

Council



Please contact: Democratic Services

Please email: Democratic.Services@north-norfolk.gov.uk

Please Direct Dial on: 01263 516010

Tuesday, 12th November 2024

A meeting of the **Council** of North Norfolk District Council will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices on **Wednesday, 20 November 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.

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

Emma Denny
Democratic Services Manager

To: 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 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

All other Members of the Council for information.
Members of the Management Team, appropriate Officers, Press and Public



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

A G E N D A

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence, if any.

2. MINUTES

1 - 12

To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 25th September 2024.

3. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

13 - 18

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

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

7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

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

8. PORTFOLIO REPORTS

19 - 68

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. APPOINTMENTS TO COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND OUTSIDE BODIES

To receive an update from the Group Leaders on any changes to appointments to committees, sub-committees, working parties and outside bodies, if any.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET 04 NOVEMBER 2024

Car Park Fees and Charges

- a. Fees for the Council's Standard Car Parks be increased by 10p per hour, 20p per hour for Resort Car Parks, and 30p for the Coastal Car Parks.
- b. No Evening or Seasonal Charges be introduced at this time.
- c. Season Ticket prices be increased in line with inflation.
- d. Coach Car Parking Charges be increased £2.5 hr / £13 for 24hr. No weekly charge to be introduced at this time.
- e. 3hrs Car Parking be offered for leisure users at Victory Leisure Centre. Hornbeam Road (North Walsham) to be as standard but charged via app only with permit holders also having usage.
- f. Beach Road and Gold Park (Mundesley) be re classified as a Resort Car Park.
- g. To proceed with consultation on the updated Off-Street Parking Places Order.
- h. Car Parking fees and charges be reviewed again in 2025/2026

11. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 16 OCTOBER & 13 NOVEMBER

Overview & Scrutiny Committee - 16th October 2024

Public Questions and Statements

Recommended that (A) the issue of Benjamin Court Cromer be referred to the November full council meeting for decision along with additional data to be provided in the report, where possible, on delayed discharges, the numbers of digitally excluded people and the availability of home-based care staff,

(B) it was noted, with the Committee's support. that the Leader of the Council intended to write to the Secretary of State as a matter of urgency on the need to retain Benjamin Court, Cromer and to request that NHS Property Services doesn't dispose of the building, and

(C) it was noted that the Chief Executive intended to make representations on the Health Watch suggestion that a team of community nurses could be stationed at the Council Offices rather than

use the Benjamin Court building.

Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 13th November 2024

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of 13th November was held after the publication of the Full Council agenda – any recommendations to Full Council from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be reported verbally at the meeting.

12. UPDATE ON THE BENJAMIN COURT FACILITY, CROMER

Report to follow

13. QUESTIONS RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS

None Received.

14. OPPOSITION BUSINESS

None Received.

15. NOTICE(S) OF MOTION

None Received.

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

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 25 September 2024 in the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 6.00 pm

Members Present:

Cllr T Adams	Cllr P Bailey
Cllr M Batey	Cllr K Bayes
Cllr J Boyle	Cllr A Brown
Cllr C Cushing	Cllr N Dixon
Cllr P Fisher	Cllr A Fitch-Tillett
Cllr A Fletcher	Cllr W Fredericks
Cllr M Gray	Cllr P Heinrich
Cllr V Holliday	Cllr K Leith
Cllr R Macdonald	Cllr G Mancini-Boyle
Cllr P Neatherway	Cllr S Penfold
Cllr P Porter	Cllr J Punchard
Cllr L Shires	Cllr E Spagnola
Cllr K Toye	Cllr A Varley
Cllr L Vickers	

Officers in attendance: The Chief Executive, The Monitoring Officer, The Director for Communities, the Director for Place & Climate Change, the Democratic Services Officer (Regulatory)

36 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs D Birch, H Blathwayt, S Butikofer, T FitzPatrick, M Hankins, C Heinink, N Housden, L Paterson, C Ringer, J Toye and E Vardy.

37 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 24th July 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendment - Page 7, minute 30: should read Cllr *Boyle*

38 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

None received.

39 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None received.

40 CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman began by saying that she had visited several local dementia groups across the district during August and September.

She then updated members on the following civic events that she had attended:
30th August – PositiviTea event, focussing on dementia at Fakenham Sports & Leisure Centre
8th September – Mayor of Dereham's Civic Service, St Nicholas Parish Church, Dereham

9th September – Norfolk County Scout Council AGM, Northgate High School, Dereham

13th September – Gloucester 1682 Supper, Kings Lynn Town Hall

15th September – 84th Battle of Britain Commemoration, Halsey House, Cromer

22nd September – Mayor of Wisbech's Afternoon Tea, Wisbech Castle

The Chairman then invited Dirck Geary from the charity 'So...' to speak about their work. He said that the charity supported people with dementia and their families in Norfolk and he outlined everything that they did, which ranged from informal coffee mornings to working with the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital. He thanked members for their support and the Chairman for her continued work in highlighting the issues faced by those suffering from dementia.

41 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader, Cllr T Adams, began by welcoming Cllr M Gray following his recent election as a member.

He then said he was delighted to say that the Council had been awarded the gold RSPCA Pawprint award for its work with stray dogs. The scheme celebrated and rewarded local authorities and organisations for going above and beyond to deliver the highest quality animal welfare services. He thanked officers for their hard work in achieving this.

Regarding Benjamin Court, Cromer and the Council's representation to the Secretary of State for Health & Social Care, he said that a response had been received. He said that it was disappointing and failed to commit to a solution, despite indicating elsewhere that the Government was supportive of community settings being used to take the strain away from hospitals. He said that the Health Watch report was now awaited.

The Leader went onto say that correspondence had been received regarding the provision of future banking services in Fakenham and North Walsham and it was intended to meet with representatives from Cash Access UK in due course.

He then provided a brief update on the Rocket House, Cromer. The lifeboat, H F Bailey, had been removed ahead of the renovation of the building. He thanked everyone for their help in moving the historic boat. The main contractors had now been appointed to carry out the work and the public toilets would close in November.

Regarding the review of public toilet provision across the district, he said that the next steps would be meeting with interested parties and businesses to assist the Council in determining how to move forward. He clarified that there would be no agreement or ratification of any individual facility at this time. Members and the public would be kept updated.

42 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

None received.

43 PORTFOLIO REPORTS

The Chairman reminded members that there was 30 minutes allocated for this item. She invited members to speak:

Cllr J Boyle asked Cllr W Fredericks, Portfolio Holder for Housing & Benefits, about the welfare benefits referred to in her report and if more detail could be provided on them. Cllr Fredericks replied that the Financial Inclusion Team had been set up to advise and support low income families in the district. During the period 1st April to 29 August 2024, almost £1m in missed benefits and income had been identified and awarded to low-income families. This included carer's allowance, council tax support, disability living allowance, discretionary housing payments, job seekers allowance, energy bank vouchers and pension credit. Regarding the latter, she said there had been an extensive push to get as many eligible pensioners as possible to complete the forms within the required timeframe.

Cllr A Fletcher asked Cllr A Varley, Portfolio Holder for Climate Change & Net Zero about the next steps for decarbonisation of the Council Offices. Cllr Varley replied that surveys had been undertaken on the Cromer building. The report would go to Cabinet for consideration. The options included heating systems and fabric measures. It also focused on behaviour changes such as hot-desking. Ultimately the focus was on energy efficiency and on reducing running costs. He added that external funding options were being looked into to minimise the cost of introducing any energy efficient measures.

Cllr G Mancini-Boyle asked Cllr A Varley for an update on the Net Zero Communities project. He asked for more information on the businesses that had been contacted across the district. Cllr Varley replied that the Stalham Communities Project was going well and several events had been hosted jointly with the Town Council. He said that he would provide a further, more detailed update shortly. Regarding, the businesses that had been contacted, he said that he would find out and provide a written response.

Cllr C Cushing asked the Leader, Cllr T Adams, about the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). He asked for information on the outcomes that these funding streams were delivering and whether the Leader was confident that the Council was getting value for money. The Leader replied that there were a lot of recipients of this funding, so he suggested that a detailed written response was provided on this. More generally, the Council wanted to maximise the potential for any funding provisions and he felt that this was a good example of this. Cllr Cushing suggested that Overview & Scrutiny could consider looking at this in detail.

Cllr A Fitch-Tillett asked Cllr L Shires, Portfolio Holder for Finance & Assets, about the request for the installation of a defibrillator on the railings on the slipway down to the beach. She said that the Council was insisting on levying a charge for this. Cllr Shires said that she would go back to the Property Services team and the Parish Council and see if a different solution could be found.

Cllr M Gray asked the Leader, Cllr T Adams, for an update on the Devolution deal for Norfolk and the impact on North Norfolk. Cllr Adams replied that he had no new update on the situation. He said that it was the Council's wish to see a cross-county consensus on the basis for a devolution arrangement and NNDC needed to set out its stall as soon as possible to the Government. He said he had confidence in neighbouring authorities and believed a consensus could be reached. He added that he believed the prize for North Norfolk would be around the development of rural transport and this was linked to economic inactivity in some locations. There would be a lot of discussions at a political level on whether it would be a Norfolk / Suffolk arrangement or Norfolk only. He was hopeful that the discussions would remain constructive and that an agreed position could be presented to the Government as

soon as possible.

Cllr M Batey asked Cllr A Brown, Portfolio Holder for Planning & Enforcement, about the Government's increased housing target and how that would impact on the district number-wise. Cllr Brown replied that when the Local Plan was submitted which confirmed the number of approximately 480 homes being delivered per year, the Council was confident that the figure was accurate. The Planning Inspector's examination in March pointed out that the methodology used to ascertain the figure should have referenced the 2014 population statistics. This was challenged as later census figures showed that the population was falling compared to 2014. The Inspector's response suggested that using the 2014 statistics would increase the housing target to 557. However, the change of Government, meant that a further increase was required and the Inspector now advised that the annual target for North Norfolk should now be 943. It was accepted that the Inspector's approach was correct given the Government's new target. A report would come to Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party on 10 October 2024 as to how the Council would address the substantial increase in the housing target.

Cllr M Taylor asked Cllr L Withington, Portfolio Holder for Tourism & Leisure why she had not mentioned the very successful Stalham & Smallburgh Beer Festival in her update. He mentioned several annual events taking place in the town and said that it was clear that Stalham was now the 'undisputed champion' of North Norfolk events and asked Cllr Withington to join him in thanking Stalham residents for their work in supporting these community events. Cllr Withington congratulated Stalham for their very successful event. She said there were a lot of very well attended events across the district that should also be highlighted and praised. She asked members to let officers know of upcoming events so that they could ensure they were highlighted and promoted as much as possible.

Cllr Penfold asked Cllr Withington about the three Green Flag spaces managed by the Council. He asked what was being done to ensure that young people engaged with these, to be more active in them. Cllr Withington replied that she was proud to have retained the Green Flag spaces this year. A lot of additional work had been done to build on the previous offer and this included events such as mini beast collecting, orienteering and challenge days. The team was now getting ready for Halloween and all of these events encouraged children to engage with nature as well as bringing in revenue. She went onto say that the Countryside team had started to work with the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) which would bring additional support and engagement opportunities. There were also volunteering opportunities via the Muddy Boots scheme.

Cllr K Bayes asked Cllr L Shires about the capital programme and referenced the high amount of funding allocated to Cromer, totalling £2.56m. He said that he could not see anything for parishes east of North Walsham and said that Cromer appeared to be favoured over other areas. Cllr Shires replied that no member would want to have the Rocket House in their ward, with all the problems and costs that it presented. Regarding capital bids for Cromer, she said that there were a large number of assets there. In the east of the district there were very few assets. However, if there were any proposals for other areas she would be keen to consider them.

Cllr K Toye asked Cllr Fredericks about the number of people in temporary accommodation. Her report indicated that this had gone down and she asked for more information on this. Cllr Fredericks replied that the hard work of the Council's Prevention Team, together with Customer Services, Housing Options and the Social

Prescribing team in supporting residents to stay either where they were – by providing support and advice on how to manage rent increases. She said that the Council's Housing Allocation policy had also been reviewed and was currently out for consultation. The Council continued to work with its partners to fill any empty homes. She concluded by saying that the ending of Section 21 could cause some issues as some landlords may not want to continue in the residential lettings business.

44 REVIEW OF POLITICAL BALANCE AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND PANELS

The Chairman invited the Leader to introduce this item. He explained that it was a statutory report that had to be presented to Full Council each time there was a change in the political balance.

He said that he wanted to advise members of the appointment of Cllr M Batey as a substitute to an outside body, the Norfolk Records Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr T Adams, seconded by Cllr E Spagnola and

RESOLVED

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.
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

45 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET 09 SEPTEMBER 2024

The Leader, Cllr Adams, advised members that there was an error in the first item Budget Monitoring P4, Recommendation 2. Cabinet had agreed the following amendment (in italics) and it was this that Full Council was being asked to approve: Seek approval of Full Council to include an addition to the capital programme in 2024/25 to *the extension and enhancement of the car parking offer in the District, at a location to be identified* and that this is funded from revenue (car park income) (as explained in paragraph 5.6)

Cllr L Shires, Portfolio Holder for Finance, said that she wanted to thank the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for their work in monitoring the Council's budget as agreed in February when the budget was set. She drew members attention to key points in the report, particularly the financial impact of temporary accommodation costs. She referenced section 2.6 to 2.9 which explained the variations. Officers continued to work hard to reduce the deficit.

