

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday, 1 December 2025 at the Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer, NR27 9EN at 10.00 am

Committee

Members Present:

Cllr L Shires
Cllr A Brown
Cllr C Ringer
Cllr A Varley
Cllr J Boyle

Cllr T Adams (Chair)
Cllr H Blathwayt
Cllr J Toye
Cllr L Withington

Members also attending:

Cllr C Cushing (Observer), Cllr V Holliday, Cllr A Fitch-Tillett, Cllr M Taylor

Officers in Attendance:

Chief Executive, Democratic Services Manager, Assistant Director for Finance, Assets, Legal & Monitoring Officer, S151 Officer and Director of Resources, Landscape Officer (Design), Assistant Director for Resources and Planning Policy Team Leader

Press and Public

Apologies for Absence:

None.

75 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd November were approved as a correct record.

76 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

None.

77 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None received.

78 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr C Ringer declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 14 – ‘Modified and Additional Beaches and Inland Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) for Dog Control’, stating that he was a parish councillor for Bodham and there was a PSPO in place in the village.

79 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

The Chair advised that members could ask questions as matters arose during the meeting.

80 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chair invited Cllr V Holliday, Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to speak. Cllr Holliday said that the Committee had supported the recommendations, specifically no increase for standard town car parks and that they asked Cabinet to be mindful of the inconvenience for cash users caused by using small change, such as 5 pence coins.

She also mentioned a request from a member of the Committee, following a recent petition relating to Pretty Corner Woods. He felt that the matter had highlighted some issues with engagement between the Council's Countryside Team and local communities and the following proposal had been supported by the Committee

'For the Countryside Team to proactively communicate with the public, in a timely fashion, regarding the way in which NNDC sites are managed, why they are managed in certain ways and what plans are in place when upcoming works on those sites are likely to cause disruption or a significant change going forward.'

The Chair thanked Cllr Holliday and Cabinet

RESOLVED

To accept the following recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

Petition – Pretty Corner Woods, Sheringham

For the Countryside Team to proactively communicate with the public, in a timely fashion, regarding the way in which NNDC sites are managed, why they are managed in certain ways and what plans are in place when upcoming works on those sites are likely to cause disruption or a significant change going forward.

Car Parking Fees & Charges

Car Parking Charges:

Option 1- overall car parking total increase in line with CPI inflation of 3.8% and apportioned so there is no increase to standard town car parks.

The Committee requested Cabinet to be mindful of the inconvenience for cash users caused by using small change such as 5p coins.

Season Ticket Charges

Option 6 - increase season ticket fees by 3.8%.

81 REPORTING PROGRESS IMPLEMENTING CORPORATE PLAN 2023-27 DELIVERY AGAINST ACTION PLAN 2024/25 AND 2025/26 - TO END OF QUARTER 2 - 1 JULY 2025 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

The Chair introduced this item. He thanked officers for their hard work in producing the report. He highlighted key progress on key issues such as the Local Plan, health

and social care facilities for older residents, the commencement of construction of the new Leisure centre at Fakenham, delivery of 3G pitches in Cromer, Fakenham and North Walsham and the improvement of facilities at Holt Country Park. Regarding the second homes council tax premium, he said that arrangements for 2026 were under discussion, and it was hoped that they would mirror the current agreement. He referred to the North Norfolk Business Forum and encouraged members to subscribe to 'Invest North Norfolk', the Council's new business portal.

The Chair said that a banking hub was now open at Holt, with one due to open in Cromer and another in progress for North Walsham. He then spoke about the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and said that the Government was replacing it and any future funding would go to the Strategic Mayors with a focus on Metropolitan areas. In conclusion, the Chair spoke about Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and highlighted that the consultation was open until 11th January 2026.

Cabinet agreed to note the contents of the report.

82 CAR PARK FEES & CHARGES

Cllr L Shires, the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates & Property Services, introduced this item. She began by thanking the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for their lengthy debate on the proposals and said that she welcomed working in partnership with them.

Cllr Shires explained that last year, when car parking charges and season ticket charges were increased on 1st April, it was with an option to review them again this year. The proposed increase sought to cover inflationary cost increases. She added that there was no proposal to increase the charges in the standard car parks in inland towns. She acknowledged the discussions at Overview & Scrutiny Committee about small change (5 pence) increases but ultimately, members agreed that rounding any increase up, would result in a 5.8% increase overall which was considered to be too high as well as unfairly disadvantaging those paying by app as there was an additional charge already in place for this option. Regarding season ticket prices, members were supportive of the CPI increase of 3.8%.

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

RESOLVED

To recommend the following to Full Council:

Option 1 & Option 6: increase car parking fees and season ticket fees in line with CPI inflation of 3.8%.

