

Cabinet



Please contact: Emma Denny

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Friday, 25 June 2021

A meeting of the **Cabinet** of North Norfolk District Council will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices on **Monday, 5 July 2021** at **10.00 am**.

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

Members of the public who wish to ask a question or speak on an agenda item are requested to arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of the meeting so that we can ensure compliance with current Covid regulations. Further information on the procedure for public speaking can be obtained from Democratic Services, Tel:01263 516010, Email:emma.denny@north-norfolk.gov.uk.

Please note that this meeting is livestreamed:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCsShJeAVZMS0kSWcz-WyEzg>

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: Mrs W Fredericks, Mrs S Bütikofer, Mrs A Fitch-Tillett, Ms V Gay, Mr R Kershaw, Mr N Lloyd, Mr E Seward, Miss L Shires and Mr J Toye

All other Members of the Council for information.

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



**If you have any special requirements in order
to attend this meeting, please let us know in advance**

If you would like any document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact us

Chief Executive: Steve Blatch

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A G E N D A

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES

1 - 8

To approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 07 June 2021.

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

To receive questions and statements from the public, if any.

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. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

9 - 10

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

6. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

To receive oral questions from Members, if any

7. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

To consider any recommendations referred to the Cabinet by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for consideration by the Cabinet in accordance within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

The following recommendation was made to Cabinet at the meeting of Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 19th May 2021:

ENFORCEMENT BOARD UPDATE

RESOLVED

To recommend to Cabinet that consideration is given to the resourcing of the Planning Enforcement Team to strengthen and support the Council's planning enforcement process.

8. HOUSING STRATEGY 2021 - 2025

11 - 46

Summary:

This report sets out:

- The works so far undertaken to develop the new Housing Strategy for 2021 to 2025, including considerable

consultation with members and other stakeholders.

- A new Housing Strategy and Housing Strategy Action Plan 2021-25 for Cabinet's views.

Options considered: The New Housing Strategy is a Corporate Objective - there are no alternative options possible.

Conclusions: The Housing Strategy will ensure the Council delivers the housing objectives in the Corporate Plan.

Recommendations: **To recommend that Full Council adopts the Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2021-25.**

Reasons for Recommendations: To deliver a new Housing Strategy and the other Housing related objectives in the Corporate Plan.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

None

Cabinet Member(s): Ward(s) affected:
Cllr. Wendy Fredericks District-wide

Contact Officer:
Nicky Debbage, Housing Strategy & Delivery Manager, Tel: 01263 516027, email nicky.debbage@north-norfolk.gov.uk
Graham Connolly, Housing Strategy & Delivery Manager, Tel: 01263 516282, email graham.connolly@north-norfolk.gov.uk

9. UK COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND (CRF) MATCH FUNDING

47 - 56

Summary: This report seeks authorisation from Cabinet to confirm and allocate the match funding requirements for the recently submitted Community Renewal Fund (CRF) bids for both Fakenham and North Walsham.

The total funding being requested for the Fakenham bid is £800k, with £600k being requested from the CFR and £200k (25%) being sought from the Council's own resources, giving a total budget allocation of £800k.

As with Fakenham, the total funding being requested for the North Walsham bid is also £800k, with £600k being requested from the CFR and £200k (25%) being sought from the

Council's own resources, giving a total budget allocation of £800k.

This means that the combined match funding requirement from NNDC is £400k, with funding requests from the CRF totalling £1.2m, which combined would see an overall funding package of £1.6m.

Options considered:

It is recommended that the match funding element is provided from the Delivery Plan Reserve.

The Council could have taken the decision not to submit any bids for the recently announced Community Renewal Fund (CRF). However, having been identified by central government as one of the 100 'priority areas', with potential access districtwide to a funding pot of £3m, it was considered opportune to submit 2 applications, one focussed around Fakenham and the other around North Walsham, to try to secure some of this funding for the area.

While there was no specific requirement to provide match funding the bid scoring guidance was clear that projects with match funding in place would be viewed more favourably, hence the request that is before Members within this report.

Conclusions:

Having been recently identified by central government as being one of the 100 'priority areas', the Council has taken the decision to submit 2 bids to the Community Renewal Fund (CRF). The match funding being sort to support these bids will strengthen the potential for them to be approved and allocated funding when the bid submissions are assessed by central government.

Recommendations: That Cabinet resolve the following;

- 1. To release match funding of £200k for the Fakenham CRF bid and £200k for the North Walsham bid subject to the bids being approved by central government.**
- 2. The match funding element to be released from the Delivery Plan Reserve.**

Reasons for Recommendations:

To support and strengthen the CRF bids for both Fakenham and North Walsham which in turn will help to realise opportunities to

secure UK Government funding into North Norfolk to support investment in projects which meet priorities outlined in the Council's Corporate Plan as they relate to provision of housing, economic growth, environment and climate change and quality of life.

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected
Cllr S Bütikofer – Leader of the Council	Lancaster North, Lancaster South, North Walsham Market Cross and North Walsham

Contact Officer, telephone number and email:
Duncan Ellis, Director for Resources, 01263 516330,
Duncan.ellis@north-norfolk.gov.uk

10. STREET TRADING CONSENT FEES

Report to follow.

11. GREENS ROAD FOOTBALL FACILITY - NORTH WALSHAM

57 - 60

Summary and Conclusion:

There are some capital maintenance works required at the football ground site on Greens Road, North Walsham. Whilst the site is leased to North Walsham Town Football Club on a full repairing lease, it cannot afford these works (c£60k). It is possible for the Council to undertake these works on behalf of the club, and write into an extended lease a commercial rent that enables the club to pay back the finance over a set period. An extension to the lease, to 21 years, will enable the club to further grow and develop and support the proposed 3G pitch installation project at the site.

Options considered: Option 1: Do not extend the lease, do not fund the works.

Option 2: Extend the lease, fund the cost of the capital works. This is the preferred option.

Recommendations: 1) That the Council extends the lease with North Walsham Town Football Club for a period of 21 years.

2) That, subject to the inclusion in the lease a requirement for an increased rent which covers the cost of the work over an agreed period of time, the Council procures and funds the necessary works to bring the site up to a fit for purpose standard.

Reasons for Recommendations: The above provides certainty for the club which continues to grow. It also assists the Council in its funding application to the Football Foundation for the potential installation of the 3G pitch

Cabinet Member(s) Ward(s) affected
Cllr Virginia Gay North Walsham West

Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Karl Read, 01263 516002, karl.read@north-norfolk.gov.uk

12. REFURBISHMENT AND LETTING OF CEDAR HOUSE, NORTH WALSHAM AND SALE OF ADJACENT LAND & BUILDINGS 61 - 84

Summary:

This is an update to a report previously presented to Cabinet on the 30th March 2020, which identifies opportunities that would see the regeneration of a heritage building, known as The Cedars, and adjoining land. The proposal would require the Council to withdraw from a previously expressed intention dated November 2014 to dispose of the asset and move forward with a proposal for the main building to be refurbished and retained by the Council for letting and consideration of options for the remainder of the site.

Options considered: A range of options and uses have been considered and a feasibility study recently produced which makes recommendations for future uses. The alternative option is to continue with the previously agreed decision to dispose, however this would lead to a further long period in which the building remains vacant, at risk and deteriorating; it would also lead to the loss of grant support for the building's restoration.

Conclusions: The property has stood empty since 2016 whilst the sale of the property was under negotiation. During this time there has been considerable officer resource needed in managing the vacant property and budget required to hold it, without the property providing any benefit to the local community or wider district.

The prospective purchaser has in the period since November 2014 been unable/unwilling to commit to the acquisition of the property. In more recent times officers have explored

alternative options and have succeeded in securing grant support for the building's restoration and conversion. Beneficial alternative options are now open to the Council following the completion of a feasibility study.

In evaluating the options and the inability of the prospective purchaser to complete, it is recommended that the disposal is not pursued; rather that the premises be refurbished and offered to let on the basis of a commercial rent either to community uses or to the private sector or a combination of both. The land and ancillary buildings offer some potential for development/conversion and it is recommended that options for its alternative use and possible disposal be further investigated. In both cases this would now represent best value and would support the objectives of the Corporate Plan, Asset Management Plan and furthermore would meet the criteria as stated in the Council's Disposal Policy.

Recommendations: It is recommended that Cabinet should resolve:

- A. To formally withdraw from the current disposal transaction which, after more than six years has not progressed to completion.**
- B. To retain the main Cedars building for letting purposes subject to a refurbishment as per the revised specification of works and then to market the premises to let.**
- C. That the previously allocated capital funding and the grant secured from Historic England is utilised for the refurbishment as per the revised cost plan.**
- D. That options are investigated for the separate use and possible disposal of the remaining parts and that marketing commences for the sale of the surplus site for potential third party development. (A further report being brought to Cabinet if disposal is deemed the most appropriate option).**

Reasons for Recommendations:

The proposed retention and refurbishment of the property and letting for a commercial rent to community organisations or private sector would bring the property back into beneficial

use. This would prevent this important Listed Building from being further at risk and would utilise grant funds already secured. The refurbishment of the property supports the following key corporate priorities:

- Boosting Business Sustainability and Growth within North Walsham and surrounding areas (as part of the overall HSHAZ town centre improvement project).
- Financial Sustainability - by utilising grant funding to invest in the restoration of the building and reducing the Council's financial liabilities, revenue costs of holding the vacant, at risk, property, as well as providing both revenue income and a potential future receipt.

Cabinet Member(s) Ward(s) affected North
Cllr Eric Seward Walsham

Renata Garfoot. Asset Strategy Manager
Telephone: 01263 516086
Email: Renata.Garfoot@north-norfolk.gov.uk
Neil Turvey. Strategic Surveyor
Telephone: 01263 516124
Email: Neil.Turvey@north-norfolk.gov.uk

13. MELBOURNE SLOPE FORMER TOILETS - PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT & LETTING 85 - 96

Summary: The Council owned former Public Toilets at the Melbourne Slope in Cromer closed several years ago and new facilities were developed elsewhere on the promenade. The currently vacant property has been widely advertised to let over the course of the month of April 2021 using Right Move, facebook & Twitter with a link to marketing particulars on the NNDC Property website page.

Options considered: Following that exposure six proposals were received and this report outlines the options available to the Council to bring the building back into use and then outlines the potential benefits and risks of doing so.

Conclusions: The six proposals received by the Council from businesses interested in renovating and leasing the building have been summarised in this report and a recommendation put forward.

Recommendations: It is recommended that Cabinet should make a resolution to allow the Estates

team to continue discussions with the preferred party and to finalise terms and to execute the letting. Should any further material changes be made to either the proposal or the proposed tenant then any decision should be delegated to the s151 officer in consultation with the portfolio holder.