She then spoke about savings and drew members' attention to the relevant section. Regarding the savings to yet be identified, Cllr Shires said that a list was provided on page 81. She was confident that the remaining savings would be found by the end of the year.

The fall in inflation would impact on the council's investment and this was detailed on page 58, point 4.

In conclusion, regarding the proposals for the public conveniences, she reiterated Cllr Adams' earlier comments that this was the start of the process, not a 'done deal'.

Cllr M Taylor asked Cllr Adams for information on the other options that were being considered for an extension to the car parking offer. Cllr Adams replied that he couldn't give specific details but assured Cllr Taylor that several sites were being looked at and members would be kept updated as matters progressed. Referring to the Meadows car park in Cromer, he said that some concerns had been raised regarding the use of an established open space. In addition, a private car park had opened up nearby recently. He added that concessions were also being reviewed where there was a high footfall. Car parking revenue was supporting the tourism infrastructure and it was important that it was maximised where possible.

Cllr C Cushing raised concerns about the second recommendation from Cabinet, 'Savings – Public Conveniences'. He said that the proposals were causing great concern to residents and he asked whether an impact assessment would be undertaken on the proposed closures and transfers. Cllr Adams replied that the focus was on facilities that had seen the smallest levels of usage and in some of these they were barely used. In Weybourne there were high levels of abuse which was expensive and time-consuming to address. For Stalham, it was clear that it was in the wrong location as usage was low but he wanted to see a facility in the town. Transfer of facilities would be explored where there was a revenue monopoly by businesses or organisations. He added that it was very early in the process and was in advance of the setting of next year's budget.

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

RESOLVED to approve:

Cabinet Agenda Item 11: Budget Monitoring P4 2024 – 2025

- 1) 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) To include an addition to the capital programme in 2024/25 to *the extension and enhancement of the car parking offer in the District, at a location to be identified* and that this is funded from revenue (car park income) (as explained in paragraph 5.6)

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

RESOLVED to approve

Cabinet Agenda Item 12: Savings Public Conveniences

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 members voted against the recommendations.

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Cllr N Dixon, introduced this item. He set out the context of the first recommendation regarding the East of England Ambulance Service Trust. The Committee had tracked ambulance response times in rural areas for some time now and had worked with the Norfolk Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (NHOSC) for some time to ensure a countywide approach was taken. The Council had very little influence over the drivers behind poor response times and were beyond the reach of the committee to address. However, the committee agreed to look at what could be done to mitigate some of the poor response times and the recommendations reflected this.

He said he had nothing further to add regarding the second recommendation for the North Walsham Heritage Action Zone. He asked the Vice-Chairman, Cllr S Penfold, to update members on recommendations from the meeting of 20th September. He said that they would come through to the next meeting of Full Council. He summarised the outcomes of the meeting which considered recommendations from the Homelessness Task & Finish Group. He thanked the Chairman, Cllr Dr V Holliday and everyone who had supported the process.

Cllr T Adams asked about expectations in the future regarding the Ambulance Service Trust. Cllr Dixon said that the committee would want to monitor the Trust in the future but it would be up to members to decide on specific actions in the future. It was proposed by Cllr N Dixon, seconded by Cllr C Cushing and

RESOLVED to

1. East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust

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

- (1) the mapping of Community First Responders 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.'

The Chairman of the Constitution Working Party, Cllr A Varley, introduced this item. He began by saying that the Procurement Act was due to be enacted at the end of October 2024, however, this was now delayed due to issues with setting up the new digital platform. He then took members through the key changes that would be implemented to reflect the requirements of the new Act. The bidding process would be more efficient and more transparent. He drew members attention to the increase in the bidding threshold from £5k to £15k.

It was proposed by Cllr A Varley, seconded by Cllr M Batey and

RESOLVED to

- (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

48 QUESTIONS RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS

None received.

49 OPPOSITION BUSINESS

The Chairman advised members that there was 30 minutes for this item and then the Motion at Agenda Item 15 on the same topic would be debated. She invited Cllr C Cushing to introduce the item.

Cllr Cushing said that he and Cllr Adams had agreed prior to the meeting that the two motions would be grouped together as they covered the same territory. He began by saying that he could not recall a new Government falling from grace so quickly, despite projected growth in the coming year. Instead, there were predictions of doom and gloom that were being used to justify cruel cuts to pensioners' income. He said that the removal of the winter fuel payment from all pensioners who did not receive pension credit would affect 10m people and save about £1.3bn. This would hit North Norfolk particularly hard, hitting approximately 25,000 pensioners. Rural housing was likely to be older and less energy efficient. Over 70% of rural homes in the UK were built before 1980 with an average of 49.6% energy efficiency and many were not connected to mains gas networks, with many relying on heating oil.

The seconder of the motion, Cllr Dixon, reserved his right to speak.

Cllr T Adams said that his group would be supporting the motion. He explained the position taking so far by the Administration which had been to focus on practical solutions. Over 160 pensioners had now been identified as eligible for pension credit by Council officers. He hoped that the proposed removal of the winter fuel allowance would be reversed now, falling opposition from all quarters. He then referenced the petition which was part of the motion. Whilst the Council could not corporately sign it, he said that he would commit to personally adding his signature and he hoped other members would too.

Cllr Dixon then spoke as seconder of the motion. He welcomed the comments of the Leader and he said that all members would accept that both motions on the agenda were essentially the same and it was important that the needs of residents were at

the forefront of everyone's mind as they voted on this matter.

The Monitoring Officer asked Cllr Cushing if he was willing to change the third bullet point of the last recommendation to:

'Request that members of the Council commit to signing the 'Save the Winter Fuel Payment for Struggling Pensioners' petition being run by Age UK'

Cllr Cushing agreed.

The Chairman invited Cllr Cushing to close the debate. He thanked Cllr Adams for his positive statement and said he was pleased that there was cross-party support on this matter and the Council was doing everything it could to support residents. It was proposed by Cllr C Cushing, seconded by Cllr N Dixon and

RESOLVED to note

- 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.
- Requests that members of the Council commit 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://chnng.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.

50 NOTICE(S) OF MOTION

As explained earlier, the motion on Winter Fuel Payments would be debated first as it was closely linked to the item of Opposition Business. The Chairman invited the proposer of the motion, Cllr L Withington to introduce it.

Cllr Withington referred member to several slides which set out the reasons for requesting a review and outlined the financial impact on pensioners in the District. She highlighted the number of homes with a D rated Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) and the high levels of households living in fuel poverty. In addition, many were not connected to mains gas. The number of excess winter deaths in Norfolk was also higher than the national average. In conclusion, pensioners in North Norfolk would be particularly impacted by the Government's proposals to remove the winter fuel allowance from everyone not on pension credit. She urged members to support the request to ask the Government to urgently review of the means testing levels of the winter fuel payment scheme.

The seconder of the motion, Cllr W Fredericks, reserved her right to speak.

The Chairman opened up the debate:

Cllr T Adams said that regardless of these changes, there was a role for Government departments to have as much data as was reasonable to help identify people that were eligible for pension credit and any other benefits. Helping to sustain households financially could only be beneficial. He said that Council officers had had meetings with the Department for Work and Pensions and raised this issue.

Cllr L Shires said that she had recently had several conversations with older residents who struggled to put their pride aside and apply for pension credit or ask for assistance with heating their home. Help was available and she urged them to seek it.

The seconder of the motion, Cllr W Fredericks, closed the debate by reiterating Cllr Shires comments and urged residents to contact the Council for assistance. There were specialist teams which could provide support and guidance on all areas. She then asked members to be present in their communities and help residents. Just completing the pension credit application form was difficult.

The proposer of the motion, Cllr L Withington said she had nothing further to add. The Chairman then put the motion to the vote and it was

RESOLVED unanimously

- 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.
- To call 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

The Chairman then moved onto the second motion – Temporary Accommodation Costs and Budget Pressures. She invited the proposer, Cllr W Fredericks, to introduce it.

Cllr Fredericks began by saying that there were several reasons why people became homeless. In North Norfolk, the top three were domestic abuse, ending of a private rental tenancy and family and friends no longer being able to provide accommodation. It was not a refugee issue but local residents who were presenting as homeless. Several of the Council's teams were working hard to assist people. It was impossible to anticipate how many people may present to the council as homeless on any given day but there was a duty to support them and find a bed for them until a more sustainable solution could be found. The financial cost of placing a family in nightly paid accommodation for a week was between £350 and £632 per week. The Council received £98 from the Government and the shortfall had to be covered from other budgets. In 2023/2024 NNDC spent £1.3m on nightly paid accommodation. The Government paid £334k and the Council funded the shortfall of £861k. Cllr Fredericks said if the Council had not purchased its own properties for use as a temporary accommodation (26 homes) then the cost would be almost double. Councils across the country faced the same issue. Placing a family in council-owned accommodation could mean in income in rent and fully covered subsidy of housing benefit. She said the increase in costs was crippling and having a heavy impact on the Council. Being able to afford to provide statutory services such as environmental health and waste collection was challenging enough let alone being able to continue to provide non-statutory services such as public toilets.

Cllr Fredericks said that representatives from NNDC had met with the Department for Housing, Levelling Up and Communities (DHLUC) to suggest possible solutions and the Council's work had been recognised nationally for its work in this area. She urged members to support the motion.

The seconder of the motion, Cllr L Shires, reserved her right to speak.

The Chairman opened up the debate to members:

Cllr N Dixon said that this was already a work in progress and had been going on for some time and he was surprised to see a motion coming forward on this matter. He

said the merit in the argument was clear. Cllr Fredericks said that DHLUC visited NNDC in March because of the lobbying and work undertaken by the Council. She said that she would like all members support on this matter as it affected everyone.

Cllr L Withington spoke about a resident that she had supported that day who had fled domestic abuse. The housing team had offered support but it was out of area and not ideal and so the community had stepped in and offered a short term solution. Sadly, this was not an isolated case and it was a huge issue. She said she would like to see members stand together on this and lobby the Government for proper financial support.

51 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

52 PRIVATE BUSINESS

The meeting ended at 7.52 pm.

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](#).

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]
Sponsorship	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.
Contracts	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>
Land and Property	<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>
Licenses	<p>Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer</p>
Corporate tenancies	<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>
Securities	<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.
--	---

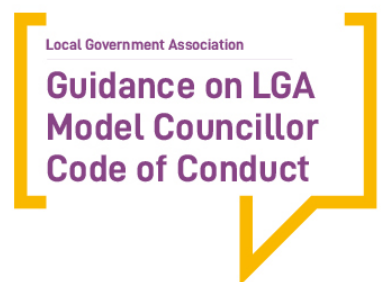
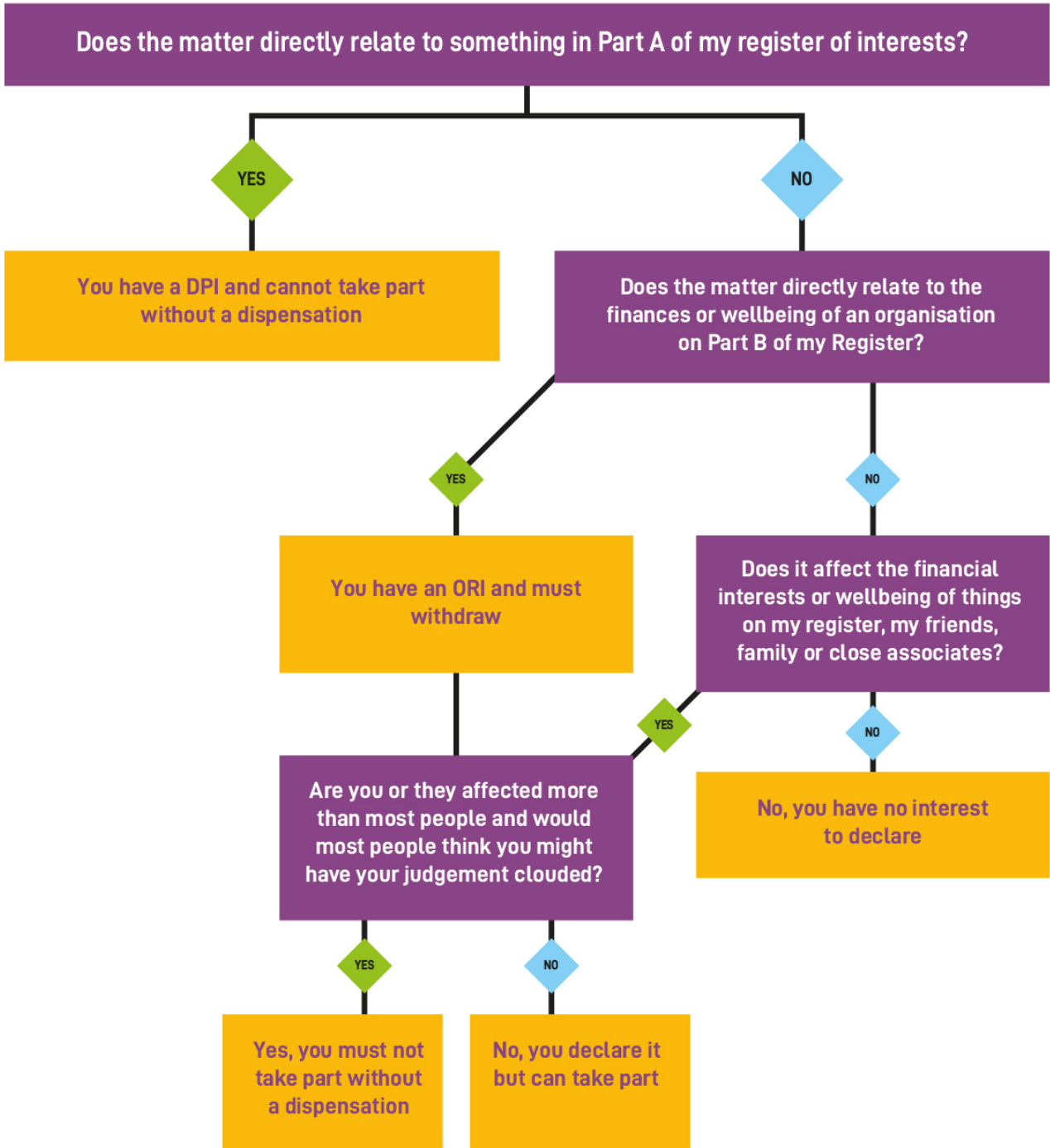
* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* '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