Resolved to agree that

The Asset Management Officer, in consultation with the s151 Officer, to proceed with the Consultation in relation to the Off Street Parking Places Order.

Reason for the decision:

Car parking income represents a significant income source to the Council and as such has a substantial contribution to make to the Council's long term financial sustainability

83 FEES & CHARGES 2026-2027

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates & Property Services, introduced this item. She explained that it was an annual report and that for some of the fees and charges, the Council had some flexibility to set the amount, with others being set by central Government. A comprehensive review of licensing fees had been undertaken by officers and in some cases, where fees were set on a cost-recovery basis only, a decrease was proposed. Cllr Ringer, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, added that a really comprehensive piece of work had been undertaken by the Licensing team and he thanked them. Taxis in particular, would see a reduction in their fees next year. There would be regular reviews going forward.

It was proposed by Cllr L Shires, seconded by Cllr C Ringer and

RESOLVED

That Cabinet approves the following fees within the appendix as per requirements set out in legislation:

- Licence to Drive Hackney Carriages or Private Hire Vehicles
- Private Hire Vehicle Licence
- Scrap Metal Dealer (all)
- Scrap Metal Collector (all)

To recommend to Full Council:

- The fees and charges from 1st April 2026 as included in Appendix A.
- That delegated authority be given to the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and relevant Directors/Assistant Director to agree the fees and charges not included within Appendix A as required (outlined within the report).

Reason for the decision:

To approve the Council's proposed fees and charges for 2026/27.

84 COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS & PREMIUMS DETERMINATION 2026-27

The Portfolio Holder for Finance, Estates & Property Services, introduced this item. She began by saying that the Council was still in negotiation regarding the return of NNDC's share of second homes council tax income. She highlighted that the Council had successfully defended the second homes council tax charge at a Valuation Tribunal and it was anticipated that this would provide more certainty on income from this charge going forward.

Cllr C Cushing asked if the 35% was higher than anticipated and was the income accrued so far, in line with what was expected. Cllr Shires replied that the initial estimate was 'conservative' but as she understood it, far more had been accrued than anticipated.

Cllr Cushing asked if a report would be coming forward assessing the impact of the second homes premium. The Chair said that he would consider this and the most appropriate way of presenting such information.

It was proposed by Cllr L Shires, seconded by Cllr J Toye and

RESOLVED

To recommend to Full Council:

That under Section 11A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and other enabling powers that:

- 1) The discounts for the year 2026-27 and beyond are set at the levels indicated in the table at paragraph 3.1.
- 2) To continue to award a local discount of 100% in 2026-27 for eligible cases of hardship under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) and that the Revenues Manager has delegated authority to make Discretionary Reductions under the Hardship Policy up to the value of £4k as indicated in the associated policy in Appendix B.
- 3) That an exception to the empty property levy charges may continue to be made by the Revenues Manager in the circumstances laid out in section 4.2 of this report.
- 4) The long-term empty-property premiums for the year 2026-27 (subject to the empty premium exceptions shown in Appendix C) are set at the levels indicated in the table at paragraph 4.2
- 5) To continue to award a local discount of 100% in 2026-27 for eligible cases of care leavers under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended).
- 6) Those dwellings that are specifically identified under regulation 6 of the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings) (England) Regulations 2003 will retain the 50% discount as set out in paragraph 2.1 of this report.
- 7) Those dwellings described or geographically defined at Appendix A which in the reasonable opinion of the Revenues Manager are judged not to be structurally capable of occupation all year round and were built before the restrictions of seasonal usage were introduced by the Town and Country Planning Act 1947, will be entitled to a 35% discount.
- 8) A new second homes premium of 100% as detailed in paragraph 4.3 (subject to the second home premium exceptions shown in Appendix C) continues to be applied in 2026-27.

Reason for the decision:

To set appropriate council tax discounts and premiums which will apply in 2026-27 and to raise council tax revenue.

85 ADOPTION OF THE NORTH NORFOLK LOCAL PLAN 2024-2040

The Portfolio Holder for Planning & Enforcement, Cllr A Brown, introduced this item. He began by thanking officers, both past and present, for their support in bringing the Local Plan to the final approval stage. It had taken 10 years and he referred members to page 106 of the agenda which set out the key stages to date. Members had been involved throughout the process via the Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party and Cabinet – across three administrations. As well as examination by the Planning Inspector, there had also been public consultations. There was no doubt that it had been a comprehensive process.

He thanked the Acting Planning Policy Manager and his team and also members, who had voted in April 2023 to refer the Local Plan to the Planning Inspector for

inspection.