Reasons for Recommendations:

This recommendation is being made in order to provide the Estates team with the remit to progress negotiations with the preferred party and to secure the best deal possible to secure an early lease completion.

Cabinet Member(s);
Cllr Eric Seward

Ward(s) affected; Cromer

Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Neil Turvey, 01263 516124 neil.turvey@north-norfolk.gov.uk

14. PROPERTY TRANSACTION: LEASE PROPOSAL AT UNIT D, HORNBEAM ROAD, NORTH WALSHAM AND RENT RECYCLING PROPOSAL

97 - 104

Summary:

The Council has received a lease proposal from a local business to rent commercial premises in North Walsham. The proposal represent a market rent/terms and initial due diligence indicate the tenant is of good covenant strength.

During negotiations it has been identified that a clear and transparent policy regarding Council investment into assets is required to respond to recent changes in the Public Works Loan Board lending terms. A rent recycling scheme is proposed to be developed to enable investment into assets where regeneration is needed to bring them back into use.

Options considered:

The alternative option would be not to accept the lease proposal however, the property was acquired for income generation purposes and the rent and terms proposed are appropriate and therefore this option has been discounted.

The Council could decide not to develop a rent recycling policy and make direct investment into assets, however that would be in conflict with lending terms and would have significant financial implications. This option therefore would not be recommended.

Conclusions: Having advertised the units to let on the open market, Officers have gained a lease proposal from a local business to rent unit D. With rent/terms that reflect the local current market it provides an appropriate level of investment return in accordance with the Asset Management Plan.

Due to the changes to the Public Works Load Board (PWLB) lending terms, the development a rent recycling policy as a clear and transparent financial strategy to demonstrate how the Council may seek to fund future asset regeneration opportunities.

Recommendations: **It is recommended that Cabinet should resolve:**

- A. To approve the lease terms as described in Appendix A.**
- B. Should there be any further negotiations to the offer made, to delegate to the s151 officer, in consultation with the portfolio holder, the ability to vary the terms of the lease and a rental value not exceeding a 10% variation the original lease proposal.**
- C. To approve officers in the development of a financial strategy for a rent recycle scheme and that approval of the policy is delegated to the Director of Resources and in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.**

Reasons for Recommendations: Principally to support the financial sustainability and growth of the Council by leasing the premises and generating rental income that is used to support Council services.

To provide a clear and transparent policy on how property rents can be recycled to facilitate regeneration of Council assets.

Cabinet Member(s)
Cllr. E Seward

Ward(s) affected
North Walsham

Contact Officer, telephone number and email:
Renata Garfoot, Asset Strategy Manager.
Tel: 01263 516086 Email: Renata.garfoot@north-norfolk.gov.uk

15. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To pass the following resolution:
"That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the

press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs _ of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act.”

16. PRIVATE BUSINESS

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Public Document Pack Agenda Item 2

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Monday, 7 June 2021 at the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 10.00 am

Committee

Members Present:

Mrs A Fitch-Tillett
Mr R Kershaw
Mr E Seward
Mr J Toye

Ms V Gay
Mr N Lloyd
Miss L Shires
Mrs W Fredericks

Members also attending:

Cllr C Cushing
Cllr N Dixon
Cllr V Holliday
Cllr J Rest

Officers in Attendance:

Chief Executive, Democratic Services Manager, Director for Resources/Section 151 Officer and Democratic Services and Governance Officer - Scrutiny

Also in attendance:

Press and Public

Apologies for Absence:

Cllr S Butikofer

85 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th May 2021 were approved as a correct record.

86 PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

None received.

87 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None received.

88 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

89 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

None received.

90 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee informed Cabinet that there were no recommendations.

91 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PLANNING POLICY & BUILT HERITAGE WORKING PARTY

The Portfolio Holder for Planning, Cllr J Toye, introduced this item.

It was proposed by Cllr J Toye, seconded by Cllr A Fitch-Tillett and

THE GLAVEN VALLEY CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISALS & MANAGEMENT PLANS 2021

Decision
RESOLVED:

1. To adopt the five Glaven Valley Appraisals for statutory planning purposes and for the Appraisal documents to become material considerations in the planning process.
2. To agree the proposed boundary changes as recommended in the draft Appraisal documents and that they be published in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
3. **To agree the proposed Local Listings as identified within the draft Appraisal documents.**

92 ADOPTION OF THE RYBURGH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (RNP)

Cllr J Toye, Portfolio Holder for Planning, introduced this item. He explained that there was a requirement to formally 'make' the Ryburgh Neighbourhood Plan as part of the statutory Development Plan for North Norfolk.

It was proposed by Cllr J Toye, seconded by Cllr V Gay and

RESOLVED:

1. To adopt the Ryburgh Neighbourhood Plan as part of the statutory Development Plan for North Norfolk;
2. To approve the attached Decision Statement under Regulation 19 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 as amended and authorised for publication and release in order to bring to the attention of the qualifying body, the people who live, work and or carry out business in the Neighbourhood Plan Area;
3. To authorise the required consequential changes to the adopted policies map and the required consequential changes to the referendum version of the neighbourhood plan through delegated powers to the Planning Policy Team Leader.

93 NORTH NORFOLK SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES FUND - ANNUAL REVIEW

The Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Culture, Cllr V Gay, introduced this item. She said that the annual review of the North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund demonstrated continued support to communities across the District. She

thanked the Health & Communities Manager for her support and the Panel for their commitment. She said that it was a cross-party panel which worked together with no interference. She concluded by saying that applications for more environmental projects would be welcomed.

Cllr J Toye said that he was pleased to see an equal distribution of funding across the District.

Cllr J Rest said that it was good to see more match funding coming forwards from applicants as this made the process fairer.

The Chairman sought clarification on whether the report would go to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration. The Democratic Services Manager replied that it had previously been scrutinised but that the decision lay with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr V Gay, seconded by Cllr R Kershaw and

RESOLVED

To note the contribution that the NNSCF makes on Council priorities as well as the impact that Covid 19 has had on applications to the NNSCF and the provision and delivery of community projects.

Reason for the recommendation:

To ensure the NNSCF continues to reflect Council priorities to build sustainable communities and respond to the Climate Emergency declared by the Council in 2019.

94 MANAGING PERFORMANCE Q4 2020/21

The Chairman, Cllr Seward, introduced this item. He explained that it provided an overview of quarter 4 (January to March 2021) and enabled the Council to assess delivery against objectives detailed in the Delivery Plan 2019 – 2023 as well as operational service performance.

Cllr A Fitch-Tillett, Portfolio Holder for Coast, referred to page 31 and the summary section for corporate plan delivery. She said that she was extremely disappointed to see that the coast was not referenced at all. She said that later on in the report all of the targets relating to coast were green and this should be recognised and reflected in the covering section.

Cllr J Rest referred to pages 52, 77 and 78 of the report and the indicators marked with a red triangle. He said that he understood why objectives such as the establishment of a Youth Council were currently on hold but he sought assurance that they would be progressed as soon as possible. Cllr L Shires confirmed that she was committed to getting the Youth Council up and running as soon as it was practical to do so.

Cllr C Cushing referred to the February Budget meeting of Full Council when he had raised the Administration's lack of preparation for a future deficit. He drew members' attention to page 68 of the report and section 6.2.1 which related to the objective of developing a financial sustainability strategy. He said that preparations should be starting now to prepare for future years and asked for an update. The Chairman

replied that he had requested a briefing meeting with the Finance Team to discuss preparations for next year's budget. He referred to the new approach of zero based budgeting which was being introduced soon and said that preparations were underway for achieving a balanced budget next year. Cllr Cushing asked why the anticipated deficit was not listed as a key priority within the delivery plan (page 34 of the report). The Chairman replied that it was his understanding that the Government's Fairer Funding review was likely to be further delayed and this could impact on the Council's priorities. He added that he wanted to approach the financial sustainability of the Council in a planned way.

Cllr Cushing requested an update on the situation at the next Cabinet meeting. The Chairman replied that the Outturn report would be presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee soon and members would have the opportunity to question the Section 151 officer on these issues. He agreed that an update would be provided at the next meeting of Cabinet.

The Director of Communities said that financial sustainability and growth was key. Some objectives had been delayed by Covid but the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) was very aware of the financial position and was looking at areas for improvement.

Cllr V Holliday referred to the 'reasons for the recommendations' at the start of the report. She said that it stated that it was to ensure that the objectives of the Council were achieved, however, the objectives were not likely to be achieved if the Council was not prepared to be critical about what it was trying to achieve. The Director of Communities replied that when performance was viewed in the fullness of the previous year, the Council continued to achieve against a number of targets. He added that it had been looked at hard and some judgements had been made. It should be acknowledged that it was a journey and that performance was lagging in some areas but further ahead in others. He used the example of the homeless list, saying that the Council could not control how many people presented as homeless but it could manage the list and the provision of available properties. He concluded by saying that when performance was considered against the background of a pandemic a lot had been achieved. Cllr Holliday asked when the pandemic would no longer be used as a reason to justify slippage. The Director for Communities replied that this report covered the period from January to March 2021 which was when the impact of the pandemic was at its height in North Norfolk. He said that it was likely to have an impact for some time as support grants were still being paid out to businesses and a large number of visitors were expected during the summer season.

Cllr N Dixon said that he wanted to make an observation. He said that it was not the easiest or clearest document to read. He referenced page 34 which was entitled 'key priorities', he said that there was just a pie-chart and that it would be more helpful to have a list of the Council's top 10 priorities here. He then said that some of the indicators listed were about how well processes were working rather than outcomes. He added that as a ward member and a County councillor, he was aware of one or two portfolios where problems occurred regularly. He said that when the Council received feedback from a business or an individual who hadn't had a good experience of the Council, this should be reflected in the performance report. Customer experiences and the resulting challenges that arose from these should be acknowledged, accepted and reflected in the performance report. As it currently stood, the report was not consistent with his own experience as a ward member and a county councillor.

The Chairman said that it was hard to reflect the issues that Cllr Dixon was referring to in the report, however, consideration would be given as to how this could be addressed. He said that outcomes were more important than processes and he was supportive of adapting the indicators to reflect this.

Cllr L Shire, Portfolio Holder for Customer Services, said that she would be happy to work with Cllr Dixon to improve the service.

Cllr N Lloyd said that he had asked similar questions of the Administration when he was in Opposition. He believed that the current Administration had taken a lot of the previous criticisms on board and more detail was now included in the performance report. He thanked officers for the progress that was being made in achieving the ambitions set out in the Corporate Plan.

The Director of Communities said that the style and content of the report was a work in progress. He asked members to make senior officers aware of any improvements.

It was proposed by Cllr J Toye, seconded by Cllr W Fredericks and

RESOLVED to

Note the report and endorse the actions being taken by Corporate Leadership Team detailed in Appendix A – Managing Performance.