You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:

- a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority
- b) any body
 - (i) exercising functions of a public nature
 - (ii) any body directed to charitable purposes or
 - (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)



CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

NOVEMBER 2024

COUNCILLOR ADAMS - CABINET MEMBER FOR STRATEGY, COUNTRYWIDE WORKING AND EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS, PERFORMANCE, COMMUNICATIONS, HR AND LEGAL SERVICES

For the period September 2024 to November 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters

Legal

Coastwise

- The new Climate Change and Coastal Erosion Transition Lawyer started in post in September and has been providing direct support to the Coastwise team identifying legislation, policy and case law to ascertain how councils can best transition homes, businesses and infrastructure away from the coast, to eventually feed back to the Environment Agency and DEFRA with proposals for policy and legislative change.
- In addition, they have been advising Coastwise in relation to NNDC's potential liabilities and all types of contracts relating to the project, which have so far included drafting T&Cs for an art competition, negotiating consultancy agreements, advising on IP rights, and, significantly, drafting and bringing to completion a first of a kind agreement for the purchase of a 'planning replacement opportunity' from a member of the public whose home is at risk of coastal erosion.

Freedom of Information

- FOI/DPA request figures show that the Council's current performance to responding to requests within the statutory twenty working days is at 98% and has not dipped below 95% thus far in 2024/25.

Litigation

- Focus remains on recovery of larger and longstanding debts at this time in conjunction, particularly, with the revenues and benefits team.
- Recovery of £29,000 of a £50,000 debt, with agreed installments of a further £4,000 per month until April 2025 which will see recovery of the full debt.
- The Council have instigated a winding up petition in the high court against a single creditor in relation to outstanding council debts of £44,694.50.
- This is over and above multiple charging orders which secure outstanding debts.

Property matters

- Eastlaw completed on another house purchase to be used as temporary accommodation.

ACV matters

- Eastlaw have considered a number of Assets of Community Value (ACV) listings (either at first instance or upon review), with the following deemed successful: Hunny Bell, Hunworth

Planning matters

- NNDC appears to be leading the way in trying to mitigate the impact of the “nutrient neutrality” regulations by preparing and using section 106 agreements, signed by owners of houses, who agree to the upgrading of their septic tanks which in turn releases new housing in areas affected by the “nutrient neutrality” regulations. In October alone Eastlaw have completed 11 section 106 agreements to enable the release of 31 new build dwellings in the District.
- Eastlaw also drafted and completed a section 106 planning agreement with the National Trust in a record two weeks to enable the expedited construction of a pedestrian bridge at Cabbage Creek, Stiffkey.

Code of Conduct matters

- Most matters have not warranted investigation, with words of advice being provided as part of the initial assessment process.
- There is one matter which is currently under investigation and may progress to a hearing before the Standards Committee.

Democratic Services

- The team is struggling with resource issues. Members have been updated in this regard, and efforts are being made to address this.

Elections

- The Elections team are still running the Annual Canvass and are currently processing returned reminder forms and completing other canvass checking ahead of publishing the Revised Register in December.
- The Periodic Polling place review is also continuing and a report will be presented to Full Council shortly with only a handful of changes in official designation being proposed.

HR

- A Prevention of Sexual Harassment Policy has been introduced in line with the change to legislation effective from 26 October 2024, training is currently being sourced and will be rolled out to all officers and members.
- We are working with the Comms Team to produce a final draft of both the People Strategy and the Learning and Development Strategy.
- HR and the Comms Team have been working to support the LGA National Recruitment Campaign which launched on 4 November utilising space within the Outlook Magazine.

Comms

- Consultation has formed an important element of recent work for the Communications Team, with the following consultations/engagements launched to the public via Council channels in recent weeks:
 - Local Validation
 - Local Plan

- Council Tax benefit changes
- Anti-social vehicle meetings PSPO
- Work is underway to present further public consultation opportunities around the Council's budget proposals for next year, North Lodge Park and leisure events/services provided or supported by the Council in North Norfolk.
- In addition, the team have communicated proactively and reactively around potential car park charge changes, discretionary toilet provision and beach hut management. All of these have been appropriately contextualised against transparent and regular updates regarding the Council's wider financial challenges - and the on-going process to identify savings and revenue opportunities to meet those challenges.
- Positive news has also recently been shared for our residents following the Government's recent budget, including confirmation of funding for the Fakenham Leisure and Sports Hub and NNDC's pending share of an £8.8m Nutrient Neutrality Mitigation Fund payment for partnering authorities in Norfolk. It is hoped the latter will help to 'unblock' pending and future North Norfolk housing development proposals where Nutrient Neutrality legislation has presented extra challenge and potential delays.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Elections

- Before the Christmas break, initial planning tasks will be completed in respect of the 1st May 2025 Norfolk County Council Elections.

3 Meetings attended

Meetings attended:

- Norfolk Business Board
- National Gas
- Meetings in respect of West Runton and Weybourne Public toilets – various
- Broads Authority
- Cabinet/Business Planning - various
- Overview & Scrutiny
- Council Tax Support Working Party
- Benjamin Court Public Meeting
- Norfolk Leaders Group
- Transport East
- Various other internal meetings

Attended:

- NNDC 50th Birthday Celebration event

Upcoming & to occur:

- JSCC
- Transport East
- Bishop of Lynn
- Albert Bartlett Ltd
- VNN Conference
- Coastwise drop in events

- Cash Access UK meetings

Media:

- EDP
- Look East
- That's Tv
- BBC Norfolk Radio
- Student Journalists

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

29 November 2024

COUNCILLOR HARRY BLATHWAYT – CABINET MEMBER FOR COAST

For the period September to October 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters

Coast protection works

The major Cromer (phase 2) and Mundesley Coastal Management Scheme programme has been progressing in accordance with the programme. Activity over this period has included rock delivery and emplacement and concreting works. Monitoring has been undertaken to satisfy consenting conditions and local stakeholders have been informed of activity throughout.

Despite challenges, due in part to delays resulting from adverse weather conditions, the scheme remains on budget. This has been managed by rescoping and identifying more cost-efficient ways of certain elements of the scheme being achieved. The funding position was further impacted by delays to consents (pre-construction) and the withdrawal of expected funding from Anglian Water for the Mundesley Scheme (which amongst other things will defend one of its key assets).

Repairs and Maintenance

The following minor works can have been undertaken in this period:

- access maintenance works
- Beeston sea wall concreting works
- Trinity House beacon inspections
- Sheringham steps repairs
- Overstrand revetement repairs.

Coastal Adaptation

The Coastwise initiative is progressing through the following activities:

- analysis of the Coastwise survey is being completed and will be shared at the November Coastwise Café events, and shared online
- a funding and finance workshop with key Environment Agency representatives to develop ideas and opportunities on future funding for coastal adaptation going being planned
- the Council has partnered with Norfolk and Waveney Mind to fund a project providing opportunities to explore and support wellbeing in communities facing the impacts of coastal erosion.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Cromer and Mundesley Coastal Management Scheme

- Ongoing concreting and rock placement at Mundesley
- Completion of rock placement and access improvement works at Cromer
- Cromer site office will begin to be dismantled as the main Cromer work nears completion (a smaller compound will remain until the Mundesley part of the scheme is completed).

Coastwise

- Work is progressing to replace Happisburgh Car Park, including design and discharge of planning conditions and purchase of land.
- November Coastwise Café public events confirmed in Overstrand, Trimmingham, Happisburgh and West Runton.
- Launching a 'Coastwise Creative' competition to support new and innovative approaches for communicating coastal erosion issues, with entries from local creatives.

Repairs and Maintenance

- Beacon repairs and maintenance (across the whole frontage).
- Continuation of post-season inspections.
- Continuation of Happisburgh car park rollback.

3 Meetings attended

September 2nd – Meeting of the Cabinet regarding Comms.

3rd – Cromer and Mundesley Board Meeting

4th – Broads Local access Forum

5th – Broads Authority Navigation Committee

6th – BA Site Visit for proposed TPO.

9th – Cabinet and Business Planning.

10th – LGA IDB Funding SIG

12th – BA CEO/Chair Briefing.

13th – BA Planning Committee.

17th – Ilfracombe,

18th – LGA Coastal SIG Field Trip

19th – AGM

20th – Broads Authority Board Meeting

20th – Broads Nature Recovery Strategy update.

23rd – Cabinet pre agenda and Business Planning.

24th – Northumberland,

25th-26th – National Parks Conference

October 1st – Cromer and Mundesley Board.

2nd – Coastwise Catch up.

2nd – LGA IDB SIG

3rd – Broads Authority and Broads Society Leaders Meeting.

3rd – Broads Authority and NNDC Leaders Meeting.

4th – The Ant Catchment, Broads and Marshes Briefing

7th – Cabinet and Business planning
8th – BA Tolls Workshop and Briefing.
8th – LGA IDB Funding SIG reception house of Commons
10th – Workshop Norfolk Coast Wildlife Recovery Programme.
10th – BA CEO/Chair Briefing.
10th – Norfolk coast Dark Skies Launch.
11th – BA Planning Committee.
14th – Broadland Future Initiative Forum
15th – Coastwise Board
15th – CPE Board Meeting
16th – BA CEO/Chairs Briefing
18th – LGA Coastal Sig Learning Lunch
21st – Pre-Cabinet. Business Planning.
21st – Natural England Reception at House of Lords.
22nd – Cromer Liaison Group
23rd – Mundesley Liaison Group
24th – Broads IDB
25th – Built Heritage and Planning Policy Working Party Briefing to Cabinet
29th – BA/ NSBA leaders Meeting
30th – Climate Change Targets Workshop.
31st – NCP Catch-up
31st – BA CEO/Chair catch-up.

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

20th November 2024

COUNCILLOR ANDREW BROWN - CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT

For the period 20th September 2024 to 8th November 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters

Since the last Portfolio Holder report to Council, we have had one that builds on our Planning Service Improvement Plan (PSIP) commitment **to better and wider engagement**:

- (i) On 24th October we held our quarterly ***Agents and Developers Forum*** and covered an array of topics including: updates on the Local Plan, our Pre-Application planning service and Building Control; and, discussions on the Local Validation List consultation (see below), Biodiversity Net Gain, and Nutrient Neutrality.

In addition, a number of further **Planning Service Improvement Plan (PSIP)** matters have been progressed including:

- (ii) Following Development Committee on 19th September 2024, consultation has started on our new draft ***Local Validation List***. This List relates to the information that needs to be submitted to support different types and scales of planning application. The consultation period finishes on 27th November 2024. The intention thereafter is to report the outcome of the consultation to Development Committee in December and adopt the final version of the List for use from January 2025. For more information see: [North Norfolk Local Validation List Consultation](#).
- (iii) ***Overview and Scrutiny Committee*** considered an update on PSIP matters at their meeting on 16th October 2024. The Committee welcomed the progress that had been made on delivering the Plan and concluded that they didn't need to receive any further reports on the subject – i.e. leaving on-going monitoring of delivery / performance against the Plan to the Development Committee. The report is available at: [Overview and Scrutiny Report on PSIP](#).

In terms of **Planning Policy**:

- (iv) Following receipt of the Planning Inspector's initial response letter on our ***Local Plan Examination*** on 19th July 2024, Cabinet agreed - at their meeting on 4th November 2024 - to start a new round of consultation on changes proposed in respond to the letter received. In doing so, Cabinet endorsed the recommendations that the Planning Policy and Built Heritage Working Party made on the subject during their meeting on October 10th 2024. The Working Party report is available at: [Local Plan Update and Action Plan Working Party Report](#).
- (v) Following the Cabinet meeting referred to above, the ***Further Consultation on the Local Plan*** commenced on 7th November 2024 and will conclude on 19th December 2024. The consultation can be accessed via: [Local Plan Consultation](#).

