

# Council



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17 September 2024

A meeting of the **Council** of North Norfolk District Council will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices on **Wednesday, 25 September 2024 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:[Democratic.Services@north-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@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. This meeting is livestreamed: [NNDC eDemocracy - YouTube](#)

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

**To:** Cllr T Adams, Cllr P Bailey, Cllr M Batey, Cllr K Bayes, Cllr D Birch, Cllr H Blathwayt, Cllr J Boyle, Cllr A Brown, Cllr S Bütikofer, Cllr C Cushing, Cllr N Dixon, Cllr P Fisher, Cllr A Fitch-Tillett, Cllr T FitzPatrick, Cllr A Fletcher, Cllr W Fredericks, Cllr M Gray, Cllr M Hankins, Cllr C Heinink, Cllr P Heinrich, Cllr V Holliday, Cllr N Housden, Cllr K Leith, Cllr R Macdonald, Cllr G Mancini-Boyle, Cllr P Neatherway, Cllr L Paterson, Cllr S Penfold, Cllr P Porter, Cllr J Punchard, Cllr C Ringer, Cllr L Shires, Cllr E Spagnola, Cllr M Taylor, Cllr J Toye, Cllr K Toye, Cllr E Vardy, Cllr A Varley, Cllr L Vickers and Cllr L Withington

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

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## A G E N D A

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence, if any.

### 2. MINUTES

1 - 8

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

### 3. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

9 - 14

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)

### 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. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive the Chairman's communications, if any.

### 6. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive announcements from the Leader.

### 7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

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

### 8. PORTFOLIO REPORTS

15 - 60

To receive reports from Cabinet Members on their portfolios.

Cllr T Adams - Executive Support & Legal Services

Cllr H Blathwayt – Coast

Cllr A Brown – Planning & Enforcement

Cllr W Fredericks – Housing and People Services

Cllr C Ringer – IT, Environmental & Waste Services

Cllr L Shires – Finance, Estates & Assets

Cllr J Toye – Sustainable Growth

Cllr A Varley – Climate Change & Net Zero

Cllr L Withington – Community, Leisure & Outreach (Including Health & Wellbeing)

*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)**

**9. REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND PANELS** **61 - 66**

<b>Executive Summary</b>	Following a change to the membership of the political groups at North Norfolk District Council, the Council is required to review the allocation of seats on committees, sub committees and working parties to reflect the political balance of the Council, in accordance with Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and regulations made thereunder.
<b>Options considered</b>	This is a statutory report and Full Council is required to approve any change to the political balance. Alternative options are therefore not presented.
<b>Consultation(s)</b>	Following a change in the political balance it is necessary to review the allocation of seats on committees, sub-committees, working parties and panels.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. That Council approves the revised political balance calculation as per section 2.6 of this report, noting the removal of an independent non-aligned member from the calculation.</b></li> <li><b>2. That Council approves the allocation of seats to political groups as shown at Appendix A, noting that there is no change to the previous allocation agreed at the meeting of 24 July 2024</b></li> </ol>

<b>Wards affected</b>	All
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Emma Denny, Democratic Services Manager, <a href="mailto:emma.denny@north-norfolk.gov.uk">emma.denny@north-norfolk.gov.uk</a> ,

**10. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET 09 SEPTEMBER 2024**

67 - 96

To approve the following recommendations made by Cabinet at the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024:

Cabinet Agenda Item 11: Budget Monitoring P4 2024 – 2025

**RESOLVED** to

- 1) Seek approval of full Council to include a budget of £300k for borrowing costs in 2024/25 and that this be funded by using the Treasury Management Reserve (as explained in paragraph 4.8).
- 2) Seek approval of full Council to include an addition to the capital programme in 2024/25 for the extension to the Meadow car park in Cromer and that this is funded from revenue (car park income) (as explained in paragraph 5.6).

Cabinet Agenda Item 12: Savings Public Conveniences

**RESOLVED** to recommend that Full Council approves:

Option 1 - Full and winter closures is progressed by officers, for the least well used and most aged sites in terms of management or maintenance, to include discussions with town and parish councils and other interested parties, regarding possible transfer of sites, where there is a particular context for doing so.