95 NORTH NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY 2021

The Chairman, Cllr E Seward, introduced this item. He explained that Norfolk County Council had been approached for support in preparing the document as they had a policy team with experience and expertise in equality, diversity and inclusion. He said that there were four Equality Objectives which would be published alongside the Equality Policy and that these objectives would become actions to be delivered as part of an annual action plan (AAP). He proposed the following additional recommendations,

The first one would strengthen section 13 of the report:

‘That an annual report to be produced and reported to the relevant committees’.

The second, would be included in the ‘Further Information’ section:

‘This Policy should be read in conjunction with the action plan and other relevant documents’

Cllr V Gay said that she was supportive of the amendments. It should be recognised that it was a ‘live’ document and keeping it under review would keep it in people’s minds.

Cllr N Dixon said that the document had been a long time coming. He acknowledged recent conversations with the Director of Communities and said that this version was more in keeping with a policy statement, which reflected the key messages from Overview & Scrutiny Committee. He made reference to pages 99 – 101 and asked whether they were part of the policy or in addition to it. He highlighted the definition of anti-semitism on page 100 and asked whether it was enshrined in the policy or attached as an appendix. He concluded by acknowledging the contribution of Norfolk County Council and asked why they were not approached for support earlier.

The Director for Communities replied that pages 99 to 100 were footnotes to the

main policy document and included explanation of the definitions referred to in the policy. They formed part of the overall document but the view had been taken that the main policy document should be kept as tight as possible. Cllr Dixon requested that the linkage between the policy document and the footnotes should be clear. Cllr Gay suggested that if they were called notes rather than footnotes and set out clearly that they included definitions of the protected characteristics, then this should make it clearer.

It was proposed by Cllr E Seward, seconded by Cllr V Gay and

RESOLVED

1. To recommend to Full Council the formal adoption of its Equality Objectives and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2021, including the amendments agreed by Cabinet.
2. That an annual report to be produced and reported to the relevant committees

Reason for the recommendation:

The Council is legally required to publish Equality Objectives. It is doing this alongside the publication of its refreshed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2021. The Equality Objectives and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy will need to be formally adopted by Full Council

96 DISPOSAL OF A PROPERTY

The Chairman introduced this item. He explained that this item had come before Cabinet on 12 April 2021. Since then the previous offer to acquire the property had fallen through and a number of further offers had been received. It was suggested that these options were explored.

Cllr V Holliday asked whether the receipt from the sale would be ring-fenced for housing. The Chairman replied that, as it was a capital asset, it would go into a central fund which was allocated into appropriate priorities. This was in line with the Council's Disposal Policy. He said that there was a balance to be drawn but that flexibility was needed.

It was proposed by Cllr E Seward, seconded by Cllr J Toyne and

RESOLVED

1. That Cabinet approves the disposal of the property as outlined in the exempt appendix.
2. That should there be any further changes to the offer made or the potential purchaser, to delegate to the s151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to dispose of the property for any value exceeding the original purchase price (plus any additional costs incurred).

Reason for the recommendation:

The disposal is in accordance with the Council's Disposal policy and the offer is deemed to be the best financial consideration reasonably obtainable at the current time.

97 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

98 PRIVATE BUSINESS

The meeting ended at 10.53am

Chairman

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Declarations of Interest at Meetings

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

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

Does the interest directly:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

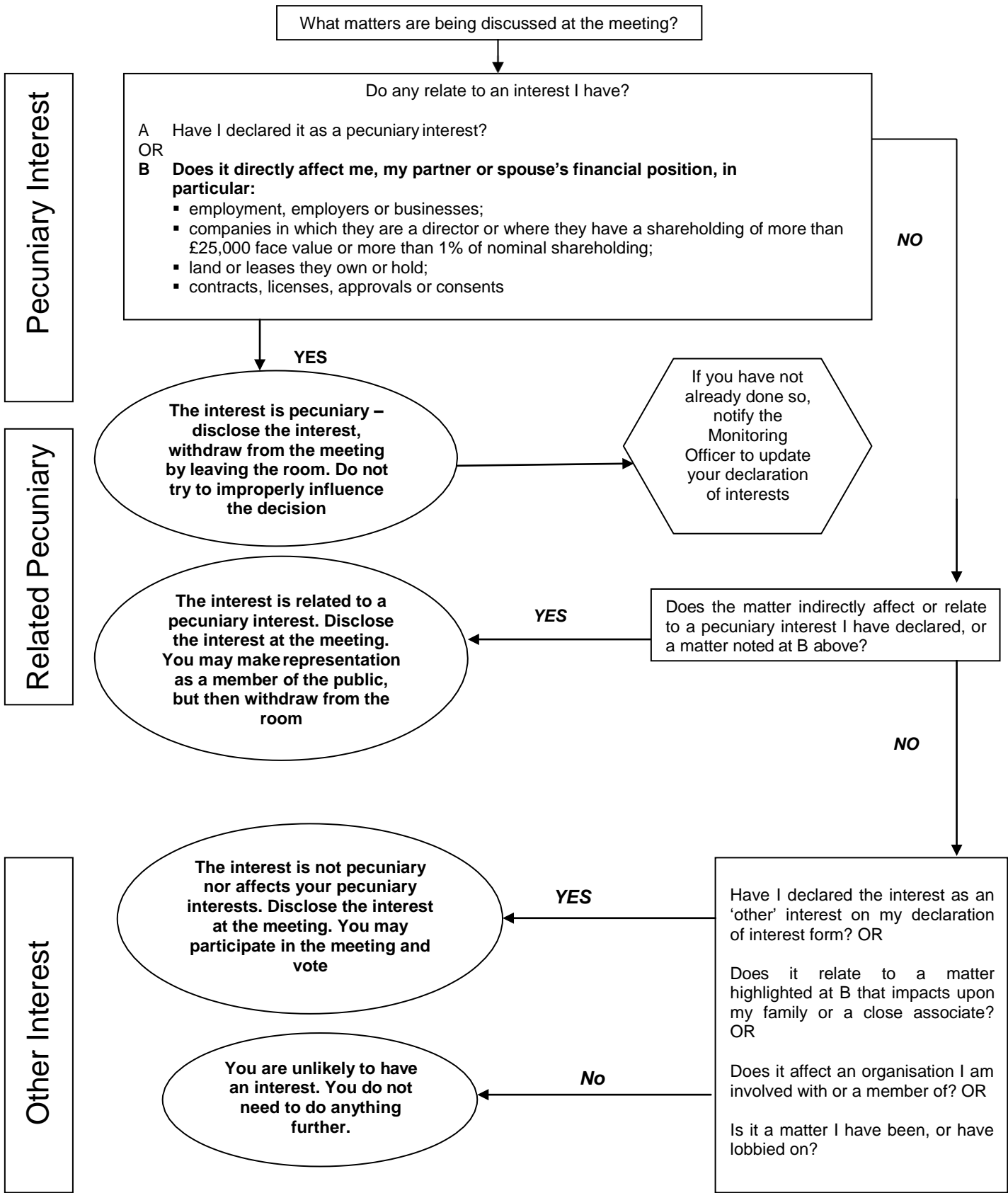
FOR GUIDANCE REFER TO THE FLOWCHART OVERLEAF

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

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS SHOULD ALSO REFER TO THE PLANNING PROTOCOL

Declarations of Interest at Meetings

DECLARING INTERESTS FLOWCHART – QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF



NEW HOUSING STRATEGY – 2021 – 2025

- Summary:** This report sets out:
- The works so far undertaken to develop the new Housing Strategy for 2021 to 2025, including considerable consultation with members and other stakeholders.
 - A new Housing Strategy and Housing Strategy Action Plan 2021-25 for Cabinet's views.
- Options considered:** The New Housing Strategy is a Corporate Objective - there are no alternative options possible.
- Conclusions:** The Housing Strategy will ensure the Council delivers the housing objectives in the Corporate Plan.
- Recommendations:** **To recommend that Full Council adopt the Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2021-25.**
- Reasons for Recommendations:** To deliver a new Housing Strategy and the other Housing related objectives in the Corporate Plan.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

None

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr. Wendy Fredericks
Ward(s) affected: District-wide

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 All housing authorities are required to review housing conditions in their area and make plans to help address these. The housing challenges in North Norfolk are substantial and an ambitious strategy is required to help tackle these. The previous Housing Strategy ran from 2016-2020 and now needs to be replaced. Housing is a high priority for the Council and the production of a New Housing Strategy is a Corporate Objective. The New Strategy builds on the framework provided by the Local Homes for Local Need Objectives in the Corporate Plan.
- 1.2 This Housing Strategy sets out the Council's priorities for housing. It also sets out the actions the Council intends to take to improve housing in the district.
- The Council's Corporate Plan Objectives set out the key priority areas for housing.
 - Evidence on housing challenges and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders has identified some additional priorities.
- The Strategy includes the actions and interventions which the Council, partners and stakeholders will undertake to deliver the key priorities for Housing.
- 1.3 The Housing Strategy has close links with both the current and emerging local plans. In addition to delivering the Housing Objectives in the Corporate Plan the Housing Strategy will help deliver other Corporate Objectives. For example, actions to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty will also have a positive impact on reducing carbon emissions in the district.
- 1.4 To accompany this report are the new Housing Strategy (including the Housing Strategy Action Plan and evidence of housing challenges in Housing in North Norfolk a Summary of Issues 2020), together with the Project Proposal for development of the Strategy.

Developing the Strategy

- 1.5 The Corporate Plan provided a framework of many objectives for the new housing strategy, evidence was also gathered to understand housing issues in the district and gap analysis undertaken against current activity to identify key areas for action.
- 1.6 Significant consultation was undertaken to develop the Strategy. A wide range of stakeholders - over 60 people - contributed to one or more of the Housing Strategy Workshops held in March and April.
- 1.7 Stakeholders included; district councillors, town and parish councillors, officers from Housing Associations, Board members from community-led housing groups, private developers and builders, private landlords, the Eastern Landlords Association, country estates and representatives from political parties not currently represented at the council.

The Housing Strategy reflects and benefits from the contributions of stakeholders. A spin off benefit is that we have a large group of people we can involve in the delivery of the new Strategy

The emerging strategy was 'tested' at a further members' briefing at the end of April 2021

Work in Progress

- 1.8 The Housing Strategy is substantially complete but there are still opportunities for change. In particular some of the delivery dates in the Housing Strategy Action Plan may be subject to further revision following consultation with service managers.