In terms of **Development Management**:

- (vi) The Development Committee has met only met once since the last Report. That Committee considered ***one major application*** – for 54 affordable homes at Station Road, North Walsham – see [Committee Report Application Reference PO201251](#).
- (vii) In the first 6 months of this financial year (i.e. 1st April 2024 to 30th September 2024), ***Development Committee*** met 8 times. Those 8 meetings have considered 26 different applications (an average of 3.25 per meeting). Further analysis has shown that:
 - Two of the 26 (7.7%) were deferred at the first time of consideration – with one subsequently determined within the same 6 month period – and the 2nd one determined at Committee in October;
 - 4 of the applications were in the major category – e.g. 10 homes or more;
 - The applications were in 16 different wards;
 - In addition to applications, Committee considered 1 Tree Preservation Order where objection(s) had been received to the provisional Order; and
 - There were no 'site visits' made by Committee in either of the two quarters.
 - The 26 applications that were considered at the 8 Committees amounted to 2% of the applications the Council determined in the 6 month period;
 - All of the applications that Officers recommended were approved, were then approved by the Committee (i.e. 100%);
 - The Committee approved three of the 6 (i.e. 50%) applications which Officers had recommended were refused; and
 - In total that means that 88% of applications determined by the Committee were resolved in accordance with the headline (i.e. approve / refuse) Officer recommendation.

- (viii) Separately, since the introduction of the new **Development Committee Call-In Form** system on 1st September 2024, by 6th November 2024, 14 Call In forms have been received and acknowledged – from 11 different councillors and one senior officer. Officers consider that the new system is working reasonably well and is increasing our consistency and transparency. A more formal review of the effectiveness of the new system will be carried out in / by summer 2025 – as previously agreed – but Officers would welcome hearing any views on the Form at anytime (e.g. when Councillors actually complete one).

In terms of **Planning Enforcement**:

- (ix) So far in 2024, our Planning Enforcement team has opened 323 different cases and has currently a case load of 187 live 'cases' that it is dealing with. Since 1st April the team have been monitoring case opening to case determination point. For the period to 30th September 2024, the average (mean) time from opening a case to determining the case was 22 working days. 'Opening' is defined as the first receipt of a query by a member of the public (etc) and the 'determination point' is defined as the – no action to be taken (e.g. planning permission isn't required) or a planning application is invited or the matter is resolved by agreement (e.g. someone stops doing something) or some form of formal action is commenced.

In terms of **Building Control**:

- (x) The Building Control team has implemented the **LABC ISO 9001 Quality Management System** for its processes and is currently undertaking internal auditing of procedures.
- (xi) The **Building Safety Regulator** has commenced its 5 year rolling program of assessing the adequacy of Individual Building Control Teams, with the prioritisation of inspections being based up risk. It is thought that NNDC with all of its surveyors accredited and not being part of shared or outsourced service would not be seen to be at the highest risk levels, but holistic reviews of service delivery are being undertaken internally before a likely inspection being carried out.
- (xii) The recent issue of the ICC (Industry Competence Committee) Guidance Note 1 – **Design Advice and Guidance**, has been issued to clarify the limitations on advice and guidance that can be given by Registered Building Inspectors. The team have considered the advice and ensured its support given is in accordance with this.
- (xiii) There has been national press on the failure of some **Private Building Control** bodies, and the excessive workload and resource issues that have subsequently affected Local Authorities. For further information see: ['Terrible' impact of Towcester building control firm collapse - BBC News](#). Whilst we have had some projects impacted within North Norfolk, the total number of projects is less than 50 so will be manageable within the team.

- (xiv) The **Building Safety Levy** has come to the forefront again following the recent election. This is a levy to fund the nationwide cladding remediation issues and will likely cause additional work for the Building Control team (new burdens funding and % retention of the levy are likely).

In terms of Government led **Changes to Planning:**

- (xv) The Council responded to the new Government's **draft National Planning Policy Framework** in September 2024. The draft can be found at: [Draft National Planning Policy Framework](#). The Council's response was considered and endorsed at the Planning Policy and Built Heritage Working Party meeting of 10th October 2024. See items 7 and 8 available via: [Agenda for Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party - 10th October 2024](#).

The Council objected to the proposed increase in its housing target that was contained within the draft – i.e. an increase to 943 new homes a year - an increase of 70% on the most recently published national target of 556.

- (xvi) Various elements of the **Budget of 30th October 2024** are directly relevant to the Council's Planning Service including:
- A commitment from Government that they will respond to the National Planning Policy Framework consultation before the end of the year – i.e. to confirm pro-growth reforms to the planning system;
 - Plans to implement legislative changes to ensure a 'simplified and streamlined' planning system will be introduced via a Planning and Infrastructure Bill early in 2025; and,
 - A £46 million to boost capacity and capability in local planning authorities (i.e. to fund another 300 local authority planners) to 'accelerate large sites that are stuck in the system, and boost and upskill local planning authority capacity to deliver the government's wider reform agenda'.

And **finally:**

- (xvii) The Government also announced – on 30th October 2024 - that our local partnership of Council's working on the Norfolk **Nutrient Mitigation** Fund will receive an additional £8.85m of capital funding and nearly £500,000 more of revenue funding. For further information see: [Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund Round 2: funding allocations](#). Broadland District Council are the accountable body for this funding with Breckland District Council, North Norfolk District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council also involved. The Council has publicised this on its website – see: [New funding boost for Nutrient Neutrality planning](#).

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments

The next Development Committee is due to be held on 14th November 2024 (i.e. before the Council meeting) and then there is one scheduled for 12th December 2024.

3 Meetings attended

September (from 20th)

20 Overview and Scrutiny Committee
23 Business Planning
25 Full Council
26 Brinton and Melton Constable Parish Councils

October

7 Cabinet & Business Planning
9 Nutrient Mitigation Member Working Group
10 Planning Policy and Built Heritage Working Party
12 Positivitea in Holt
16 Overview and Scrutiny Committee
17 Development Committee
21 Business Planning
24 Norfolk Strategic Planning Forum
31 Portfolio Holder Meeting

November

4 Cabinet and Business Planning
7 Joint Staff Consultative Committee

4 Future Meetings (after 8th November 2024) due to be Attended

November

12 Melton Constable Parish Council
13 Corpusty and Saxthorpe Parish Council
14 Development Committee
18 Business Planning
18 Edgefield Parish Council
20 Full Council
21 Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party

December

- 2 Cabinet and Business Planning
- 9 Anglian Water Workshop
- 11 Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- 12 Development Committee
- 18 Full Council

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

October 2024

COUNCILLOR WENDY FREDERICKS - CABINET MEMBER FOR PEOPLE SERVICES

For the period up to 30 September 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Benefits

We are considering making changes to our Council Tax Support scheme from 1st April 2025. As part of these changes, we are undertaking a consultation so residents in North Norfolk can tell us about their views on them.

The Council Tax Support under review is the help provided for working age people on low incomes to pay for their Council Tax. Council Tax Support for low-income pensioners (66 years or over) is decided by central government and is therefore not affected by this.

Until April 2013 there was a national scheme called Council Tax Benefit. The Government made local Councils responsible for replacement schemes from 1 April 2013 and reduced funding to support the schemes. Since then, funding has further reduced. We also need to make changes to keep the Council Tax Support Scheme in line with Housing Benefit which we also administer to keep costs low.

Decisions about changes to the scheme need to be considered alongside the wider challenges being faced by local authorities.

As government funding continues to decrease, we need to strike a balance between a revised scheme that is fair and affordable for those who receive support, and for all our residents who receive council services. However, we remain committed to providing the maximum level of support for those with the lowest income.

In this consultation we are asking for views on several proposals to change the scheme. Options include:

- Introducing a flat rate non-dependent deduction of £10 per week for each adult.
- Removing the additional earnings disregard of £17.10 a week from earnings.
- Reducing the time we can backdate an award of Council Tax Support.

The consultation is published on the council's website and has also been posted to households who may be affected by the proposed changes. The consultation closes at midnight on Sunday 24th November 2024.

Benefits Speed of Processing

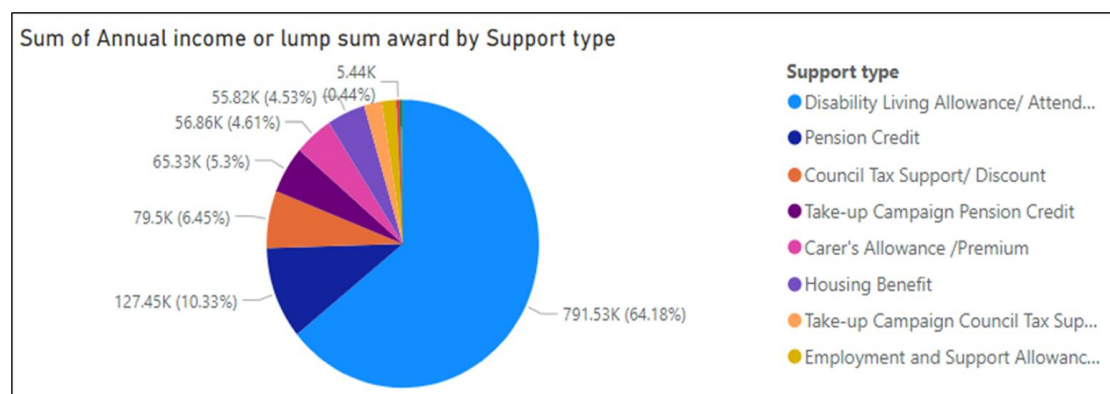
The Department for Work and Pensions have published the New Claims speed of processing figures for Quarter 1, the national average days to process is 22 days. North Norfolk's speed of processing of new claims for Quarter 1 is **7 days** which is the fastest in the County.

Financial Inclusion

To date, in this financial year, the team have claimed over £1.23 million* in missed benefits and/or funding for households across North Norfolk, with the highest amount of income being claimed for disabled households.

* Sum of income or lump sum award calculated on an annual basis.

Financial Inclusion	
Income Tracker 24/25	
Support type	Sum of Annual income or lump sum award
Carer's Allowance /Premium	56,862.00
Council Tax Support/ Discount	79,503.46
Disability Living Allowance/ Attendance Allowance / Personal Independence Allowance	791,528.40
Discretionary Housing Payment	2,307.07
Edenred/Argos Voucher	5,440.00
Employment and Support Allowance or Jobseeker's Allowance	21,304.40
Energy Bank Voucher	1,837.00
Household Support Fund/ Discretionary Household Support Grant	0.00
Housing Benefit	55,817.84
Pension Credit	127,446.80
Take-up Campaign Council Tax Support	25,823.67
Take-up Campaign Pension Credit	65,332.80
Total	1,233,203.44



We have recently run take up campaigns for Council Tax Support and Pension Credit through mailings, website information, and social media, to bolster low income households throughout the winter.

The team will be increasing their targeted work through the Financial Inclusion Triage Officer, a newly created post starting in November. The role will work closely with households in crisis, keeping people in their homes for longer.

This will provide a cost benefit to the council and to other public services as problems are unravelled and solved before they become too complex, or support is put in place as

early as possible for those with complex and ongoing needs.

Household Support Fund

The council has been allocated funding of £69k under round 6 of the Household Support Fund. This round of funding is for 6 months (Oct 24 to Mar 25). Households will be contacted by the Benefits team if they are eligible to support. The delivery plan is currently being finalised and detail will be published shortly.

Discretionary Housing Payments

We continue to administer Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to support tenancy sustainment, homelessness, and to support people to stay within the community. Cases are worked on as a panel which includes officers from the Benefits Team and Housing Options.

For 2024/25, North Norfolk has been allocated funding of £103,037.00, and up to 31st October 2024 we have spent 71% of our allocation across 84 households. A further total of 157 applications (across 146 households) have been refused as the circumstances of the household are outside the scope of the scheme. Where we have not been able to provide support through the DHP scheme, the team will consider other funding options and signpost the customer accordingly.

A breakdown of how the expenditure has been allocated across the 84 households can be seen below.

Single Working Age Households	
Number of successful applications	51
Rent Arrears	£4,655.61
Rent Deposit/Moving Costs	£400.00
Ongoing Rent Shortfall	£33,542.42
Sub Total Expenditure	£38,598.03
Single Pension Age Households	
Number of successful applications	5
Rent Arrears	£0.00
Rent Deposit/Moving Costs	£0.00
Ongoing Rent Shortfall	£6,451.68
Sub Total Expenditure	£6,451.68
Couple Working Age Households	
Number of successful applications	4
Rent Arrears	£2,034.73
Rent Deposit/Moving Costs	£0.00
Ongoing Rent Shortfall	£822.38
Sub Total Expenditure	£2,857.11
Couple Pension Age Households	
Number of successful applications	1
Rent Arrears	£0.00
Rent Deposit/Moving Costs	£2,154.00
Ongoing Rent Shortfall	£0.00
Sub Total Expenditure	£2,154.00
Family Working Age Households	
Number of successful applications	23
Rent Arrears	£2,527.26

Rent Deposit/Moving Costs	£1,661.95
Ongoing Rent Shortfall	£18,581.75
Sub Total Expenditure	£22,770.96
Family Pension Age Households	
Number of successful applications	0
Rent Arrears	£0.00
Rent Deposit/Moving Costs	£0.00
Ongoing Rent Shortfall	£0.00
Sub Total Expenditure	£0.00
Total Expenditure	£72,831.78

Housing Options and Homelessness Prevention

Your Choice Your Home

As at the 31st October 2024 there were 2,334 households on the housing list with 489 (21%) being on the Housing Register – this register contains those qualifying applicants who have the most urgent housing needs.