He then outlined why the Local Plan was needed. He said that it gave the Council control over developments in the district and without a new plan in place, there would be a requirement after the 1st January 2026 to start a new plan. This would present huge challenges, especially with LGR on the horizon and the introduction of a new Strategic Mayoral Authority. The Council would also lose the current housing delivery test which stood at 557 dwellings per year to 2040 and without a plan, this would increase to 932 dwellings per year, leaving the district vulnerable to speculative developers.

He acknowledged that the Plan was not perfect and accepted that there may be challenges to it ahead, especially with the Government's ambitions for housing growth.

In conclusion, Cllr Brown said that with no Local Plan in place, the district would lose the Neighbourhood Plan conformance process and put them in jeopardy. There would also be substantial financial implications of having to start a new plan afresh.

The Chair said that it was a significant achievement, and he thanked officers and members for their hard work. He also acknowledged that it was not perfect and there were sites across the district that would make both members and residents uncomfortable. He reiterated that members must think of the implications of not approving the Plan, adding that there would be a doubling of housing numbers for a start and an increase in speculative development.

Cllr L Shires thanked Cllr Brown and the Planning Policy Team for their hard work. She said that residents didn't fully understand all the complex layers of the planning process. Referring to North Walsham, Cllr Shires said that a lot of new dwellings were planned, which was welcomed by local residents, particularly families, but they were concerned about the impact on services such as healthcare. She went on to say that the land at the end of Mundesley Road (NW16), was causing particular concerns. It had been a late addition to the Plan and was presented almost as a 'done deal' by developers. This had caused considerable concern and she said that local members would need to work with the community to identify the opportune moment for them to feed into the process and ensure that residents understood the difference between the Local Plan and the separate route for considering planning applications. She added that she felt that she could support the approval of the Local Plan because she understood the intent behind it and she would continue to support and engage with the local community when planning applications came forward and push for section 106 agreements to be put in place to ensure the infrastructure was in place to support them.

The Chair agreed with Cllr Shires comments, adding that it was important to remember the Local Plan was for the whole district and to consider the implications of not approving it.

Cllr C Cushing spoke about the Fakenham Urban Extension and said that it was still not underway and this demonstrated that even when dwellings were proposed for certain areas, it was still challenging for them to reach the development stage. He then asked Cllr Brown about the Government's previously stated ambitions for approximately 980 houses per annum in North Norfolk and asked about the risk of this still happening, even with an approved Local Plan in place. Cllr Brown replied that it was a huge risk. Currently, because NNDC submitted its plan when it did, whilst many other councils paused theirs to await Government changes to the

planning process, the Council was subject to 'transitional arrangements'. This meant the housing delivery test would follow the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) of the previous government and not the new NPPF. If the Local Plan was not adopted, then the new much larger housing delivery test would come into effect straightaway, resulting in a significant uplift in numbers.

Cllr V Holliday thanked the Planning Policy Team for all their hard work. Like other members, she reiterated that although the Local Plan was good for the wider district, there were elements of it that were causing some concern and this should not be ignored. The Chair agreed, adding that the call for sites was like 'rolling the dice'. That said, the benefits for the wider district outweighed the impact on individual areas.

Cllr J Toye said that the Local Plan had been produced for good reasons and make the most of the opportunities presented.

The Chair said that members should remember that the Plan was not just about housing but that it also covered economic, heritage and environmental issues. He added that residents were very concerned about healthcare provision and he hoped the Government would take note of this. Cllr Toye said that the Government had recently committed to opening 250 neighbourhood health centres, so this was an area to monitor.

It was proposed by Cllr A Brown, seconded by Cllr J Toye and

RESOLVED TO

- 1) Note the outcome of the Inspector's Report into the examination of the North Norfolk Local Plan, dated 31 October 2025 (Appendix 1 & 2);
- 2) Recommend to Full Council that the Council adopts the modified Local Plan which incorporates the Main Modifications as the appropriate basis for the future planning of the whole District (Appendix 3);
- 3) Notes that all policies of the North Norfolk Core Strategy 2008 and the Site Allocations; Development Plan Document 2011 (the current Local Plan) will be superseded by the new Local Plan upon adoption. This is subject to the provisions of paragraph 9.3 of this report that: 'Upon adoption there is a six-week window under section 113 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 during which an aggrieved party can challenge the decision to adopt a Local Plan on legal and procedural grounds'
- 4) Delegates authority to the Assistant Director for Planning to publish the Adoption Statement and accompanying documents, making the North Norfolk Local Plan part of the Adopted Development Plan for North Norfolk;
- 5) Delegates authority to the Planning Policy Manager to make any further necessary non-material modifications and any further updates to the Policies Map as required.