Resource Implications

- 1.9 The actions to improve energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty are likely to require a dedicated staff resource (i.e. an Energy Officer). A budget for this post, likely to be fixed-term, is yet to be approved but options for grant support for this will be explored.
- 1.10 All other actions in the Action Plan can be delivered within existing resources. However, as previously noted, the delivery dates of some actions are subject to further revision following consultation with service managers.
- 1.11 There are many actions/projects in the Strategy that involve research followed by a report and recommendations. Whilst the research actions/projects can be delivered within existing budgets, it is likely that some of the recommendations will have budget implications. Where this is the case these will be brought forward as separate project proposals with any resource implications clarified and highlighted

Governance Timeline

- 1.12 To complete and approve the Housing Strategy we propose the following governance timeline.

Governance	Date	Purpose
Overview & Scrutiny Committee	14/7/21 (papers 6/7/21)	Testing whether proposed actions will deliver address objectives and tackle the housing challenges identified
Full Council	21/7/21 (papers 6/7/21)	Confirmation of Strategy and Action Plan

2. Conclusion

- 2.1 The Housing Strategy is a key Council document and sets out the actions required to deliver the Housing Objectives of the Corporate Plan and tackle many of the housing challenges in the district.

3. Implications and Risk

4. Financial Implications and Risks

- 4.1 Delivering the energy and fuel poverty related actions in the Housing Strategy will need a dedicated resource (i.e. an Energy Officer). This post is subject to separate approval but grant funding for this may be available to fund/offset the cost.
- 4.2 Other financial implications may arise as research projects set out in the Strategy Action Plan are completed and recommendations emerge. These will be the subject of further separate reports.

5. Sustainability

- 5.1 A number of actions in the Housing Strategy Action Plan link to energy and sustainability issues, the adoption of the Strategy and implementation of the action plan will help achieve the Council's environmental and climate change objectives.

6. Equality and Diversity

- 6.1 No direct implications in this report

7. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

- 8.1 No direct implications in this report

North Norfolk District Council Housing Strategy 2021- 2025

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Introduction

Background

The Council's Corporate Plan sets out the Council's priorities. Local Homes for Local Need is one of the six priorities. The Corporate Plan recognises that access to suitable housing is a problem for many households.

House prices are high relative to local incomes and unaffordable to many households seeking their first home. The lucrative holiday let market often squeezes out tenants in private rent homes. There are too few affordable homes to meet the shortfall in the market.

Much of the existing housing stock has poor energy efficiency and this linked to low incomes results in significant numbers of households facing fuel poverty. With an aging population many older people in the district live in homes which are no longer suitable to their needs.

The Purpose of the Housing Strategy

This Housing Strategy sets out the Council's priorities for housing. It also sets out the actions the Council intends to take to improve housing in the district.

- The Council's Corporate Plan Objectives set out the key priority areas for housing.
- Evidence on housing challenges and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders has identified some additional priorities.

The Strategy includes the actions and interventions which the Council, partners and stakeholders will undertake to deliver the key priorities for Housing.

Links to Other Strategies and Policies

The Housing Strategy has links with a wide range of other Council strategies and policies. In preparing the Housing Strategy we consulted with stakeholders, including internal stakeholders. Our aim is to ensure we do not duplicate other strategies and policies and that the Housing Strategy aligns with those strategies and policies.

Other policies and strategies that have links to the Housing Strategy include; the existing and emerging Local Plans, the Environmental Charter and the Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy.

Structure of the Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy has two main elements:

1. The process for developing the strategy taking the Corporate Plan as a framework, looking at evidence of housing locally and listening to the views of a wide range of stakeholders.
2. The proposed actions and interventions which the Council working with partners will undertake. We group by these actions by housing theme:
 - Increasing the supply of new housing.
 - Improving housing stock condition in the private sector.
 - Making better use of existing housing.
 - Supporting vulnerable residents.

Developing the Housing Strategy

We have developed the Housing Strategy from:

1. The Council's Corporate Plan Objectives, which provide a 'framework' of priority areas.
2. Analysis of evidence on the housing needs and challenges in the district.
3. Consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

In advance of producing a new Housing Strategy we prepared a report – Housing in North Norfolk a Summary of Issues 2020 (attached as Appendix 2 to this strategy). This report provides much of the background data that helped inform the development of the strategy.

The Council already undertakes a wide range of housing activity. This 'business as usual' activity and existing projects do not form part of the strategy. However we do summarise this activity in this report to:

- Reassure stakeholders of action the Council is already taking (and therefore show where it is not necessary to include new action in the Housing Strategy).
- Identify the resources already used to provide housing services and which could, potentially, be re-allocated (if current activity were stopped/reduced) to generate capacity for newer and higher priority Housing Strategy actions.

The Corporate Plan

Housing is a top priority for North Norfolk District Council; delivering Local Homes for Local Need with a focus on high quality in terms of design, environmental sustainability and affordability is one of the six headline aims in the Corporate Plan.

The Corporate Plan provides the framework for the Housing Strategy. We set out the Corporate Plan objectives in our engagement with stakeholders. The ideas for additional actions and interventions identified by stakeholders align with and augment the Corporate Plan objectives.

Consultation with Stakeholders

The housing strategy is divided into four themes and these formed the basis of engagement with stakeholders:

- Increasing the supply of new housing.
- Improving housing stock condition in the private sector.
- Making better use of existing housing.
- Supporting vulnerable residents.

In March and April 2021 we held a series of workshops (one for each theme). In total over 60 stakeholders including, district councillors, town and parish councillors, officers from Housing Associations, Board members from community-led housing groups, private developers and builders, private landlords and representatives from political parties not currently represented at the council attended one or more of the workshops.

Following the series of workshops we prepared an initial draft of the new housing strategy. We circulated this draft to stakeholders for further comment. We also held a further workshop for Councillors and invited comments on the initial draft.

This current Housing Strategy incorporates many of the additional ideas we received from stakeholders and members.

The Big Issues for North Norfolk

These are the headline issues identified from analysis of housing conditions in the district and included in “Housing in North Norfolk a Summary of Issues 2020”. We have grouped these by housing themes.

Increasing the Supply of New Housing

To meet the needs of additional households the Council has a target of 479 new homes per year. In the six years to March 2020 new homes built averaged 469 per year.

The district needs 100 new affordable homes each year. In the six years to March 2020 the average number of new affordable homes was 83. However, right to buy sales and voluntary sales by registered providers reduced the net number of new affordable homes in the six years to March 2019 to an average of 19 - a net deficit of 81 homes per year.

Housing Stock Condition in the Private Sector

By far the most significant issue is excess cold due of poor heating systems/poor insulation.

- 27% of homes in the private sector have a category 1 HHSRS¹ hazard. The largest single problem is excess cold.
- Nearly one in five of tenants in private rented homes face fuel poverty.

There are 55,000 homes in the district, nearly 13,000 have a category 1 HHSRS hazard. Over 5,000 households, nearly 10% of households in the district face fuel poverty.

Private residences are the single biggest generators of carbon-dioxide in the district. Improving heating systems and insulation in the district will help keep homes warm, reduce energy bills, reduce fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions.

Making Better Use of Existing Housing

The District has a problem with ‘Lost’ homes.

- The incidence of second and holiday homes in North Norfolk is the second highest in the country (in 2020 there were 6,697 registered, 11.6% of homes).
- The level of empty homes is relatively low in North Norfolk. Even so this is still a waste of scarce housing (there were 572 empty homes in December 2020 that had been empty for six months or more).
- Some affordable housing is lost each year through sales, both voluntary disposals and right to buy – on average 64 per annum over the last five years.

There is a mismatch between the need for, and supply of, affordable homes. Of the current housing list 1,538 (59%) need a one-bed home but only 105 (46%) of available lets in the last year were one-bed. There are fewer applicants (238) needing a home with four or more bedrooms, but there was only one available for let in the last year.

Registered providers are building significant numbers of shared ownership homes in the district but only 23 applicants on the housing list have expressed an interest in this tenure. However, for many households this could be an affordable solution, with a typical 25% share priced at £70k and average earnings in North Norfolk £23k.

Most affordable homes let go to those in very high need - 82% of homes were let to Band 1 or 2 need applicants. However, on rural exception schemes (where the local allocation policy

¹ The housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) is a risk-based evaluation tool to help identify and protect against potential risks and hazards to health and safety from any deficiencies identified in dwellings. The HHSRS Category 1 hazards include excess cold hazards, falls hazards and disrepair.

gives priority to those with local connections), applicants in lower need may have an opportunity for a home as only 23% go to those in the highest bands.

Supporting Vulnerable Residents

The district's population is old and getting older - 33% of the population are aged 65+ (compared to 18% in England) and the average age is 50 (41 in England). The number of older people is predicted to increase 150% by 2041.

There are estimated to be 17,000 households where a person has limiting long term illness / disability in North Norfolk. Many of these households will need adaptations to their home or will need to move as their current home cannot meet their needs. There is shortage in the district of suitable homes for older people who need additional support to live independently. There is also a shortage of homes for households with disabilities who need accessible homes.

Of the 2,825 applicants on the council's housing list, many are in high need (240 in Band 1). Band 1 applicants often have a variety of complex needs indicators such as medical or welfare needs. In the last year 951 households have come to the council as potentially homeless. Again many of those face complex issues such as a history of mental health, abuse or drug and alcohol dependency, face physical health or disability challenges or are potentially vulnerable due to their age, support needs or learning disability.

Current Actions Undertaken by the Council to address Housing Issues in North Norfolk

NNDC, working with a wide range of partners, is already taking action to address many of the housing issues highlighted above. We set out the detail in Appendix 1 of this report.

Actions for the Housing Strategy

In this Housing Strategy we have grouped the actions and interventions by themes:

- Increasing the supply of new housing.
- Improving housing stock condition in the private sector.
- Making better use of existing housing.
- Supporting vulnerable residents.

For each theme we start with the existing Corporate Plan Objectives and Delivery Plan Actions. We follow these additional actions identified from analysis of housing challenges and consultation with stakeholders.

Theme 1 – Increasing the Supply of Housing.

For this Theme the Housing Strategy has three sub-themes each with a number of proposed actions and interventions:

1. Direct delivery.
2. Supporting delivery by others.
3. Supporting new types of development.

Existing Corporate Plan Objectives and Delivery Plan Actions

The existing Corporate Plan already clearly highlights new affordable homes, and access to those homes, as a priority:

Objective 5: Delivering new affordable homes both directly as a Council and through partnership working with Registered Providers.

- Investigate ways to support and assist affordable housing providers, including the potential for a Council loan scheme for Registered Providers to facilitate a supply of affordable homes.

In addition, Objective 1 of the Corporate Plan is the development of a new Local Plan for the district. This new Local Plan will help facilitate the delivery of new homes (market and affordable) in the district. The new Housing Strategy will sit alongside and work in tandem with the emerging local plan.

New Actions in the Housing Strategy

The main focus of this theme of the strategy is increasing the supply of affordable housing. However, some of the actions, such as simplifying and de-risking development, will also help deliver market housing.

