banking services in communities across the UK. Over the next few weeks it will be looking for potential sites in Holt and it is hoped the hub could be opened in the next 12 months.
19	Prepare an Economic Growth Strategy	Rob Young	Economy: Thriving Business: 2 Providing support to allow rural businesses to thrive, recognising that many of our larger employers operate outside of our main towns	In Progress	Green	The Economic Growth Strategy was presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 14 February 2024 and is included on the Cabinet agenda for their meeting on 11 March 2024..
20	Launch the Virtual Business Support Hub	Stuart Quick	Economy: Thriving Business: 2 Providing support to allow rural businesses to thrive, recognising that many of our larger employers operate outside of our main towns	Completed	Green	The Invest North Norfolk site is now live. It will be kept up to date as the source of business information on items such as grants, funding, events and support.
21	Commission a study into the potential Hydrogen production at the Bacton Energy hub	Steve Blatch	Economy: Infrastructure: 2 Seeking to maximise the potential from the local implications of the transition towards hydrogen and carbon capture, use and storage (CCUS) at the Bacton Gas site	In Progress	Green	Cabinet approval to commission a study obtained June 2023. However significant exploratory developments around carbon capture and storage and Hydrogen production and transmission taken forward during the summer and a research project progressed by the University of Newcastle Upon Tyne. These studies are being progressed and will be reported on in due course. In the meantime the council has established meaningful dialogue with National Gas Grid, terminal operators and others proposing carbon capture and hydrogen developments at Bacton and these discussions are ongoing.
22	Ensure our customer service delivery model reflects current and future customer needs	Steve Hems	Council: Customer: 2 Providing support for all residents, focussing on equality, understanding and respect	Not Started	NA	

	Action	Lead Officer	Corporate Plan objective	Stage	RAG Status	Lead Officer comment (required if RAG status is Amber or Red or Stage is completed or cancelled in this quarter)
23	Complete implementation of the Planning Service Improvement Plan	Russell Williams	Council: Effective & Efficient: 2 Continuing a service improvement programme to ensure our services are delivered efficiently	In Progress	Amber	A final report on progress on delivery of the Plan will be reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in Summer 2024.
24	Facilitate Corporate Peer Challenge and prepare response to any recommendations made	Steve Blatch	Council: Effective & Efficient: 3 Delivering services that are value for money and meet the needs of our residents	In Progress	Green	Corporate Peer Review conducted week commencing 11 September 2023. Draft Action Plan submitted to and approved by Cabinet 5 February 2024 with agreed actions now to be taken forward.
25	Ensure the Council's annual accounts are audited in a timely manner	Tina Stankley	Council: Effective & Efficient: 4 Ensuring that strong governance is at the heart of all we do	In Progress	Amber	The Director for Resources (DoR) is submitting a report to Governance, Risk and Audit Committee (GRAC) on 26 March 2024 outlining the Government's and our own plan to catch up. The need to catch up for 21/22 and 22/23 has arisen as a result of reduced capacity in the Council's Finance Team and the delay in the external auditors being able to audit our accounts. The DoR is meeting with the external auditors on 5 March to agree on a plan to catch up and this will be included in the GRAC report.
26	Develop a new People and Workforce Strategy in support of the Council's objectives and priorities	James Claxton	Council: Effective & Efficient: 5 Creating a culture that empowers and fosters an ambitious, motivated workforce	Not Started	NA	The Workforce Development Plan will be drafted written and approved in 2024.
27	Review and prepare an options appraisal for the management of the car park service	Tina Stankley	Council: Opportunity: 2 Reviewing our parking management contract to ensure we are realising all opportunities to generate revenue from these assets	In Progress	Green	This is being progressed by an officer working group. The options once finalised will be presented to members for their consideration.
28	Advertise and let the Cedars building in North Walsham	Renata Garfoot	Council: Opportunity: 3 Increasing the rates of occupation on all council's commercial properties	In Progress	Green	Four tenants have been secured for the property and the Legal Team instructed to complete the leases, which is anticipated by the end of April. Earlier completion is likely but is subject to receipt of specific documents from tenants. One remaining vacant office has some interest and terms are being discussed.