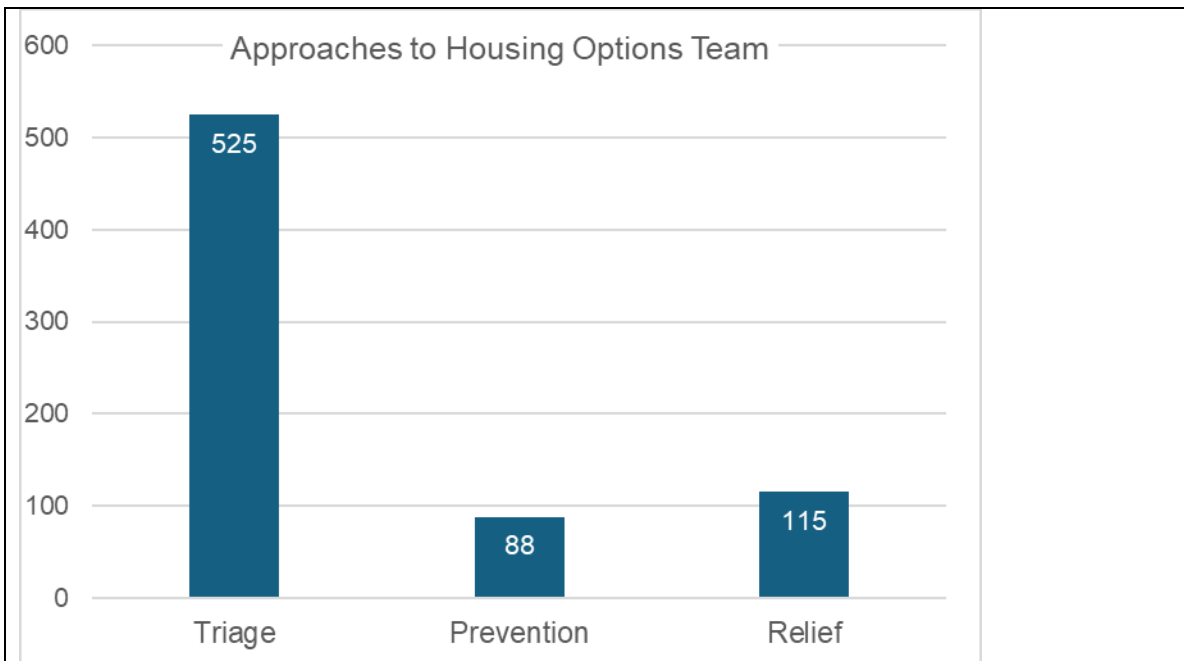
The tables below highlight the makeup of housing need and the size property that is required by applicants on the housing list. Although the greatest demand for housing is those with a 1-bedroom need, there are significantly fewer larger properties allocated with a current demand for 4 bed+ properties being 221 with out 1 four bedroom housing being let between 1st April to 31st October 2024.

	Housing List by Bedroom Need				Homes Let by Property size (Bedrooms)			
	Housing Register	Housing Options	Transfer	Total	Housing Register	Housing Options	Transfer	Total
1 Bed	209	924	175	1308	60	1	6	67
2 Bed	100	354	89	543	78	7	7	92
3 Bed	82	107	48	237	16	1	3	20
4 Bed	89	95	37	221	1	0	0	1
5 Bed +	9	9	7	25	0	0	0	0
Total	489	1489	356	2334	155	9	16	180

Households Assessed and Duty Owed

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

Approaches to the service remain high and between 1st April 2024 to 31st October 2024 we have opened 728 new cases. Each case represents a household who has contacted us as they have some sort of housing need, and we are still seeing an increase in homeless households (relief cases).



The three most common triggers of homelessness were:

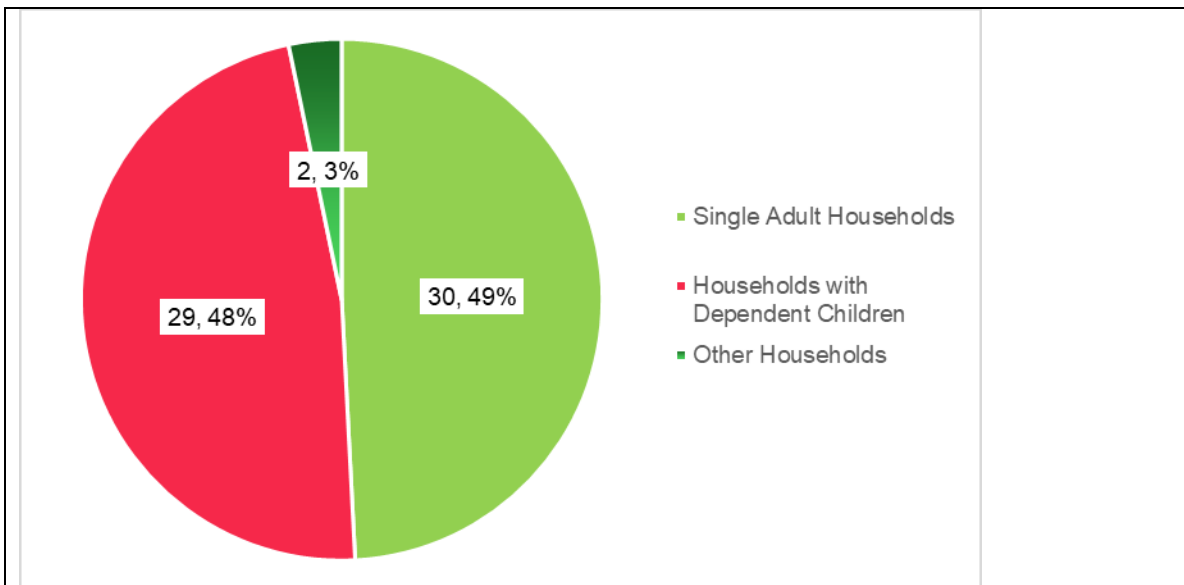
- End of Private Tenancy
- Family/friends no longer/willing to accommodate
- Domestic Abuse

As at the 31st October 2024 there were 223 open homeless cases. Of which 137 households were initially assessed as threatened with homelessness (68 – prevention Duty) or were homeless (69 Relief Duty), of these households 56 included (134) dependent children.

Temporary Accommodation

As at the 31st October 2024 there were 53 households in Temporary Accommodation. This is an overall decrease of 23% from the same date last year (31st August 2023).

Included in the 30 Family Households there are 77 children.



Rough Sleeping

During the month of October (at various points in time) 5 people were reported/verified as sleeping rough in North Norfolk, this includes 1 person with entrenched experience of rough sleeping and 4 people who have previously slept rough in the district. At the end of the month, 4 people remained sleeping rough.

DAHA Accreditation

North Norfolk District Council have been awarded an accredited status by Standing Together, a domestic abuse support charity.

DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance) accreditation is the UK benchmark for how housing providers should respond to domestic abuse.

The Council worked with DAHA to implement best practice as a housing provider/service, to ensure we are delivering a safe and effective response to domestic abuse.

[Housing Strategy](#)

Temporary Accommodation

The Council currently holds 25 units of Temporary or other homeless accommodation (including five units of move on accommodation for ex-rough sleepers). Some of these units have been partly funded using government grant, including Local Authority Housing Fund Grant (which has also helped to fund Flagship Housing to purchase 10 affordable homes).

Value for money analysis of our in-house TA has been completed and has concluded the homes do provide VFM, especially compared to expensive (and inferior) nightly paid accommodation.

New Affordable Homes

We have a healthy affordable housing scheme pipeline, many of which are 'rural exception' housing sites at various points in the development process. There are over twenty developments which will, subject to approvals, yield more than 350 new affordable homes in the next few years. In common with most of Norfolk, 'Nutrient neutrality' is a delaying factor for many sites within the district.

In 2024/25 we expect Housing Associations to provide 59 new affordable homes in the district – this is a lower figure than previously reported as one scheme will now begin handing over homes in early 2025/26. So far in 2024/25 23 new homes have been completed, including well-received Exception Schemes in Northrepps and Hindringham.

Recently Planning has been approved for a site of 47 affordable homes in Bacton and 50+ homes on Station Road in North Walsham.

Development of affordable homes in Sheringham (Westwood), Warham, Salthouse and West Beckham are also on site, as well as affordable homes as part of a market site at Beresford Road, Holt.

North Norfolk recently gave a presentation on our success in delivering affordable homes through rural expectation schemes at a national Rural Services Network event.

Social Prescribing

Referrals have increased significantly in October. There has also been a number of complex cases this month, requiring professional's meetings, which have been led by the Team Leader.

October 2024:

Referrals received into SP = **54**

Total number of issues/concerns supported by SP = **130**

Total number of referrals discussed at North Norfolk Help Hub = **40**

YTD: (figures from 01/04/2024)

Referrals received into SP = **305**

Total number of issues/concerns supported by SP = **781**

Total number of referrals discussed at North Norfolk Hep Hub = **159**

Note: all cases raised at the North Norfolk Health Hub meeting are complex cases with multiagency working practices in place

Community Hub

4th meeting held on Thursday 17th October with over 50 agencies represented. Presentations received from:

- Help Alert – a care and falls alarm agency
- NHS Smoke Free – NHS Health Checks – Reed
- Adult Learning from NCC
- Health & Wellbeing Web page – Catherine Van Battum

The next newsletter due to be released Friday 8th Nov 2024.
Next meeting: Thursday 21st Nove (Focus on suicide prevention)

Homes for Ukraine (H4U)

There are currently eighty-three Ukrainian guests being supported in North Norfolk, of which fifty-four are adults and twenty-nine are under the age of eighteen, in thirty-four host settings.



IHAT

Continue to promote IHAT and discretionary grants available throughout 2024-25.

- Production of literature to better promote DFG and Discretionary Grants within local community groups and residents of NNDC.
- Attending relevant Positivitea and occupational therapy events to promote and network with local organisations and groups.

Key objectives

- Increase adaptation output, we have increase demand within the system at present and are actively looking for ways to efficiently progress less complex cases more rapidly by utilising resource we already have within the team.
- Aim to increase spend through the amount of approved cases and completed adaptations.

Figures 2024/25 – Disabled Facilities Grant

Budget for 2024/25 £1,754,615.00 (minus 15% top slice for staff costs)

Quarter 1 & 2 YTD grants awarded (completed)	82 cases/grants awarded, 130 individual adaptations undertaken
Quarter 1 & 2 YTD total value	£860,367.53
Quarter 1 & 2 YTD total DFG contacts	268
Quarter 1 & 2 YTD recommendation for adaptations completed	119
2023/24 brought forward approval value/outstanding cases YTD (expected to complete 2024/25)	£314,724.85 / 26 approves cases
Cases awaiting assessment for adaptations	77

Figures 2024/25 – Discretionary Grants

Quarter 1 & 2 YTD grants awarded (completed)	43
Quarter 1 & 2 YTD total value	£50,982.48

Discretionary Grants key highlights from quarter 2

- 19 minor adaptation grants (*adaptations costing under £1000, non means tested*) awarded totalling £5624.00 (average spend per grant £296.00). This has included applicants who may not be financially eligible for DFG and also lower level adaptations that have prevented the need for DFG meaning savings within DFG budget and also relieving some of the pressure/demand on the DFG process.
- 7 home repair grants awarded totalling £27,279.00 (average spend per grant £3,897.00) these have included repairs and replacement boilers/heating systems inc. hot water with some properties and residents being without these basic utilities for 2+ years. Grants have also been awarded under home repair that have helped facilitate a DFG for adaptations in addition to Discretionary including upgrades to electrical systems to allow for the installation of stair lifts and level access showers. Without the grant these upgrades would have prevented an adaptation if the client was unable to fund prior to DFG application submission.
- 12 architects and surveyors grants awarded totalling £15,444.85 (average spend £1,287.00). These grants have enabled complex cases to progress to DFG through taking away the expensive upfront cost required away from the family/applicant and offering support to applicants through the architect and survey or grant. Without the introduction of this grant less than 10% of our complex cases were able to progress previously due to financial implications.

3 Meetings attended

September	October	November
Anglian Water Workshop	Cabinet	Cabinet
Visit to Water Lane Mundesley re improvements	Business Planning	Business Planning
Cabinet and Comms meeting	Norfolk Citizens Advice	Laying Wreath at Mundesley

Mundesley Golf Club Meeting regarding Net Zero discussion	Neurodivergence in Local Government	LGA Training Risk Management Warwick
LGA MP Parliamentary Reception Whitehall	Trunch Parish Council	Armistice Day at NNDC
Ripple Catchup	LGA Finance Training Refresh 2 sessions	Social Value Calculator Meeting
Planning Briefing	Video of 25 th unit of TA	Overview and Scrutiny
LGA Transformation Refresher	Portfolio Catch up with Peoples' Services	AGM Libdem
Cabinet	Portfolio Catch up with Housing Strategy	Business Planning
Business Planning	Development Committee	Southern Hill Meeting
Meeting with Solo Housing Association	Libdem Meeting	Flagship Strategic Partner Meeting
Victory Housing Meeting	LGA Conference Harrogate Oct 21 st – 24 th	Portfolio Catch up with Housing Strategy
Meeting with Rentplus	MPC and NNDC Meeting	NNDC Full Council
Patient Reference Group	Beam Foundation Meeting	Housing Conference London 26 – 28 th November
LGA comms Training	Visit to Stiffkey Affordable Housing Site	District Council Network presentation HOP Westminster
Rural Fair Funding and Economy Webinar	BBC Radion Norfolk Housing interview	Homestead Charity Meeting
Southern Hill Hospital Meeting		Energy Hub Meeting
Rural Affordable Housing Webinar		Business Planning & Budget Meeting
Data Support Catch-up		LGA Audit Training on line
Overview and Scrutiny		Planning Training Refresher
MPC Housing Meeting		Mundesley Christmas Lights Switch on
Rural Health and Care Webinar		PH Catchup Peoples Services
Beam Meeting		Site Visit to Warham with Flagship
Holt Land Discussion		
Norfolk Wind offshore event		
MPC Full Council		
Meeting the new PCC NNDC Full Council		
Public Meeting with Denbury Homes		

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

08 November 2024

COUNCILLOR RINGER - CABINET MEMBER FOR IT, ENVIRONMENTAL AND WASTE SERVICES

For the period September - October 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Civil Contingencies

- The annual Civil Contingencies report and the Business Continuity policy/framework updates have been prepared and will go to GRAC in December.
- The highest and 2nd highest Spring Tides of the year passed without significant issues.
- Members of the Community Connector teams, and the Civil Contingencies team represented NNDC at the new 'Crucial Crew' (Fire led safety event for 10–11-year-olds) at Gresham's in Holt. Risk and Resilience was the theme and delivered in partnership with the Norfolk Resilience Forum.