This theme has close links with planning policy. We have involved stakeholders including planning officers in developing the strategy proposals to ensure planning policy and housing strategy align. The emerging Local Plan already covers some of the issues around new housing supply e.g. the need for smaller homes and specialist housing provision for disabled or older people, so we have tried not to repeat in this housing strategy.

Direct Delivery by the Council

Using its own resources and with support from government grant the Council has delivered several additional units of temporary housing for homeless households. There is potentially a wider role for the council in directly providing housing, but exactly what that role should be and where the council can have the biggest impact has yet to be clarified.

Actions:

- The Council will clarify what it aims to achieve through direct delivery / a housing company – including delivery of new homes, improvement of existing homes and supporting different tenure options e.g. private rent.
- Consider if it is possible to develop a business case for a housing company which meets the Council’s aims and helps meet housing need in the district.

De-risking Development

A strong theme emerging from consultation with stakeholders is that there are barriers to housing development, including affordable housing, due to the planning system and lack of finance. The risk of abortive costs deter Registered Providers and SME builders/developers bringing forward sites.

Actions:

- The Council will consider a range of actions to help de-risk housing development (including affordable housing) and bring back recommendations to implement the most effective. Actions to be considered include:
 - Allocate sites for affordable housing.
 - Achieve outline planning permission on selected sites.
 - Allocate resource within the Major Projects team to provide planning support for affordable housing.
 - Provide free pre-application advice for affordable housing developments.
 - Use s106 commuted sums to provide top-up funding for affordable housing for schemes which would otherwise not be viable.
 - Provide loan funding to help Registered Providers deliver affordable housing.
 - Better engage external consultees (including highways, etc.) to understand the context and need for affordable housing development.
 - Work with Homes England to make the case for higher grant rates and/or ability to use grant with cross-subsidy from market homes.
 - Investigate ways we can encourage small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) to provide new housing (and employment) in the district.

Coastal Rollback

To assist owners whose properties are at risk from coastal erosion and to help prevent blight the Council is able to offer owners planning permission for a property elsewhere in the district. However, this involves the co-operation of landowners and property owners to link land with the planning permission. To date very few rollback sites have been developed. It is possible that a more proactive approach by the Council could help deliver sites both for rollback and affordable housing.

- Consider whether providing sites for ‘Coastal rollback’ linked to affordable housing developments helps deliver both.

Build to Rent

Market rented homes are ‘under-represented’ in the district and build-to-rent could play an important role in increasing supply, inward investment and driving up standards within the private rented sector.

Actions:

- Look at ways the Council can support the development of good quality rented housing.

Modern Methods of Construction

Modern methods of construction (MMC) bring several potential benefits:

- Reducing development risk.
- Reducing environmental impacts and providing energy efficient homes.
- Reducing costs and delivering more quickly.
- Allowing access to difficult sites e.g. where access for construction traffic would not be possible or would cause disruption to existing residents.

Actions:

- The Council will encourage and support the use of MMC by helping to identify sites, liaison with planning and consultation with Town/Parish Councils and local residents.

Engagement with Local Communities and Other Stakeholders

Support from local communities is important to the successful delivery of affordable housing.

Actions:

- The Council will work with Registered Providers, other developers and landowners to involve local communities in new housing schemes in their areas.
- The Council will work with Neighbourhood Plan groups to help identify sites for affordable housing.

Community Led Housing

Community led housing gives local communities greater involvement and control in delivering affordable housing to meet local needs. Greater local ownership ensures schemes are better integrated into local communities and deliver quality sustainable new homes.

Actions:

- Support existing and 'grow' new community led housing organisation to deliver more affordable homes to meet local need

Theme 2 – Improving Housing Stock Condition in the Private Sector

For this Theme the Housing Strategy has three sub-themes each with a number of proposed actions and interventions:

1. Improving energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty
2. Tackling disrepair.
3. Tackling empty homes.

The Corporate Plan Objectives & Delivery Plan Actions

The existing Corporate Plan already highlights the condition of existing homes, especially energy efficiency, as a priority:

Objective 2: Developing & implementing a new housing strategy

- Identifying the most effective interventions to improve conditions and energy efficiency in private sector housing.
- Identifying and analysing the condition of private sector housing stock.
- Investigating the viability of methods to help reduce fuel poverty amongst vulnerable local residents.

New actions in the Housing Strategy

Delivering Programmes of Improvement Works

Delivering works to improve heating and insulation is an area with multiple challenges:

- Grant funding is available but is short-term and (seems) difficult to access.
- Promotion of the available funding and support to applicants is unclear.

- Grant processes are often complex and experience has shown that few people who really need the works will access the scheme.
- Contractors lack the capacity and skilled staff to take on extra work at short notice. They are reluctant to do works to single properties preferring the economies of scale of grouped properties. Supporting local contractors will help the local economy and also provide job and training opportunities for younger workers.

Actions:

- The Council and partners to lobby government to secure long-term grant funding for energy efficiency works for both privately owned and privately rented homes.
- The Council will work with Norfolk Warm Homes and other partners to produce a clear 'offer' for low income households (and landlords) to improve energy efficiency. This offer will include support from initial enquiry to final installation - to 'hand hold' through process. This will include the council employing a dedicated energy efficiency officer.
- The Council and Norfolk Warm Homes will actively promote energy efficiency measures. Promotion will be direct to residents and through intermediaries such as landlords, and parish and town councils.
- Working with Norfolk Warm Homes and other partners the Council will consider an accreditation scheme for contractors to help ensure capacity to deliver energy efficiency and to promote local employment.
- The Council will consider whether direct provision or guaranteeing work for contractors will help ensure contractors are available to carry out work.

Fuel Poverty

Nearly 10% of households in the district face fuel poverty. The problems are most acute in the private rented sector and in parts of the owner occupied sector.

Actions:

- The Council will work with landlords and the Eastern Landlords association to encourage landlord take up of energy efficiency improvement works.
- The Council will use the Building Research Establishment Stock Condition Database² to target properties for energy efficiency improvement works.

Older Properties and Listed Buildings

The District has a high proportion of older properties and listed buildings. These properties have design features and use materials which make improvements to energy efficiency difficult. In addition planning policies prevent implementation of some type of energy efficiency works on listed buildings.

Action:

- The Council will work with the district's country estates, other private landlords and owners to identify examples of good practice for making energy efficiency improvements to older/listed buildings. The Council will share and promote the good practice identified.

Empty Homes

By comparison with England as a whole North Norfolk District has relatively few empty homes that have been empty for more than two years. However, the relatively few long-term empty homes are often in poor condition, unattractive, potentially dangerous and are a waste of scarce housing.

² This database uses income and stock condition data to identify fuel poor households.

Action:

- The Council will carry out research to identify examples of good practice (use of legislation, grants and other incentives) to reduce the number of long-term empty homes. The Council will consider adopting good practice measures where these bring benefits which justify the costs of the interventions.

Disrepair

Some owner-occupiers lack the financial resources or capability to adequately maintain their homes. Poor condition homes are likely to have an adverse effect on the health and wellbeing of the occupiers and potentially on the wider neighbourhood.

Action:

- The Council will carry out research to identify examples of good practice (use of legislation, grants and other incentives) to tackle homes in disrepair. The Council will consider adopting good practice measures where these bring benefits which justify the costs of the interventions.

Theme 3 – Making Best Use of Existing Homes

For this Theme the Housing Strategy has four sub-themes each with a number of proposed actions and interventions:

1. Managing the loss of affordable homes.
2. Supporting access to home ownership.
3. Allocating affordable homes fairly.
4. Accessing alternative housing options.

The Corporate Plan Objectives and Delivery Plan Actions

The existing Corporate Plan already highlights the issue with 'lost' affordable homes:

Objective 3: Develop a business case for a housing company with a view to providing the Council with a way of addressing some of the housing needs in the district

- Explore whether the District Council should consider the acquisition of older Victory Housing Trust (Flagship) properties in rural locations and then upgrade and make available for market rent.

Objective 5: Delivering new affordable homes both directly as a Council and through partnership working with Registered Providers.

- Explore ways to help households into owner-occupation, including consideration of mortgage facilitation schemes; lending to allow people to buy their own home, meaning that more local people can remain in the communities they call home

New Actions in the Housing Strategy

Lost/underused homes

The level of second and holiday homes, and the knock-on impact on the availability and affordability of homes for local households, is a major issue in North Norfolk. Whilst this may be a national policy issue, many actions in this strategy, particularly those related to new supply will help mitigate the impact of second and holiday homes. Compared with England as a whole North Norfolk District has relatively few long-term empty homes and these are covered in the previous theme of the strategy. Whilst the number of affordable homes 'lost' through voluntary disposals and right to buy sales are falling, seeking alternative options for the voluntary disposals remains an important part of retaining affordable homes.

Actions:

- The Council will work with Flagship to review all proposed disposals and consider alternative options (including NNDC purchase).

Access to Owner Occupation

Access to owner occupation in North Norfolk is difficult because of high prices relative to incomes.

Actions:

- Support government initiatives that help access owner occupation - provided these are not at the expense of affordable housing.

Low Cost Home Ownership

Low cost home ownership is currently not well understood or exploited to meet housing need but is likely to continue to be a significant part of delivery of new affordable homes. The actions proposed aim to make better use of this tenure.

Actions:

- The council will work with partners to raise awareness and understanding of shared ownership and other low cost home ownership homes.
- The council will research current mortgage availability and consider whether the council itself should become a mortgage lender for shared ownership and other low cost home ownership homes if there is a significant gap in availability.
- The Council will ensure that, through appropriate housing policies and policy in the emerging Local Plan, the government's new low cost home ownership product First Homes is implanted effectively – to deliver locally affordable home ownership options

Allocating Affordable homes

Understanding future demands for affordable housing and how current allocations benefit (or exclude) households is key to making best use of a very scarce housing resource. Identifying future demands will also identify gaps in existing provision and help shape future new homes delivery programmes.

Actions:

- The council will undertake analysis to understand housing needs and review the effectiveness of the current allocations system (specifically looking at local lets and at priority for move on).

House share

House sharing could be an affordable solution for some households and may also be a way to help older residents who are under-occupying and facing isolation and loneliness.

Actions:

- The council will work with partner Registered Providers to consider building new shared housing schemes.
- The council will investigate promotion of a scheme to facilitate multigenerational living.

Accessing private rented homes

Private renting is an important part of a thriving housing market but is a relatively small sector in the district.

Actions:

- The council will consider how it or partner Registered Providers could expand the private rented sector, including options to:
 - Establish a private sector leasing scheme (leasing homes from landlords providing greater security of income to the landlord and a guaranteed supply of homes to the council).
 - Provide support to private landlords by advertising their homes/finding prospective tenants.
 - Work with the Eastern Landlords Association to provide better support and information to existing and prospective landlords.