**11. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 17 JULY & 20 SEPTEMBER 2024**

The following recommendations were made by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at the meeting held on 17 July 2024 and reported to the Cabinet meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> September.

*The Chairman will provide an oral update at the meeting regarding any recommendations made at the meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September.*

**1. East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust**

Recommended that the Council –

(A) Request the East of England Ambulance Trust to provide

(1) the mapping of CFRs in North Norfolk to establish where any gaps in the numbers of volunteers are

(2) communication materials for members of the council to use when talking to their respective Parish and Town Councils about the co-responding and the role of CFRs

(B) the Council

(1) works with the Norfolk Ambulance Trust to help promote its Campaign on Community First Responders and co responding by signposting members of the public towards the Ambulance Trust's Community First Responders <https://www.eastamb.nhs.uk/join-the-team/volunteering-and-volunteers/community-first-responders>

(2) encourages the members of the council to talk to their respective

Parish and Town Councils on the importance of the work being done by Community First Responders with the aim of increasing the understanding of these roles and seeking to achieve more volunteers to apply for these roles

## **2. North Walsham High Street Heritage Action Zone**

'To update the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in 12 months' time on the impact of the North Walsham High Street Heritage Action Zone initiative and learning from this, to establish a set of evaluation criteria, including baselines, that can then be used for similar projects in other towns in North Norfolk.'

## **12. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY 17 SEPTEMBER 2024** 97 - 126

The Constitution Working Party considered the following report at the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024:

Updates and amendments to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

The Working Party made the following recommendations to Full Council:

### **RESOLVED**

That Full Council

- (i) Approve all the proposed changes to the Contract Procedural Rules, namely by approving the newly drafted Contract Procedure Rules, at appendix A, in their entirety.
- (ii) Approve delegation to the Monitoring Officer to make any further necessary changes to the Contract Procedure Rules if required to comply with subsequent Government guidance, policy and updated legislation.

## **13. QUESTIONS RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS**

None Received.

## **14. OPPOSITION BUSINESS**

*Please note that there is a maximum time limit of 30 minutes for this item.*

The following item of Opposition Business has been received:

### **Changes to the Winter Fuel Allowance and Protecting Pensioners from Fuel Poverty**

Proposed by: Cllr C Cushing Seconded by: Cllr N Dixon

#### **This Council Notes:**

- The Labour Government's recent decision to restrict the Winter Fuel Payment to only pensioners in receipt of means-tested benefits like

- Pension Credit, as announced by Chancellor Rachel Reeves.
- Age UK estimate that 2 million pensioners who badly need the money to stay warm this winter will not receive it. According to a recent EDP article, a total of 25,796 people in North Norfolk could potentially forfeit the payment, giving the district the fourth-highest number of people who could lose it in the UK.
- Energy bills are set to rise by 10 per cent after regulator Ofgem announced it was increasing the price cap for gas and electricity bills. The regulator announced it is hiking its price cap from the current £1,568 for a typical household in England, Scotland and Wales to £1,717, adding around £12 a month to an average bill.
- The significant role that Winter Fuel Payments play in helping older residents of North Norfolk and across the UK afford heating during the coldest months, thereby preventing 'heat or eat' dilemmas and safeguarding health.
- The criticism from Age UK, the Countryside Alliance and other charities, highlighting the social injustice and potential health risks posed by this sudden policy change.
- The additional strain this decision will place on vulnerable pensioners, many of whom do not claim Pension Credit despite being eligible, further exacerbating their financial hardship. This is particularly relevant in North Norfolk which has the oldest demographic of any local authority area in the UK.

**This Council believes:**

- That the Winter Fuel Payment has been a lifeline for many older people across the UK and that restricting its availability solely to those on Pension Credit risks leaving many pensioners in financial hardship.
- While some pensioners currently in receipt of the Winter Fuel Payment may not require it, many thousands across North Norfolk sit just above the cut-off for Pension Credit and will now lose their allowance. Despite publicity to do so, many pensioners who may be eligible for Pension Credit do not claim it and will be particularly badly hit, a real concern in districts such as North Norfolk with its high percentage of pensioners and this has to be addressed.
- The decision to means-test Winter Fuel Payments, especially with such short notice and without adequate compensatory measures, is deeply unfair and will disproportionately affect the health and well-being of our poorest older residents.
- The government's approach fails to consider the administrative barriers and stigma that prevent eligible pensioners from claiming Pension Credit, leaving many without the support they desperately need.