Public Protection

The taxi and private hire policy is under review and will be presented to the next licensing committee in December. Officers have met with members of the trade representation bodies to discuss the proposals and changes.

Vehicle applications for taxi's can now be booked online and the application forms are now editable on screen. This represents and delivers an improvement in customer service and waiting times.

The Licensing team has seen a significant increase in work associated with taxis. In 2019/20 there were 41 new driver applications compared with 103 new driver applications in 2023/2024. In 2019/20 there were 43 new vehicle applications compared with 220 new vehicle applications in 2023/24. As a result of this increase we are looking to recruit additional capacity in this team

The Food Safety team are continuing to undertake routine food hygiene inspections, they are working to the current Food standard Agency target of

450 inspections by 31/03/2025. This is a significant task given the vacancies in the team.

Environmental Protection

An abatement notice has been served on an industrial premises in relation to noise after a lengthy investigation.

The consultation process for a new Public Space Protection Order in relation to inconsiderate and inappropriate vehicles use started on the 4th of November and runs until 9th of December. Further details can be found here: [Home | PSPOs: Inconsiderate and inappropriate vehicle use](#)

Environmental and Safety Services

Continued improvement has been observed with bin collections following the challenging and lengthy reroute earlier this year. Weekly missed bins are trending downwards and round completion rates are high.

Planning for Commercial and Domestic Food Waste collections and surrounding discussions are progressing and the project planning for this is underway.

A Garden waste subscription article has gone out in the NNDC Outlook to further promote the service and generate uptake, both in the short term and the long term. <https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/environmental-services/order-a-new-brown-garden-bin/>

The team are working with Serco on the removal of the seasonal litter/BBQ bins commencing on 4th of November.

The Council's Health and Safety Policy has been reviewed and updated.

Roof mounted solar panels are being fitted to some of our waste collection freighters. These will help to power the bin lifts and reduce emissions.

IT Infrastructure Team

- IT Review final report has been submitted.
- Officers have tested the National Response Framework (NRF) Incident Plan in the case of a Cyber-attack.
- A revised version of IT Security Policy has been issued to staff.
- All Revenues & Benefits laptops have had a client upgrade.
- 75% of Cyber Security courses issued have been completed but we have a 12% click rate on simulated phishing emails. It is necessary to improve our staff/Members awareness of possible threats.

- Staff have attended training on Microsoft Azure and Security Fundamentals.

IT Web Team

- New forms published:
 - Council Tax benefit consultation
 - Council Tax Register for Direct Debit form
- Existing forms updated:
 - Changes to Customer Reply functionality
 - Updates to Contact Us
 - Updates to Garden Bin
 - Notification of a death
 - Changes to Preapplication Advice form
 - Purchase a Parking Permit
 - Site Inspection form
- New Forms System Creation
- Work continues on creating our own suite of online forms, separate from any supplier (ongoing savings in software licencing fees). Recent work has included:
 - Working with other software suppliers to enable sending of data in to back-office software
 - C3 (customer service)
 - Whitespace (Environmental Services)
 - Assure (Environmental Services)
 - Replication of existing forms in new system:
 - All Environmental Services Street Reporting Forms (Littering, dog fouling, graffiti etc)
 - Noise and Nuisance reporting
 - Integration with Active Directory to enable automatic logging in of internal users
- Website and Intranet Content updates for teams including:
 - Invest North Norfolk
 - Planning
 - Green / Environmental
 - Community safety / safeguarding
 - Country Parks

ICT Applications Support Team

- Work ongoing to archive data.
- Procurement in Revs/Bens being supported.
- Agreement with Environmental Health not to renew mobile working software at a saving of £7.7K

- Work underway to strengthen links between Environmental Health and ICT, working alongside Environmental Health technical lead.
- Civica Revs & Bens software updated for all four environments.
- Finance system brought up to current release levels.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

IT Infrastructure Team

- Install the Powerstores used for storage at Cromer & Fakenham.
- Review our usage of Microsoft products.
- Build server for an impending upgrade to the Environmental Health system.
- Continue to develop staff and widen the skill pool.
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Audit
- Submission for the Cyber assessment framework.
- Order the upgrade from analogue to Digital for telephone/broadband lines in anticipation of the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) switch off.

IT Web Team

- Moving mapping services to UNImap Web
- Engagement and assistance with various council consultations
- Automating data transfers between Planning and Environmental Services
- Team training on “.NET Razor” to further enhance new forms system
- Pending forms:
 - Internal form for Licensing
 - Custom and Self build form – in testing with Service
 - Second property review form – in testing with Service
 - Change of business address
 - Self-serve customer management facility for Garden Bins

ICT Applications Support Team

- Plan to introduce new Document Management System within Environmental Health.
- Review of service software costs, determine if savings can be realised.
- Review of forthcoming contract end dates, consideration given to enact full procurement to secure preferential rates.
- Training on Finance release loads to take full responsibility for this going forward.
- Work to migrate land registry data to national database.

3 Meetings attended

Regular Meetings with officers on Portfolio Matters
Norfolk Waste Partnership
Joint Waste Contract Review and Development Board
Meetings with representatives of SERCO

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

November 2024

COUNCILLOR JOHN TOYE - CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

For the period September to November 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Funding and Programmes

UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a three-year funding programme with an allocation of £1.2 million (2022-2025) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) is a two-year capital grant fund of £1.4 million (2023-2025) awarded to NNDC by Government. Both programmes are intended to support local economic priorities.

The programmes have reached mid-year (Quarter 2) in the final year of delivery and are on track for full defrayal of the funding allocation by end of March 2025.

Five schemes are presently being delivered through the UKSPF programme in the current financial year:

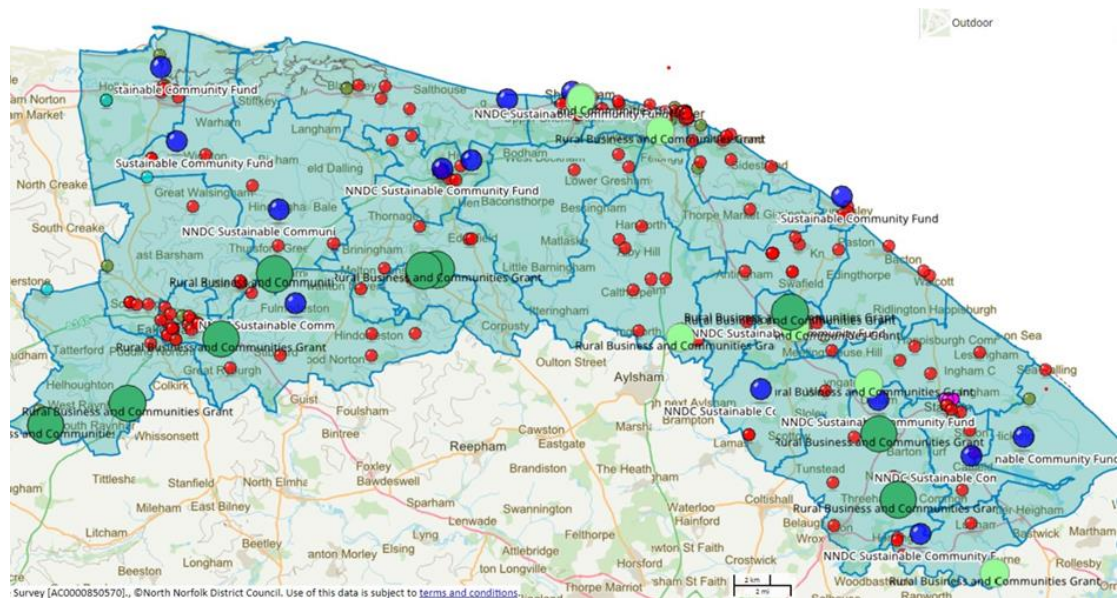
- Decarbonisation and Growth
- Go Digital
- Future Skills Now
- Growth Hub business advice
- Cost of Living energy efficiency support for households (in partnership with Norfolk Warm Homes)

These schemes are designed to provide advice to businesses/organisations and encompass a variety of different approaches, including audits, advice, and training. Some of the schemes also include grant funding to support identified needs. In addition, there is a scheme to support households experiencing fuel poverty to reduce their energy costs and reduce carbon emissions. The take-up has been good across all five schemes, with some programme targets already being met or exceeded.

The Rural Business and Community Grant scheme (funded by REPF) is a capital only scheme designed to support business and community projects. To date **24 capital projects** have been awarded funding (12 business and 12 community led), with **£1,250,000 of grants committed** to-date against the £1.4 million budget. This investment has leveraged a further £1.2m of additional community and private match funding.

Collectively the UKSPF and REPF grant and support schemes being delivered have leveraged **£2m of private, community and additional public sector investment (non-NNDC)** and therefore bringing the total value of the programme to **£4.6m**.

As illustrated below, there has been a good geographical spread of business and community groups supported across the District through the programmes.



Skills & Employment

The inaugural North Norfolk Skills and Employment Forum was held on 22 October. Attended by a strong turnout of representatives from the skills, education and training providers, the group will work collaboratively towards an overarching objective of delivering visible, accessible, and inclusive skills and employability pathways aligned to the needs of local employers. The primary goal of the forum is to identify and implement solutions in response to local opportunities and challenges presented in the Economic Growth Strategy 2023-2027; these include issues such as 'brain drain', low wages and an aging workforce. Future meetings will be held bi-monthly.

Business Engagement Activities

The Economic Growth, Communications and Web Development teams are presently working together on improving the Council's approach to business engagement, to improve our understanding of business needs/challenges, find new ways of sharing information and to celebrate business success stories. This will include reviewing the Invest North Norfolk brand and web pages, e-communications and events (commencing in 2025). Further details will follow as this work develops.

As part of our ongoing business engagement activities, we continue to visit and have meetings with local businesses and those seeking to inward invest. We are also continuing to visit our local towns and communities with Mundesley as our next one.

One notable recent visit was to the Worstead Estate on 30 October. The Council has worked closely with the estate owners and the businesses who have located on to the estate, as part of their process of diversification.



A video of our discussion around the development of the site and the support of the Economic Growth Team can be found here: [\(1\) Post | LinkedIn](#)

Scottow Enterprise Park visit

A visit to Scottow Enterprise Park took place to liaise with the team managing the site and meet some of the businesses operating from the site, including Swift Air and Attolife (formerly Anglia DNA). At 600 acres, this site is North Norfolk's largest business park, and the Economic Growth team have worked very hard with local partners over the years to help a number of large and innovative businesses locate onto this site. The new CEO of Hethel Innovation (which manages the site) is keen to continue to work collaboratively with the Council to support new investment and develop clusters, with the clean energy sector in particular being recognised as a key growth area.