Theme 4 – Supporting Vulnerable Residents (to access & sustain suitable housing)

For this Theme the Housing Strategy has two sub-themes each with a number of proposed actions and interventions:

1. Prevention of Homelessness and Help for those who are Homeless.
2. Provision of Specialist Housing – New and Adapted

The Corporate Plan Objectives & Delivery Plan Actions

The existing Corporate Plan already includes priorities relating to vulnerable residents:

Objective 4: Developing & implementing a new Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy and Action Plan.

Objective 6: Working with partners to deliver 500 units of Housing with Care/Extra Care.

New Actions in the Housing Strategy

Prevention of Crisis

Many people who become homeless or face acute housing need have previously interacted with other public services. These public services may have been aware of warning signs of the risk of homelessness. The impact of homelessness is major and preventing crisis is far more effective and beneficial than tackling homelessness once it has happened.

Actions:

- The Council will use the opportunity of bringing people related services together (following a recent review) to better identify people at risk and to work collaboratively in a cross-service way to provide people-centred services and deliver better outcomes for potentially vulnerable residents.

Homeless

Homelessness is a major trauma in someone's life and is likely to have a significant impact on their life chances. Working together with other organisations can deliver more effective services to prevent and tackle homelessness.

Actions:

- The Council will continue to deliver actions in the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy.
- The Council will deliver four units of move on accommodation for rough sleepers and explore options to provide better forms of temporary accommodation, including further direct delivery of temporary housing.

- The Council will ensure it has effective processes and resources in place to manage a portfolio of temporary accommodation
- The Council will play an active part in the Norfolk Strategic Housing Partnership project to end homelessness in Norfolk and will help deliver the emerging action plan from this project.

Domestic Abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 brings in new duties for local authorities and requires the upper tier authority (Norfolk County Council) to assess the need for safe accommodation (refuge or other accommodation with security features) for those fleeing domestic abuse, and the need for support for those housed in safe accommodation; and to develop a strategy to meet the identified need.

- The council has a statutory duty to cooperate with Norfolk County Council in carrying out these requirements and will assist by providing needs data to support the needs assessment and will work with all relevant partners to develop a strategy which will inform commissioning decisions for the delivery of new provision.

Appropriate homes for older or disabled people and Supported Housing

Safe, secure, warm and accessible housing can make a huge difference to the quality of life and health of older or disabled people and there is a significant shortage of these homes in the district. There are also other gaps in specialist supported housing in the district.

Actions:

- The Council will continue to work with partners to deliver 500 Housing with Care Homes – through helping with site identification, the planning process and funding of schemes.
- The Council will ensure that new homes meet the needs of older and disabled households by ensuring policies in the new local plan provide sufficient new suitable homes.
- The Council will work with RP partners to ensure that new affordable homes meet the needs of older and disabled local residents.
- The Council will work with partners including Norfolk County Council to support the delivery of specialist housing schemes making use of both Homes England and other sources of grant funding.
- The council will carry out a review of the use of Disabled Facilities Grants to ensure the funding has the biggest possible impact on helping people with disabilities to have a home suited to their needs. For example, this could include using DFG funding to improve accessibility standards of new or existing affordable homes.

Conclusion

The housing needs of the district are substantial. To meet these needs the district will actively engage and work with a wide range of partners to: help increase the supply of new quality homes to meet local needs; to improve the condition of existing housing to provide warm, secure, affordable homes; to make the best use of scarce existing affordable homes; and, importantly, as the strategy is not just about 'bricks and mortar, help meet the needs of all our households to ensure they can access and sustain a home.

The Action Plan sets out the actions the Council will undertake to deliver against these ambitious aims.

Appendix 1 - Current Actions Undertaken by the Council to address Housing Issues in North Norfolk

Current activity - Increasing the Supply of Housing:

1. Local Plan Policies – the current (and emerging) Local Plan contains clear policies to set a framework to deliver the right types of homes in the right locations across North Norfolk. This includes:
 - a) The size mix of homes to deliver the smaller homes needed in the district.
 - b) Requiring suitable homes for older and disabled residents.
 - c) Supporting the delivery of affordable homes by setting clear requirements for the proportion of affordable homes provided as part of market development.
 - d) Policies to enable rural exception housing schemes and community led housing.

An independent consultant undertakes viability reviews to ensure the Council maximise the number of affordable homes delivered. Section 106 agreements ensure the Council secure affordable homes in perpetuity.
2. A dedicated Enabling Officer – who works with parish council and local communities to build understanding of the local need for affordable homes, and carries out site searches and liaises with landowners and RPs to identify and progress suitable sites.
3. Support to Community-led housing - a specific element of the enabling role is supporting the growth of community-led housing in the district, including using Community Housing Fund to support groups and schemes with grant.
4. Financial support – NNDC uses section 106 monies to provide grants to increase affordable housing and has also provided loans to RPs to help them deliver more homes in the district.
5. The Council has undertaken a review of existing council assets/land to identify sites suitable to provide housing.

Current activity - Housing Stock Condition in the Private Sector:

1. Enforcement – the council's current intervention in private sector housing focuses on statutory powers:
 - a) Licencing relevant Homes in Multiple Occupation
 - b) Action to tackle private rented homes failing to meet minimum standards.
 - c) 'Nuisance' properties (dangerous structures, serious disrepair and pests) causing issues to wider communities.
2. Empty homes – the main tool NNDC currently uses to reduce the number of empty homes is Council Tax; where empty homes are regularly monitored and premiums are applied to 'tax' long-term empty homes.
3. Improve energy efficiency – as well as tackling excessively cold private rented homes NNDC provides information on existing energy efficiency grant schemes and sign posts customers to Norfolk Warm Homes, the council also provides information on community energy supplier switching.

Current activity - Making Best Use of Existing Homes:

1. Common Housing List – the Council, on behalf of all social landlords across the district operates a common housing list (meaning applicants only need to apply once).
2. Choice based lettings system – the Council advertise properties available to let on behalf of Registered Provider landlords across the district. Bids made by applicants for a home are priorities using a common priority banding system to ensure homes go to those in the highest need, or in the case of Exception Housing Schemes, to those with the strongest local connection
3. Second & Holiday Homes – the Council monitors and provides regular reports on the levels of Second and Holiday homes across the district. The information is shared with parishes and used to target the highest concentration areas for new affordable housing.
4. Analyse Need – the Council analyses information from its Housing List to identify gaps in existing affordable supply and uses this information to provide information to developers and Registered Providers to help address those gaps.
5. Affordable housing stock disposals - the Council has an ongoing dialogue with the Flagship Housing Group and has agreed actions to mitigate the impact of stock disposals e.g. facilitating the purchase of disposals by other landlords, encouraging sale to shared owners and most recently direct purchase by the Council.

Current activity - Supporting Vulnerable Residents (to access and sustain suitable housing):

1. Extra Care Housing – the Council works with developers and Registered Providers to understand local need, identify suitable sites, achieve successful Planning permission and deliver good quality extra care housing - most recently a 66 flat scheme at Meadow Walk in Fakenham.
2. Adaptations – the council has a dedicated team including NNDC and NCC staff (Occupational Therapists) who assess need, recommend appropriate adaptations, provide grants and organise adaptations to enable residents to remain in their homes. The annual budget for this is £1.3m.
3. Homelessness prevention and relief – the Housing Options team work with households in need to prevent, wherever possible, homelessness occurring – this involves negotiating with landlords and families and accessing additional funds to prevent crisis. Support is provided to those facing homelessness, including dedicated posts to support rough sleepers and those with more complex needs.
4. Support – the Early Help Hub brings together a wide range of service providers to provide advice, support and assistance to residents of all ages to enable them to live independently and address their needs to improve their wellbeing. The service includes Living Well officers who work directly with households to access services to improve wellbeing.
5. Provision of temporary housing – the Council provides temporary accommodation for homeless households whilst their needs are assessed and ahead of securing more permanent homes. Some of this accommodation is purchased from the private sector but the council also provides self-contained homes itself to provide better quality housing.

Appendix 2 - Housing in North Norfolk a Summary of Issues 2020

In advance of producing a new Housing Strategy we prepared a report – Housing in North Norfolk a Summary of Issues 2020. This report, included in this appendix, provides much of the background data that helped inform the development of the strategy

Housing Strategy Action Plan

Theme 1 – Increasing the Supply of Housing

Aim	Action	Target For Completion	Who is Responsible
Direct Delivery			
Develop a business case for a housing company with a view to providing the Council with a way of addressing some of the housing needs in the district. (Corporate Plan Action Plan 1.3.1)	The Council working with stakeholders will clarify what it aims to achieve through direct delivery/ a housing company – including delivery of new homes, improvement of existing homes and supporting different tenure options e.g. private rent.	Agreed objectives for direct delivery/ housing company. September 2021	Housing Strategy Manager
	Produce an updated business case for with options and recommendations to progress (or not).	Updated business case. December 2021 (Original target Business Case March 2020)	Housing Strategy Manager
Supporting Delivery by Others			
Investigate ways to support and assist affordable housing providers, including the potential for a Council loan scheme for Registered Providers to facilitate a supply of affordable homes for our communities, whilst supporting the Council's	Investigate option of allocating sites for affordable housing.	Report with Recommendation December 2022.	Planning Policy Manager
	Investigate options of making the planning process easier for affordable housing providers ¹ : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide free pre-application advice for exception housing schemes and other affordable housing led proposals. • Identify a dedicated officer resource to provide planning support for each proposal. 	Report with recommendation. March 2022.	Major Projects Manager

¹ This will form part of a Strategic Review of Major Projects pre-application advice and resources available for planning applications.