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME

March				
Topic	Purpose	Type	Cabinet Member	Decision Maker
<b>Budget Monitoring P10</b>	To review the budget monitoring position	Periodic	Cllr L Shires	Cabinet
<b>Net Zero Strategy</b>	To look at progress made on the action plan	Progress	Cllr A Varley	Scrutiny
<b>Car Park Usage Monitoring</b>	Annual review of the usage and revenue of the Council's public car parks	Annual	Cllr L Shires	Scrutiny
April				
Topic	Purpose	Type	Cabinet Member	Decision Maker
<b>Beach Huts &amp; Chalets Monitoring</b>	To monitor the occupancy, condition and revenue of NNDC owned beach huts and chalets.	<i>Moved from Jan</i>	Cllr L Shires	Scrutiny
<b>Performance Benchmarking</b>	To review performance benchmarking data comparatively with similar authorities	Quarterly	Cllr T Adams	Scrutiny
<b>Performance Monitoring Q3</b>	To monitor the Council's performance and consider any recommendations to Cabinet	Quarterly	Cllr T Adams	Cabinet
<b>Contextual Performance Measures Report</b>	To review contextual performance and consider how this may impact corporate priorities	Quarterly/6 monthly	Cllr T Adams	Scrutiny
<b>Review of Housing Allocations Policy</b>	September/October Following public consultation	Policy review	Cllr W Fredericks	Cabinet
<b>Public Convenience Strategy Follow-up</b>	To review progress made with	Update	Cllr L Shires	Scrutiny
<b>Levelling Up Fund – update report</b>	Report going to full council	Update	Cllr T Adams	Cabinet
<b>East of England Local Government Association Water summit</b>	Report back	Update	Cllr A Varley	Scrutiny

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME

	Potential Items			
Topic	Purpose	Type	Cabinet Member	Decision Maker
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder Update</b>	To invite the PCC following the election on their plans in North Norfolk	Annual		Scrutiny
<b>NWNSHAZ End of Project Report</b>	To review the project post-completion (June) possible site visit	Review	Cllr J Toyne	Scrutiny
<b>Ambulance Response Times Data Monitoring</b>	To monitor ambulance response times data across the district	Some issues		Scrutiny
<b>Review of Anglian Water's 5-year Plan</b>	At the request of Anglia Water	June 2024		Scrutiny
<b>Anglian Water – monitoring of sewage outflows</b>	Annual review	Dec 24		Scrutiny
<b>Performance Management Software</b>		TBC	Cllr T Adams	Cabinet
<b>Peer Review Action Plan</b>	Revisit from Peer Review Team	June/July		Cabinet
<b>Waste Update</b>	Progress made in planning, implementing, and embedding the round reorganisation on a regular basis	Review	Cllr C Ringer	Scrutiny
<b>Waste Update</b>	Only when performance has dropped to a level that is of significant concern or that progress on the gap analysis items is not adequate	When triggered	Cllr C Ringer	Scrutiny
<b>MTFS</b>	Further work be undertaken by the committee on what the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy could look like in the future		Cllr L Shires	Scrutiny
<b>Car Park Income</b>	Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman to meet with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates and Property Services and appropriate officers to consider the information that should be in a future report to the Committee on the Council's Car Parks		Cllr L Shires	Scrutiny
<b>Planning Service Improvement Plan</b>	Progress /Completion of the Planning Service Improvement Plan – along with yearend data for 2023/24 (e.g. during 'Quarter 2')	Update	Cllr A Brown	Scrutiny

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME

<b>Homelessness Task and Finish Group</b>	To report back when its work is complete		Cllr W Fredericks	Scrutiny
<b>Council’s Workforce Development Strategy</b>	How vacancies are managed, how agency staff are used, what work the council does to recruit staff, as well as the impact of vacancies, especially key staff, on the Council’s service delivery and budget		Cllr T Adams	Scrutiny
<b>Local Postal Services</b>	Report from Councillor Hankins			Scrutiny
<b>Budget Monitoring</b>		Quarterly	Cllr L Shires	Scrutiny

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## **GUIDANCE FOR REVIEWING THE WORK PROGRAMME**

In setting future Scrutiny topics, the Committee is asked to:

- a) Demonstrate the value any investigation would have to the Council's Community Leadership Role.
- b) Consider the relationship any future topic may have with the work of the Cabinet's Work Programme and the Council's Corporate Plan
- c) Be mindful of the public's priorities.
- d) Provide reasons for the investigation (so that Officers/Witnesses can assist Members to reach an outcome).
- e) Consider the outcomes required before commencing an investigation.
- f) Balance the need for new topics with existing items on the Scrutiny Work Programme.
- g) Consider whether it would be helpful to time limit investigations or break down some topics into smaller areas.
- h) Provide sufficient notice, where possible, in order that the Cabinet Member with responsibility for the subject, Officers and outside witnesses/attendees can fully assist the Committee.

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