2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Women Talk Business

Friday 29 November 2024 from 10.30am to 12pm
Venue: Cromer Library, Prince of Wales Road, Cromer, NR21 9DY
Organised by BIPC Norfolk

Getting started with Google Analytics 4 (GA4) workshop

Thursday 5 December 2024 from 9.15am to 12.45pm
Venue: Committee Room, North Norfolk District Council, Holt Road, Cromer, NR27 9EN
Organised by New Anglia Growth Hub

Social Media for your Business workshop

Thursday 9 January 2025 from 9.15am to 12.45pm
Venue: Committee Room, North Norfolk District Council, Holt Road, Cromer, NR27 9EN
Organised by New Anglia Growth Hub

3 Meetings attended

Roys
Byfords
Sainsburys
Worstead Estate
The Victoria at Holkham
Elis
Scottow Enterprise Park
Swift Aircraft
Attolife
Weener Plastics
North Norfolk Skills and Employment Forum
UKSPF Local Partnership Group
Fakenham Business Engagement Group

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

November 2024

COUNCILLOR ADAM VARLEY CABINET MEMBER FOR CLIMATE CHANGE AND NET ZERO

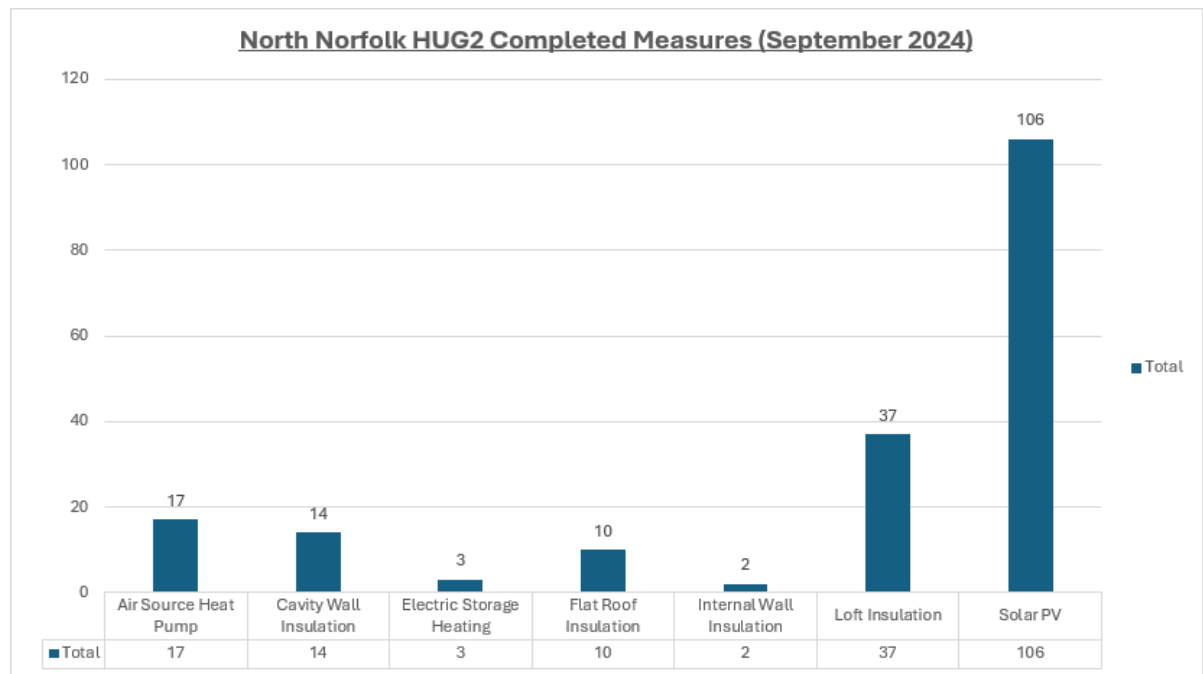
For the period September to October 2024

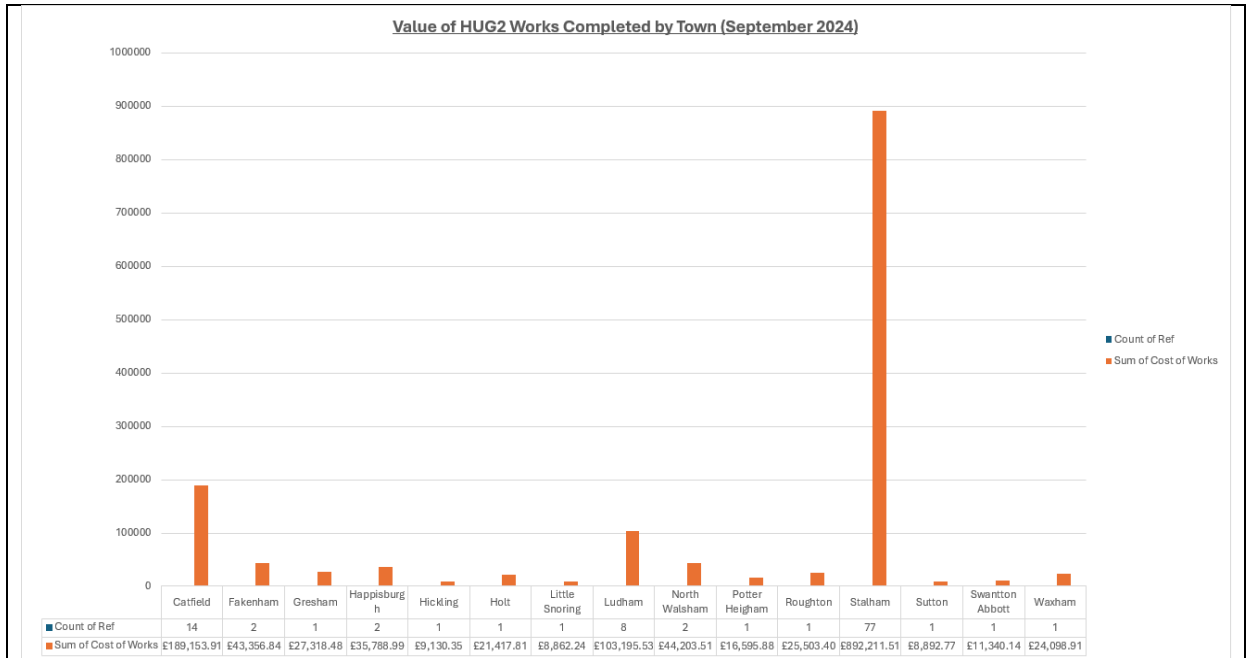
1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Delivery of funding from Government - Home Upgrade Grants (HUG2) and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) funding in conjunction with Norfolk Warm Homes.

Home upgrade grants are delivered by our Energy Efficiency Officer in conjunction with Norfolk Warm Homes (a consortium of Norfolk local authorities.) These grants are delivered to eligible off-gas households to improve the energy rating of the property and reduce bills. Energy efficiency improvements and a move to low carbon heating are key concepts of the scheme.

The value of completed HUG2 works across North Norfolk now exceeds £1,461,000 million which is comprised of 114 homes as of the last monthly reporting period (30th September). The Standard Assessment Procedure score, a number that estimates a building's energy performance and efficiency and informs the EPC (Energy Performance Certificate), has improved by an average of 18% across these buildings.





Stalham has a large number of off-gas homes which, together with the work done through the Net Zero Communities Project, has meant that the take-up of the grants in this area has been particularly successful.

UKSPF has enabled the team to unlock more HUG2 funding. Some properties fail the 'fabric first' requirements of the HUG2 funding, usually because of failed cavity wall insulation which cannot be rectified under the rules of the grant scheme. By funding this measure, UKSPF has enabled properties to insulate their homes making them suitable for alternative heating systems such as ASHPs which have been provided by HUG. Sixteen of the HUG funded homes have been enabled/enhanced through UKSPF.

The HUG2 scheme runs until March 2025 and is now fully subscribed.

The team is currently assisting Norfolk Warm Homes in preparing a bid for the Warm Homes: Local Government Scheme, which will replace HUG2.

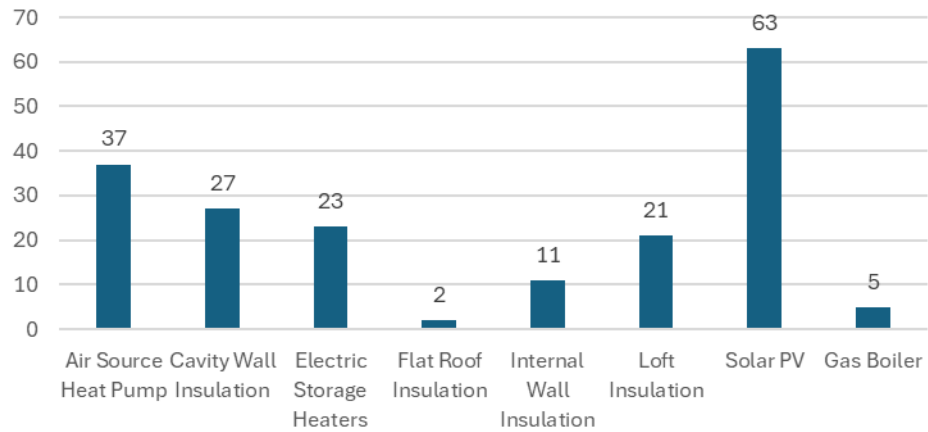
Delivery of Energy Company Obligation Scheme

Under ECO, medium and larger energy suppliers fund the installation of energy efficiency measures into low-income British households. The obligated energy suppliers work with installers to introduce certain efficiency measures into homes, such as loft, floor or wall insulation, or heating measures.

In October 2022 Cabinet approved a statement of intent which allows the Council to approve additional households based on other factors such as those with a health condition that could be impacted by living in a cold home.

A total of 106 declarations of eligibility have been issued to-date, since the publication of our Statement of Intent, with 71 declarations issued in this financial year.

Approved North Norfolk ECO4 LA Flex Measures (2024/25)



Take up of the scheme has again been particularly successful in Stalham and also Fakenham. This scheme is still open to applications and details of eligibility can be found on our website [Home | Energy saving tips \(north-norfolk.gov.uk\)](#)

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Work to install Solar PV cells on Victory Swim and Fitness Centre in North Walsham is due to commence on site on 11/11/24.

Further engagement activities are taking place in Stalham as part of the Net Zero Communities Project. This is a community thermal camera “hire” scheme and an event at the Poppy Centre – “An introduction to Climate Awareness”, focusing on the challenges in North Norfolk related to climate change and what individuals and communities can do to decrease carbon emissions (carbon awareness training)

3 Meetings attended

Norfolk Strategic Flood Alliance
Briefing on the outcome of the Ant Broads and Marshes planning inquiry
NCCP Portfolio Holders Group

MAG002 The Broads: Flooding & Groundwater
Carbon Footprint
Biodiversity and Flagship group
Introduction with Climate Change team

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

November 2024

COUNCILLOR SHIRES - CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, ASSETS AND PROPERTY SERVICES

For the period September 2024 to November 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Finance

Accounts

- The draft 2022/23 Statement of Accounts has been published on our website and the public inspection period is open. The 2023/24 Statement of Accounts will be published before the end of December which is well before the backstop deadline of February 2025.

Budget

- Cabinet have reviewed budget savings proposals submitted by Assistant Directors at a recent Business Planning meeting. A second round of identifying savings is taking place to find further savings
- The Period 6 budget monitoring report has been prepared. This outlines the position for revenue and capital as at the end of September. The current full year forecast is a deficit of £0.995m. Two thirds of this is attributable to the cost of temporary accommodation and then borrowing costs exceeding the budget.

Revenues

Collection for 2024/25 as of 30 September 2024.

- The Council Tax collection was 55.11% against the target of 55.10%.
- The NDR collection was 60.53% against the target of 59.00%.
- There has been excellent progress on some complex debt cases that have included old debts which we have been successful in collecting.
- Congratulations to the Revenues Service who were highly commended for the IRRV Performance Awards 'Most Improved Team of the Year' and then won the Revenues Team of the Year Award at the recent national IRRV annual awards ceremony.

Estates

Vacant properties

- Cornish way letting – one-unit vacant pending letting once tenants reorganise. Unit 5/7 is occupied.

- The Cedars Barns are being advertised with little interest; however land is being let temporarily as a compound. Vacant Annex has some interest from an existing tenant.
- North Lodge Park hard standing is vacant.
- Fakenham Connect first floor offices maybe required to facilitate the Flash project.

Leases

- Lease negotiations for the RNLi and Rocket House Café at the Rocket House are progressing subject to governance approvals. Repair of the building is progressing.
- Short term agreement for car parking at Gold Park continues to progress as an interim arrangement until terms over a longer-term agreement are agreed.
- Fakenham industrial unit lease renewal with solicitors is expected to complete shortly with an increase in rent.
- Solicitors continue to progress with the lease renewal to North Walsham Football Club in consultation with funding body.
- Awaiting tenant confirmation on funding to contribute to repairs at Marrams Bowls Club, and lease renewal is progressing at Suffield Park.
- Lease renewal negotiations for industrial unit at Catfield, Cornish Way with rental increases continue.
- Donkey shelter – Building redevelopment by community organisation being considered.
- Cromer Council office first floor lease short term lease being progressed and longer-term lease for a smaller area being considered. The first-floor office may come vacant and be available for letting either as a whole or part of the exiting footprint.
- Lease negotiations to facilitate the FLASH project are progressing.

Disposals

- Enabling land at Sheringham. The option agreement is to be further extended for a period of 6 months to enable the purchaser time to apply for planning consent for an amended scheme, alongside this advertising of the site for sale, will also commence.
- Sale of Station Approach putting greens to the Town Council in Sheringham continues to progress.
- Disposal of Highfield Road car park, Fakenham to local housing association is progressing.
- Mundesley Gun Emplacement disposal has completed. A separate area of land to Parish Council continues to progress.

Acquisition

- Acquisition of 1 additional property for Housing Team has completed.
- Supporting Coastwise/Coastal Team in acquiring 2 areas of land in Happisburgh and a further 2 residential properties are progressing with solicitors instructed.

Property Services

The Lees

- Works to refurbish the right-hand side of the Lees at Sheringham are due for

completion in October. This will include a changing places facility.

- Play area refurbishment at the Leas Sheringham. We are looking to promote inclusion going forward with NNDC play areas and are supporting the *everyone has the right to play* initiative. The play area design has been approved. Installation has been deferred until later this financial year allowing current capital works ongoing to be completed.
- The amenity area to the west of the Leas public conveniences - Initial proposals would include removal of the ornamental water features in their entirety and refurbishment of the horse box shelters and the shelter by the yacht pond.

Collaborative Working

- Collaborative working with Estates to deliver the Chalet roof repair works. This includes the Art Deco building and Red Lion tenanted units at Cromer and chalet roof repairs at Sheringham.
- Collaborative working with Estates at The Rocket House, The Reef, Watch House and Marrams Bowls Club.
- Working with Officer Rawlings for energy efficiency and improvement works to Holt Road offices to include improvements to existing roof PV's, electric vehicle charging points and new boilers.
- Cromer offices final phase LED lighting project is due to commence first week in November with a 4 week programme.
- Working with Countryside and Leisure to deliver an electrical supply and new workshop and office areas at Holt Country Park. The modular buildings have now been installed and are operational.
- Collaborative working with Housing Options on the target hardening scheme for vulnerable persons.
- Continue to work with Housing Options on inspecting and maintaining temporary accommodation and refugee accommodation

Albert Street

- Works at Albert Street Holt public conveniences demolition and rebuild are now underway.
- Completion is expected in December securing the changing places funding.