Aim	Action	Target For Completion	Who is Responsible
financial sustainability. (Corporate Plan Action Plan 1.5.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better engage internal and external consultees (including highways, etc.) so that issues and constraints are identified early. 		
	<p>Secure support from local communities to enable the successful delivery of affordable housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council will work with Registered Providers, other developers and landowners to involve local communities in new housing schemes in their areas. The Council will work with Neighbourhood Plan groups to help identify sites for affordable housing. 	<p>Every proposed exceptions housing scheme will include at least one community consultation event. (Annual monitoring).</p> <p>Offer support to all existing and new Neighbourhood plan group. (Annual monitoring).</p>	<p>Community Enabling Officer</p> <p>Community Enabling Officer</p>
	Provide loan funding to help Registered Providers deliver affordable housing.	Pilot scheme in place by March 2021	Housing Strategy Manager
	Work with Homes England to make the case for higher grant rates and/or ability to use grant with cross-subsidy from market homes.	Pilot mixed funding scheme proposal to Homes England. September 2021	Housing Strategy Manager
	Use s106 commuted sums to provide top-up funding for affordable housing for schemes which would otherwise not be viable.	Annual budget approved. March 2021 – March 2025.	Housing Strategy Manager
	The Council will consider a range of actions to help de-risk housing development (including affordable housing) and bring back	Consider whether providing sites for 'Coastal rollback' linked to affordable housing developments helps deliver both.	Options and viability report. March 2022
Investigate de-risking options including gaining outline planning permission on selected sites.		Report with Recommendation March 2022.	Major Projects Manager

Aim	Action	Target For Completion	Who is Responsible
recommendations to implement the most effective.	Investigate ways we can encourage small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) to provide new housing (and employment) in the district.	Carry out research into barriers for SME builders/developers. December 2022	Joint project Housing Strategy and Economic Development
Supporting New Types of Development			
Market rented homes are 'under-represented' in the district and build-to-rent could play an important role in increasing supply, inward investment and driving up standards within the private rented sector.	Investigate ways the Council can support the development of good quality rented housing.	Undertake research and report with recommendations. September 2022	Housing Strategy Manager
Support the use of Modern methods of construction (MMC) where this brings demonstrable benefits.	The Council will encourage and support the use of MMC by helping to identify sites, liaison with planning and consultation with Town/Parish Councils and local residents.	MMC scheme on site by April 2023.	Housing Strategy Manager
Support the delivery of community-led housing in the district.	Help grow existing community-led organisations.	Four new affordable homes each year.	Community Housing Enabler
	Establish new community-led groups.	One new group by March 2023.	Community Housing Enabler

Theme 2 – Improving Housing Stock Condition in the Private Sector

Aim	Action	Target For Completion	Who is Responsible
Improving Energy Efficiency and Reducing Fuel Poverty			
Identifying and analysing the condition of private sector housing stock. (Corporate Plan Action Plan 1.2.3)	Report on housing stock condition in the district.	Condition survey March 2020.	
Identifying the most effective interventions to improve conditions and energy efficiency in private sector housing. (Corporate Plan Action Plan 1.2.2)	Employ a dedicated Energy Officer to work alongside the Environmental Policy Team to give focus to development and delivery of energy efficiency policy and schemes.	New officer in post. November 2021	Housing Strategy Manager and Environmental Policy Officer.
	The Council and partners to lobby government to secure long-term grant funding for energy efficiency works for both privately owned and privately rented homes.	Make evidenced case for continuity of funding. March 2022	Energy Officer
	The Council will work with Norfolk Warm Homes and other partners to produce a clear 'offer' for low income households (and landlords) to improve energy efficiency. This offer will include support from initial enquiry to final installation - to 'hand hold' through process.	Improved take up of existing energy grants. Establishment of new schemes of energy grants. Annual monitoring report.	Energy Officer
	The Council and Norfolk Warm Homes will actively promote energy efficiency measures. Promotion will be direct to residents and through intermediaries such as landlords, and parish and town councils.	Raised awareness of availability of energy grants. Annual monitoring report.	Energy Officer

Aim	Action	Target For Completion	Who is Responsible
	Working with Norfolk Warm Homes and other partners the Council will consider an accreditation scheme for contractors to help ensure capacity to deliver energy efficiency and to promote local employment.	Report with recommendations on potential benefits of scheme. September 2022	Energy Officer
	The Council will consider whether direct provision or guaranteeing work for contractors will help ensure contractors are available to carry out work.	Report with recommendations on potential benefits of scheme. September 2022	Energy Officer
	The Council will work with the district's country estates, other private landlords and owners to identify examples of good practice for making energy efficiency improvements to older/listed buildings. The Council will share and promote the good practice identified.	Report identifying good practice examples. March 2023	Energy Officer
Investigating the viability of methods to help reduce fuel poverty amongst vulnerable local residents. (Corporate Plan Action Plan 1.2.4)	The Council will work with landlords and the Eastern Landlords association to encourage landlord take up of energy efficiency improvement works.	Improved take up of energy grants. Annual monitoring report.	Energy Officer
	The Council will use the Building Research Establishment Stock Condition Database ² to target properties for energy efficiency improvement works.	Improved take up of energy grants. Annual monitoring report.	Energy Officer

² This database uses income and stock condition data to identify fuel poor households.

Aim	Action	Target For Completion	Who is Responsible
Tackling Disrepair			
Help owners of private sector housing remedy disrepair.	The Council will carry out research to identify examples of good practice (use of legislation, grants and other incentives) to tackle homes in disrepair. The Council will consider adopting good practice measures where these bring benefits which justify the costs of the interventions.	Report with recommendations on actions the Council could take. March 2022	Housing Strategy Manager and Public Protection & Commercial Manager
Tackling Empty Homes			
Reduce the number and negative impact of empty homes in the district.	The Council will carry out research to identify examples of good practice (use of legislation, grants and other incentives) to reduce the number of long-term empty homes. The Council will consider adopting good practice measures where these bring benefits which justify the costs of the interventions.	Report with recommendations on actions the Council could take. March 2022	Housing Strategy Manager, Revenues Manager and Environmental Health Manager

Theme 3 – Making Best Use of Existing Homes

Aim	Action	Target For Completion	Who is Responsible
Managing the Loss of Affordable Homes			
<p>Explore whether the District Council should consider the acquisition of older Victory Housing Trust (Flagship) properties in rural locations and then upgrade and make available for market rent.</p> <p>(Corporate Plan Action Plan 1.5.3)</p>	<p>The Council will work with Flagship to review all proposed disposals and consider alternative options (including NNDC purchase).</p>	<p>Monthly Meetings established. March 2021</p>	<p>Housing Strategy Manager</p>
	<p>Consider purchase of Flagship properties as part of the business case for a housing company. See Theme 1 – Increasing the Supply of Housing (Direct Delivery).</p>		
Supporting Access to Home Ownership			
<p>Explore ways to help households into owner-occupation, including consideration of mortgage facilitation schemes; lending to allow people to buy their own home, meaning that more local people can remain in the communities that they call home</p> <p>(Corporate Plan Action Plan 1.5.2)</p>	<p>The council will work with partners to raise awareness and understanding of shared ownership and other low cost home ownership homes.</p>	<p>Promotional campaign in place. December 2021</p>	<p>Housing Strategy Manager</p>
	<p>The council will research current mortgage availability and consider whether the council itself should become a mortgage lender for shared ownership and other low cost home ownership homes if there is a significant gap in availability.</p>	<p>Report with recommendations on potential benefits. September 2022</p>	<p>Housing Strategy Manager</p>
	<p>The Council will ensure that, through appropriate housing policies and policy in the emerging Local Plan, the government’s new low cost home ownership product First Homes is implanted effectively – to deliver locally affordable home ownership options</p>	<p>Included in new Local Plan. September 2021 Housing Policy and Processes. March 2022</p>	<p>Planning Policy Manager, Housing Strategy Manager and Principal Lawyer.</p>

Aim	Action	Target For Completion	Who is Responsible
Allocating Homes Fairly			
Ensure the system for prioritising housing need and letting homes makes the best use of available affordable homes.	The council will undertake analysis to understand housing needs and review the effectiveness of the current allocation agreement (specifically looking at local lets and at priority for move on).	Undertake analysis and report on current system. November 2022	Housing Options Manager
Accessing Alternative Housing Options			
House sharing could be an affordable solution for some single person households and may help older residents who are under-occupying and maybe facing isolation and loneliness.	The council will work with partner Registered Providers to consider building new shared housing schemes.	Develop proposal to share with RP partners April 2022	Housing Strategy Manager
	The council will investigate promotion of a scheme to facilitate multigenerational living.	Undertake analysis and develop proposal April 2022	Housing Options Manager
The council will consider how it or partner Registered Providers could expand the private rented sector.	Consider the establishment of a private sector leasing scheme (leasing homes from landlords providing greater security of income to the landlord and a guaranteed supply of homes to the council).	Report with recommendations on potential benefits. September 2022	Housing Options Manager
	Work with the Eastern Landlords Association to provide better support and information to existing and prospective landlords. This could include advertising their homes/finding prospective tenants.	Report with recommendations on potential benefits. September 2022	Housing Options Manager

Theme 4 – Supporting Vulnerable Residents (to access & sustain suitable housing)

Aim	Action	Target For Completion	Who is Responsible
Prevention of Homelessness and Help for those who are Homeless			
The impact of homelessness is major and preventing crisis is far more effective and beneficial than tackling homelessness once it has happened.	The Council’s People Services teams working with other Council teams and external partners will identify people ‘at risk of crisis’ and develop action to help prevent crisis.	New staff structure for People Services. Sept 2021 Service Review. Sept 2022	Assistant Director People Services Assistant Director People Services
Developing and implementing a new Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy and Action Plan (Corporate Plan Action Plan 1.4.1).	The Council will continue to deliver actions in the new Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy.	Annual Monitoring April 2021 to April 2025	Housing Options Manager
	The Council will deliver four units of move on accommodation for rough sleepers and explore options to provide better forms of temporary accommodation, including further direct delivery of temporary housing.	Complete purchase and let the four NSAP units. June 2021. Complete the conversion of Lushers Passage to provide an additional TA unit. October 2021 Review Property and Asset management processes to ensure the Council is able to provide safe housing which maximises income. December 2021	Estates Manager, Property Services Manager and Housing Options Manager. Estates Manager, Property Services Manager and Housing Options Manager. Estates Manager, Property Services Manager and Housing Options Manager.

Aim	Action	Target For Completion	Who is Responsible
	The Council will play an active part in the Norfolk Strategic Housing Partnership project to end homelessness in Norfolk and will help deliver the emerging action plan from this project.	Contribute to the development and delivery of the action plan. September 2021	Housing Strategy Manager
Provision of Specialist Housing – New and Adapted			
Provide safe accommodation and support to those fleeing domestic abuse	The Council will work with Norfolk County Council to develop and deliver a strategy for the delivery of new provision.	Contribute to the development and delivery of the strategy. September 2021	Assistant Director People Services
		Complete target hardening works to all council owned temporary accommodation. March 2022	Housing Options Manager
Working with partners to deliver 500 units of Housing with Care / Extra Care (Corporate Plan Action Plan 1.6.1).	The Council will continue to work with partners to deliver 500 Housing with Care Homes – through helping with site identification, the planning process and funding of schemes.	One new site (c50 homes) per year. Annual monitoring report. April 2021 – April 2025	Housing Strategy Manager
Safe, secure, warm and accessible housing can make a huge difference to the quality of life and health of older or disabled people and there is a significant shortage of these homes in the district.	The Council will ensure that new homes meet the needs of older and disabled households by ensuring policies in the new local plan provide sufficient new suitable homes.	Liaise with Planning Policy to finalise housing policies September 2021	Housing Strategy Manager and Planning Policy Manager
	The Council will work with RP partners to ensure that new affordable homes meet the needs of older and disabled local residents.	Analyse housing need and provide housing mix for new developments Annual monitoring report. April 2021 – April 2025	Housing Strategy Manager

Aim	Action	Target For Completion	Who is Responsible
	The Council will work with partners including Norfolk County Council to support the delivery of specialist housing schemes making use of both Homes England and other sources of grant funding.	Delivery of new homes in greatest need Annual monitoring report. April 2021 – April 2025	Housing Strategy Manager
	The council will carry out a review of the use of Disabled Facilities Grants to ensure the funding has the biggest possible impact on helping people with disabilities to have a home suited to their needs. For example, this could include using DFG funding to improve accessibility standards of new or existing affordable homes.	Review complete. April 2022	Assistant Director People Services

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UK COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND (CRF) MATCH FUNDING

Summary: This report seeks authorisation from Cabinet to confirm and allocate the match funding requirements for the recently submitted Community Renewal Fund (CRF) bids for both Fakenham and North Walsham.