**This Council resolves to:**

- To ensure a Council-led local awareness campaign is robust to alert those eligible of Pension Credit which in some respects will help access to the Winter Fuel Payment for those most in need. This should be done using the local press, town and parish magazines and in particular highlighting in the next edition of the NNDC Outlook magazine what help is available and encourages people to claim all benefits to which they are entitled.
- Request that the Leader of the Council, the Members of Parliament for North Norfolk and the Broadland and Fakenham constituencies

- write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, urging a review of the decision to means-test the Winter Fuel Payment and asking the government to ensure that vulnerable pensioners, particularly those who do not claim Pension Credit, are protected from fuel poverty.
- Commit the Council to signing the 'Save the Winter Fuel Payment for Struggling Pensioners' petition being run by Age UK and write to all members offering them the opportunity to sign the petition themselves. 'Save the Winter Fuel Payment for Struggling Pensioners' petition: <https://chng.it/xwVN4SHdHj>
  - Encourage local efforts to promote Pension Credit uptake through council services and partnerships with local charities and community organisations to ensure that all eligible pensioners in North Norfolk are supported in claiming their entitlement.

## 15. NOTICE(S) OF MOTION

*Please note that there is a maximum time limit of 30 minutes in **total** for this agenda item.*

The following Notices of Motion have been received:

1. Temporary Accommodation costs and budget pressures

Proposed by Cllr Wendy Fredericks, seconded by Cllr Lucy Shires

**This motion is asking for a letter to be sent by NNDC and our two MPs to the Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner.**

This letter seeks clarity over the funding support to Councils regarding exponential rising nightly paid temporary accommodation costs. The building of more homes is of course incredibly welcome. However, it is the short-term funding crisis that needs addressing while these new affordable homes are built out. It is putting unprecedented pressure on NNDC and councils up and down the country. This means that costs have to be found by cutting other services leaving residents lacking in support.

This echos the findings from the District Councils Network that this is a National issue and they are calling on the Government for support. <https://www.districtcouncils.info/record-temporary-accommodation-figures-action-demanded-to-tackle-crisis/>

The second part of the letter requests a return visit from the Ministry Housing, Communities and Local Government (previously DHLUC). The Council were grateful to meet with the department at NNDC Council offices earlier this year. Action points were taken by the Officials. We would like to know the progress under the new Government Regime.

**Recommendation: The letter will be drafted by the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council and asked to be signed by both of our MPs.**

## 2. Motion on Winter Fuel Allowance Announcement

Proposed by Cllr Liz Withington, seconded by Cllr Wendy Fredericks

Fuel poverty is a pressing issue, with 16.1% of households in North Norfolk affected, compared to the national average of 13.1%.

- (1) The region's housing energy efficiency is subpar, with over 60% of properties off the gas grid, relying on expensive heating alternatives. This disproportionately affects older residents, many of whom live in cold homes and are vulnerable to fuel poverty.
- (2) Norfolk has a significant elderly population, particularly in North Norfolk, where 33% of residents are aged 65 or older. This demographic is more susceptible to cold-related health issues, contributing to high excess winter deaths.

NNDC stresses that failure to address this issue will push more elderly people into fuel poverty, exacerbating health risks and impacting the well-being of North Norfolk's aging population.

NNDC is proactively reaching out to residents with our teams using our data to encourage those eligible to apply for Pension Credit and help fill in appropriate forms. Anyone concerned about this please give NNDC a call and our teams will help you.

### **Recommendation:**

- **We ask NNDC to submit a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer urging a review of the winter fuel allowance means test, particularly considering pensioners with incomes below the national living wage.**
- **This Council calls upon our two local MPs in particular the North Norfolk MP to continue to lobby the Government for this review, emphasizing the potential negative impact on elderly residents in North Norfolk:**

### References

- (1) [JSNA Housing Briefing Paper March 2024.pdf \(norfolkinsight.org.uk\)](#)
- (2) (2)Source: Non-gas map (nongasmap.org.uk)
- (3) [Save the Winter Fuel Payment | Age UK](#)

## 16. **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.”

## 17. **PRIVATE BUSINESS**