Reason for the decision:

It is a legal requirement to have an up-to-date Local Plan for the Council's administrative area and to undertake review at least every five years. The updated North Norfolk Local Plan has been guided by a balanced cross-party working party, undergone formal rounds of consultation and independent examination by a Planning Inspector, and has been found "sound" subject to the inclusion of modifications and provides an appropriate basis for the planning of the District. The

Plan provides the Council's Strategic Planning Framework and is required in order to ensure the Council has an up-to-date Local Plan in place from which planning decisions are made.

86 ENDORSEMENT OF THE DRAFT NORFOLK COAST NATIONAL LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN (2025-2030)

Cllr H Blathwayt, Portfolio Holder for Coast, introduced this item. He explained that the Council, along with other relevant authorities, had a statutory duty to publish a management plan for the conservation and enhancement of the designated landscape and this needed to be updated every 5 years. The current plan (2019 – 2024) had therefore been reviewed and was presented to members for approval. Cllr Blathwayt said that it aligned with the recommendation of the Local Plan and protected public access to amenity.

The Chair thanked the Senior Landscape Officer (CB) for her hard work in producing the document. He invited members to speak:

Cllr V Holliday said that she had some reservations about the landscape management plan. She felt the targets were not SMART but subjective and the monitoring of the targets was weak in some instances such as chalk streams. She referred to the State of the North Norfolk Coast Landscape report, which highlighted that there was a high percentage of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) which were in poor condition and this should be looked at closely.

Cllr Blathwayt said that the targets were definitely SMART. Cllr Holliday replied that 19% of targets were SMART, the rest were subjective. She said that it was good that evidence had been collated but that members should be concerned that it showed that rivers were in poor condition and light pollution was on the increase. Cllr Blathwayt said that unfortunately, designated National Landscapes (previously Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty had limited powers and there was no statutory input into planning applications. Instead, its aims were achieved through public negotiation. In the future, the elected Mayor would have powers that could strengthen its remit and ensure it became a statutory consultee in planning applications in the future.

The Senior Landscape Officer said that production of a Landscape Management Plan every five years was a statutory duty and it fed into the Council's Local Plan. Regarding the State of the Norfolk Coast Landscape report, she said that this was the first time that there had been hard evidence on the state of the landscape, previously there had been condition assessments but they had not been quantified in a factual way. It wasn't perfect and there were some gaps but it was a good start and was based on evidence provided by partner bodies. Having more tangible statistics would make it easier to apply Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and this would be an effective way of highlighting areas, such as chalk streams, that needed attention.

It was proposed by Cllr H Blathwayt, seconded by Cllr A Varley and

RESOLVED

To endorse the Draft Norfolk Coast Landscape Management Plan (2025-2030)

Reason for the decision:

1. The publication of a Management Plan for the Norfolk Coast National Landscape every 5 years forms part of the statutory duty of the relevant authorities (of which NNDC is one) in managing the area.
2. This Plan will complement and support the Council's Local Plan Planning policies

87 MODIFIED AND ADDITIONAL BEACHES AND INLAND PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS FOR DOG CONTROL

Cllr C Ringer, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, introduced this item. He said that following a consultation on the Council's inland Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) earlier in the year, Cabinet had agreed to consideration of further PSPOs raised by consultees. He highlighted the key changes which included the addition of three play parks, the permitting of dogs in leads in Fakenham churchyard and modification to the PSPO at Mundesley and the inclusion of the beach at East Runton, in line with the Blue Flag status. The rest were all minor changes.

The Chair thanked officers for their hard work on this.

It was proposed by Cllr C Ringer, seconded by Cllr J Toye and

RESOLVED

To adopt all the Public Space Protect Orders (PSPOs), as set out in Appendix A, relating to dog control.

Reason for the decision:

To allow the modification of and addition to the dog control PSPOs, as supported by the majority of consultees

88 ANNUAL UPDATE - REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (RIPA)

The Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services, Cllr C Ringer, introduced this item. He explained that was required to review its policy for the use of powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) on an annual basis. He confirmed that officers had reviewed the RIPA Policy and procedure document and made no changes. They had also reviewed the Internet & Social Media research & Investigations Policy and identified that no changes were required. Finally, he confirmed that the Council had made no use of powers under RIPA in the last 12 months.

It was proposed by Cllr C Ringer, seconded by Cllr T Adams and

RESOLVED to

1. That Members note that there are minor operational amendments to reflect the latest best practice and guidance are required to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 Policy and Procedures.
2. That Members note that there are minor amendments required to the Internet & Social Media Research & Investigations Policy in order to reflect changes to relevant legislation which impact on the policy.

3. That Members note there has been no activity undertaken under RIPA within the period since the last report.

Reason for the decision:

The Council is required to have an up to date policy/procedure in order to exercise its powers.

89 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

90 PRIVATE BUSINESS

The meeting ended at 10.58 am.

Chairman