Car Park Enforcement

- Discussions around the current car park enforcement service level agreement with Borough Council West Norfolk Kings Lynn which expires early next year.

Pier

- Current programme of pier substructure works is complete.
- Pier sub structure survey is currently work in progress with the report expected in December.

- Working with Leisure Services and Openwide on the Pier backstage refurbishment works planned for January 2025. Tender is due back on 20 November.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Finance

Statement of Accounts

- Work will commence on the production of the draft 2023/24 Statement of Accounts. This will be published before the recommended backstop date. Once completed the Council will be back on track to meet pre Covid statutory deadlines.

Budget

- Working papers completed in conjunction with service managers will be pulled together to produce the first draft position of the 2025/26 base budget which will be presented to Cabinet in January.

Revenues

Second Homes Work

- North Norfolk District Council has voted to implement the premium charge from April 2025 and is in discussions with Norfolk County Council as to how a proportion of the additional Council Tax receipts generated from the premium in North Norfolk can be used to address the acute housing pressures which exist in the district – through investing in new social housing developments with Housing Association partners.
- There is additional work needed here to communicate to residents of the potential increase and implement measures to reduce avoidance of the premium.

Business Improvement District (BIDs)

- The Holt BID has updated us that key members have resigned, and they are looking for others to take their place. It has been agreed that the start date of 1 April 2025 would no longer be feasible with the earliest suggested start date being 1 April 2026 which has the advantage of reducing some of the costs associated.

System Procurement

- The Civica Open revenues system will expire for Revenues and Benefits on 1 October 2025 and the tender bids are in and Revs, Bens and IT are in the process of scoring these.

Training/Development

- We have a have a team leader nearing completion of her level 5 CMI management qualification, one Revenues Officer now starting the level 3 certificate in Institute of Revenues, Rating & Valuation (IRRV) and another officer looking to start within the next twelve months.

Service Improvements

- Online forms - reviewing and improving the most used customer paper forms is continuing including the Non-Domestic (Business) Rates Change of Address form.
- We have also nearly completed the work on the Second Homes Review form which we hope to roll out to customers ahead of annual billing. The plan is to send this via email, text and then paper for those customers who do not have digital methods to keep the costs down.
- The Long-term empty property review forms as part of our Business Process Review of the current process has been completed and is now live with updated webpages.
- Reviewing and implementing service improvements suggested by staff including a direct debit online form is nearing completion.

OPEN Revenues Workflow Disk Space discussion

- Revenues and Benefit services in conjunction with IT and System Teams are reviewing the amount of disc space being used with a view to the size reducing. We are close to capacity and have agreed to implement processes to delete and archive old electronic accounts and documents stored that are no longer needed by the services. This work is important and needs to have a resource and to be tested before it is implemented in our live system. It is hoped a rolling plan to undertake this exercise can start so we are in a much better place before annual billing starts in January/February 2025 and we need to create and save another year's worth of data. Once this is up to date, then it will become an annual exercise.

Estates

Beach Huts and chalets

- Implement changes to rents and Beach hut and chalet weekly lets following Overview & Scrutiny and Cabinet.

Assets

- Asset valuation procurement
- Asset Management Plan

Property Services

Forward Plan

- Capital works bids for 2025/2026 submitted.
- Budget saving proposals for 2025/2026 submitted.

Procurement

- Working with Debs Beckles (Procurement Officer) to issue a consultant contract early next year. Tender is now live for this and due back in December.

- Working up tender for car park repairs from current capital fund.
- Working up tender brief for new asset management system. Current contract expires June 2025 with no further extension allowed.

Staffing

- Property Services multi skilled operative shift pattern changes effective from week 44 – week 11 2024. This will mean no Saturday working or out of hours call out service.

3 Meetings attended

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

October-November 2024

COUNCILLOR LIZ WITHINGTON - CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY, LEISURE AND OUTREACH SERVICES

For the period 1st October to 30th November 2024

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Community Connectors Portfolio Holder report: activity and achievements in October 2024



PositiviTea:

Two PositiviTea events have been delivered this month:

1. 8th October – Men's mental health (Wells-Next-The-Sea)
2. 24th October – Living with long term health conditions (North Walsham)

The Webpage <https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/communityconnectors> has been updated to reflect upcoming PositiviTea dates.

Falls & Frailty:

Data from the NNUH continues to be received on a weekly basis. Referrals for North Norfolk average around 20-30 a week. Close collaborative work continues with the ICB and ICC teams.

In October, officers have made 124 calls to residents
423 calls have been made to residents to date, plus 6 home visits.

High Intensity Users:

October

Community Groups Attended: 20
Signposting Activities: 29
Referrals Made from Group Attendance: 11
Referrals Received: 30
Communal Room visits: 3
Attendance Allowance Claims Supported: 22

YTD (figures from 01/04/2024)

Community Groups Attended: 111

Signposting Activities: 140
Referrals Made from Group Attendance: 38
Referrals Received: 84
Attendance Allowance Claims Supported: 43
Blue Badge Applications Supported: 9

Age Friendly Communities:

Work has commenced by the Older People Working group to establish the next potential areas for Age Friendly Development. Town and Parish Councils have been contacted to gauge interest, and a number of these have responded.

The Age Friendly Businesses and Sit You Down schemes continue to be live, across the district. Officers have met with colleagues from Age UK Norfolk to discuss further promotion.

North Norfolk Health & Wellbeing Partnership:

Upcoming meetings:

North Norfolk Health & Wellbeing Partnership Meeting: Friday 15th November

Older People Working Group: Thursday 22nd November

Poppyland Radio:

Two shows recorded on:

<https://www.poppylandradio.co.uk/shows/community-connectors>

Empowering Communities & The Lounge Next The Sea.

Community Grants

NNDC's Rural England Prosperity Fund capital grant scheme for community initiatives continues to support projects in the District. Recent grants include: **North Norfolk Railway** - Improvements to the workshop shed and railway platform lighting improvements, helping to bring efficiencies and emissions reductions.

Colby and Banningham Play Space - the supply and installation of children's outdoor play equipment, seating and perimeter fencing.

North Walsham Rugby Club - mobile floodlights and a VEO camera system. to extend training hours, reduce carbon emissions and encourage volunteering.

Green Park Community Space - to connect to a mains electricity supply; the centre has for many years had to operate on a diesel generator. This will reduce emissions and bring the opportunity to run fridges and to operate a community shop.

Visitor Economy

Visit North Norfolk (VNN) continues to promote collateral that is available to support members with marketing and to deliver ongoing marketing campaigns to promote North Norfolk more widely, with the most recent video seeking to highlight the archaeology of the Deep History Coast [here](#).

The annual VNN 2024 conference will take place at Fakenham Racecourse on 14 November. This will share an analysis of the latest market trends, an update on the activities of VNN and provide important opportunities for businesses operating in the local visitor economy to network. Renowned journalist and broadcaster Simon Calder will be the keynote speaker.

A cultural and tourism report has been completed. This sought to understand the value and role of culture as a driver for local economic growth. Notable findings include:

- Cultural tourists spend **266%** more than other tourist types
- North Norfolk is a levelling up **place for Culture** until 2025
- The cultural Sector contributes over **£250m** to Norfolk and Suffolk in GVA.

The recommendations from this report are presently being reviewed.

Customer Services

Over the summer, Customer Services has been actively assisting residents in response to several council initiatives, including a campaign encouraging those in need to apply for Council Tax Support and raising awareness of Pension Credit. These initiatives followed the Winter Fuel announcement made by central government.

Alongside these efforts, the annual canvass and various reminders and reviews were sent out, contributing to an average telephone wait time of 8 minutes and 31 seconds over the past three months.

As we continue to encourage residents to explore alternative contact methods and self-service options, we're seeing a positive downward trend in wait times.

Customer satisfaction with contact accessibility is currently averaging 80%. However, overall satisfaction rates are rising, with October showing that 89% of surveyed customers were happy or extremely happy with their interaction with the council.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

We hosted a Women's Health PositiviTea last month at [The Treehouse Cafe](#).

The [Hop on the WOW bus - Norfolk & Waveney Integrated Care System \(ICS\)](#) came with an eye care clinic and discussions began about the WOW Bus having a regular presence at The Treehouse with dentists and learning disabilities teams on board. This will be happening from January which is another great success story brought about by connections made at PositiviTea events and through the Community Connector Teams.

The team are looking forward to considering the implications from the Cultural Feasibility study and how this can be used to support the local economy and growth of the creative sector- which is currently the fastest growing sector in the UK and explore the links with culture, arts and heritage and the North Norfolk tourism economy.

Using new software Social Value engineering the team are also looking to how the benefits to the local economy from improved health and wellbeing, sustainable communities and reduced costs to the NHS, as a result of a strong cultural and arts base. It is important we understand how this can financially contribute to the local economy. We will begin to measure the impact this can have from specific projects being proposed or developed and explore how further value can be added as we develop projects and support businesses

Leisure Contract

Everyone Active returned strong participation figures across the 5 leisure facilities in September, attracting 43230 visits. This is an increase on September 2023.

The Reef Triathlon was delivered by the Leisure Team in early October and proved to be a huge success once again. The event sold out with 125 participants signing up and 107 taking part on the day (around 10% drop out is normal for this type of event). Participants from 9 different counties joined in, 44% female and 56% male, and an excellent 26% of attendees were taking part in their first ever triathlon. Every age group from 17-18 all the way up to 75-79 were represented.

Countryside

Two Halloween events were delivered by the team in half term which saw 109 children and 94 adults brave the woods as part of a hide and seek event and a fancy dress trail. Feedback from the events was positive.

The Children's Father Christmas trail on December 23rd is sold out already and two Santa Paws events are selling very well too. These will be the last events of the year. Santa Paws events have been increased this year due to

last years popular demand.

The Rangers management work has turned again to the more practical tasks including ride management and tree works, and the volunteer groups at Holt and Pretty Corner continue to do very well.

Holt country Park

The new staff facilities are all in place now at the Holt country Park. These provide warm and dry spaces with drying facilities and a refreshment space for our staff members and volunteers who are working in all weathers to maintain and improve this important Green flag space.

The new facilities also support staff in the revenue creation and cost saving activities the team undertake. Being able to sell firewood and run events as well as construct our own benches, woodland signage and fencing posts etc means that these are not outsourced and at a greater cost to North Norfolk Residents. The Green Flag status is also dependent on the team continuing to generate improvements in the park and being able to self-source these items supports them in bringing forward improvements at less cost.

Beaches/RNLI

The end of season de-brief with the RNLI did not throw up anything of much significance. We are awaiting the official report, but the feedback was that the season was quiet and uneventful.

Markets

The main season is now over but the Saturday market at Sheringham remains busy, and the Food and Makers bolt on market was a good success. Our Festive Market is set for the 7th December and all the **18 extra pitches have now been booked** for this. Cromer has picked up a few extra traders in recent times.

Physical Activity Development

At present the final Big Norfolk Holiday Fun sessions will take place over Christmas and New Year, although no official announcement has been made about this funding just yet. We are entering into discussions locally to see how we may be able to continue some provision in the district should the funding be withdrawn as expected.

An extra £1500 was secured for Stalham High School's Opening Schools Fund project thanks to an underspend in the district. This will see a fitness facility developed on site to support the pupils and the local community. Conversations around introducing a junior park run at this site are also continuing.

£9000 of funding has been secured for Physical Activity projects to be delivered at libraries in Stalham and North Walsham. These will include Walk & Talk, seated exercise and Tai Chi, and sessions are due to start in the new year.

Pier Pavilion Theatre

The summer show attracted 26331 visits which is almost exactly the same as last year. Concert visits have easily exceeded their target with 22832 booked by the end of quarter three – 3000 over the annual target. Early sales for the Christmas show are strong with opening night taking place on November 16th this year, which is a week earlier due to last year's successful run.

Customer Services

One of the main ways our Customer Service Advisors encourage self-service is by promoting our online forms. When speaking with customers, advisors email relevant web links for their future use. Our contact centre has also recently been upgraded to include text messaging, which will further help us promote these services.

In the near future, our colleagues in Environmental Services will begin sending renewals to residents who use the Garden Bin service. Over the past year, we have been collaborating closely with IT to develop a new Garden Bin Interface, which is expected to significantly improve our ability to manage the incoming contacts related to this service.

3 Meetings attended

Integrated Care System (ICS) Conference, Norfolk Anti Poverty Alliance, Dementia Café development, Positivitea- Mens Mental Health and Winter Well, Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP), Dementia Awareness Session for Staff and Members, North Norfolk Health and Wellbeing Partnership.

Creative Sheringham, Culture and Tourism Feasibility Study, FLASH Project Group and Steering Group, Visit North Norfolk, Experience Sheringham Norfolk Arts Forum Executive Committee, Norfolk Records Office Committee, Norfolk Joint Museums committee, Sheringham Wayfinding Scheme Transport East Webinar for Local authorities RSN Digital Switchover Social Value engineer

Flash Board and Steering Group Tennis Club x2 Healthy Aging Alliance Holt Country Park