The total funding being requested for the Fakenham bid is £800k, with £600k being requested from the CFR and £200k (25%) being sought from the Council's own resources, giving a total budget allocation of £800k.

As with Fakenham, the total funding being requested for the North Walsham bid is also £800k, with £600k being requested from the CFR and £200k (25%) being sought from the Council's own resources, giving a total budget allocation of £800k.

This means that the combined match funding requirement from NNDC is £400k, with funding requests from the CRF totalling £1.2m, which combined would see an overall funding package of £1.6m.

Options considered: It is recommended that the match funding element is provided from the Delivery Plan Reserve.

The Council could have taken the decision not to submit any bids for the recently announced Community Renewal Fund (CRF). However, having been identified by central government as one of the 100 'priority areas', with potential access districtwide to a funding pot of £3m, it was considered opportune to submit 2 applications, one focussed around Fakenham and the other around North Walsham, to try to secure some of this funding for the area.

While there was no specific requirement to provide match funding the bid scoring guidance was clear that projects with match funding in place would be viewed more favourably, hence the request that is before Members within this report.

Conclusions: Having been recently identified by central government as being one of the 100 'priority areas', the Council has taken the decision to submit 2 bids to the Community Renewal Fund (CRF). The match funding being sought to support these bids will strengthen the potential for them to be approved and allocated funding when the bid submissions are assessed by central government.

Recommendations: That Cabinet resolve the following;

- 1. To release match funding of £200k for the Fakenham CRF bid and £200k for the North Walsham bid subject to the bids being approved by central government.**
- 2. The match funding element to be released from the Delivery Plan Reserve.**

Reasons for Recommendations: To support and strengthen the CRF bids for both Fakenham and North Walsham which in turn will help to realise opportunities to secure UK Government funding into North Norfolk to support investment in projects which meet priorities outlined in the Council's Corporate Plan as they relate to provision of housing, economic growth, environment and climate change and quality of life.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected
Cllr S Bütikofer – Leader of the Council	Lancaster North, Lancaster South, North Walsham East, North Walsham Market Cross and North Walsham West

Contact Officer, telephone number and email:
Duncan Ellis, Director for Resources, 01263 516330, Duncan.ellis@north-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Introduction

1.1 This report follows on from the report presented to Cabinet in April 2021 by the Chief Executive which outlined the opportunities presented by the newly announced Community Renewal Fund (CRF) and sought agreement to the following recommendations;

- To note the opportunities presented to North Norfolk by the new UK Community Renewal and Levelling Up programmes;
- To endorse the proposals made that a programme of complementary projects be developed in respect of the future planned growth of North Walsham and Fakenham as sustainable locations for future housing and business development at scale supported by provision of key transport, health, education community and green infrastructure and submitted to the County Council as lead body for endorsement and onward submission to the Government; and
- To agree that in developing any proposals the Council establishes a Strategic Stakeholder Board and Steering Groups for North Walsham and Fakenham to support project development and oversee programme delivery.

1.2 The headline issues of the CRF programme are as follows;

- £220 million programme in 2021, aiming to support community renewal, including skills development, economic renewal, infrastructure deficits etc
 - 100 priority areas (including North Norfolk, Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Kings Lynn and West Norfolk)
 - Projects with a value of up to £3million could be supported per area, with 90% of the funding for revenue spend
 - Locally in Norfolk, the programme will be led by the County Council, endorsed by local Members of Parliament
 - Bids for project funding to be submitted by lead authorities by 18th June 2021
- 1.3 The fund focusses on 4 key project themes covering the following broad areas;
- Investment in skills
 - Investment for local businesses
 - Investment in communities and place
 - Supporting people into employments
- 1.4 The bids submitted focus on the third of these themes, namely ‘Investment in communities and place’. There was also a strong focus within the CRF prospectus around supporting central government’s aspirations in relation to achieving ‘Net Zero’, innovation and delivery by March 2022.
- 1.5 The priority focus within Investment in communities and place theme covers the following areas;
- Feasibility studies for delivering net-zero and local energy projects
 - Exploring opportunity for promoting culture-led regeneration and community development
 - Improving green spaces and preserving important local assets
 - Promoting rural connectivity
- 1.6 This report seeks to update Members regarding the progress made with the bids since the last report and includes a request for an element of match funding for both projects to further strengthen and support the bid submissions.

2. Update on progress

- 2.1 Following the initial report in April 2021 the recommendations detailed within section 1.1 of this report have all been delivered. Bids have been submitted in line with government requirements for both Fakenham and North Walsham and the Strategic Board has been established along with Steering Groups for both Fakenham and North Walsham, resented by a wide range of stakeholders.
- 2.2 The timelines for drafting the bids were incredibly tight, in line with the following timetable;

- Applications submitted to Norfolk County Council (NCC) by Friday 14 May at 5pm
- Projects appraised by NCC by Friday 4 June
- Submission by NCC to Government by Friday 18 June
- Government decision late July 2021 onwards

2.3 To facilitate submissions by the required deadlines the following meetings were held with the various stakeholder groups;

- Fakenham Steering Group 29 April 2021
- North Walsham Steering Group 30 April 2021
- Initial Strategic Board meeting 12 May 2021
- Second Strategic Board meeting 11 June 2021

2.4 Following the initial submissions feedback was provided by NCC officers and the bids were updated and share with the Steering Groups and Strategic Board for information and further comment.

2.5 Bids were successfully submitted to NCC on time covering both Fakenham and North Walsham.

3. Fakenham CRF bid – Fakenham Improvement and Regeneration Scheme for Tomorrow (FIRST)

3.1 The FIRST bid requested CRF funds totalling £600k with a proposed match funding element to be provided by NNDC of £200k giving a total overall project budget of £800k.

3.2 The FIRST project initiative includes various project elements that will develop Fakenham as a destination where people choose to live, work, do business and visit. This will be achieved through a range of improvements, kick-started through a series of interlinked feasibility projects, addressing known constraints/challenges which the town faces in response to changing consumer trends, service delivery by national companies (retail and financial services), recovery from the COVID pandemic and UK and local objectives towards Net-Zero carbon impact/promoting carbon literacy.

3.3 The aims of the FIRST initiative recognise Fakenham's existing potential and builds upon the current economic strengths and natural assets within the town centre and local area to create a unique sense of place which will, in turn, boost confidence in the town, attract visitors and maximise the opportunities for physical activity, health and wellbeing.

3.4 FIRST will see collaborative working between a number of partners who have not previously worked together in such a wide ranging or coordinated manner to deliver the activities, outputs and outcomes.

3.5 The projects proposed as part of the FIRST programme are:

TO DELIVER A FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE GROWTH THROUGH;

1. The creation of a '**Fakenham Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan**' (including delivery of some elements) promoting low-to-no, carbon commuting, greater access to greenspace, healthier lifestyle

options and overall enhanced connectivity within the local area. The plan will specifically address;

- Opportunities to promote active travel schemes between the urban extension and town centre.
 - The feasibility of developing a network of cycling and walking routes which connect the town centre to local tourism and green infrastructure assets ie Pensthorpe, the Racecourse and the Hawk and Owl Trust.
 - 'Accessibility for All' walking infrastructure along the existing network around the River Wensum opening up opportunities for residents and visitors to explore nature.
2. Working alongside Fakenham Town Council, develop an action plan to implement and promote a '**Healthy Fakenham**' scheme which aims to improve healthy eating, active lifestyles; including holding a variety of events that support local businesses and promote sustainable lifestyle choices.
3. The creation of **Feasibility Studies** covering;
- a) the creation and extension of the existing sports facilities in order to extend participation in underrepresented groups;
 - b) the provision of Lido or other swimming pool facility in Fakenham and;
 - c) design proposals for flood management for Sculthorpe Moor to alleviate winter inundation of the upper reaches of the Wensum and to provide an attractive visitor environment linked to the wider footpath and cycle way network.
4. The creation of a '**Climate Change Action Plan**' for Fakenham which will;
- assess opportunities for climate change adaption and mitigation within the town centre;
 - understand how residents, community groups and businesses can be supported to decarbonise their own activities and improve carbon literacy and;
 - feed into NNDC's Environmental Charter which will help communities to address the climate change crisis at a local level whilst contributing towards central governments net-zero carbon emission 2050 target.
- 3.6 These projects link directly with the CFR prospectus and in particular support 3.4 Communities and Place priority area.

4. North Walsham CRF bid – Seeding Sustainable Growth in North Walsham

- 4.1 The North Walsham bid also requested CRF funds totalling £600k with a proposed match funding element to be provided by NNDC of £200k giving a total overall project budget of £800k.
- 4.2 This project is based on the growing market town of North Walsham and nearby significant employment sites. It aims to enable development of a practical plan to deliver community renewal and growth in a manner that is consistent with the principles set out in the March 2021 *Build Back Better*

Treasury policy statement. It will do so by helping to identify ways to attract growth, skills and investment into the region that will overcome significant existing infrastructure constraints and also support timely delivery of Net Zero.

- 4.3 It will be delivered by a lead consultant with experience and expertise in land-use planning, development and sustainability as well as project management. Specialist studies will be procured from subcontractors as part of the overall contract.
- 4.4 This initiative will set the growth trajectory for North Norfolk's largest, and potentially most sustainable market town, North Walsham. It will pave the way for securing significant housing and employment development, with community engagement and sustainability as guiding principles. The consultant will be expected to:
- Evaluate the opportunities for delivering large-scale (net-zero) housing and employment development, in a sustainable manner;
 - Quantify known energy and transport infrastructure constraints on future expansion, and demonstrate how to sustainably overcome such challenges;
 - Show how renewed (post-pandemic) investment interest in the town centre and the changed patterns of work and commuting can benefit market towns;
 - Identify opportunities to extend services and community infrastructure to meet the needs of an expanded population;
 - Show how new development can effectively integrate with the town's existing built form;
 - Provide a methodology for 'nature based solutions' to environmental constraints and the provision of green infrastructure which will benefit new development and facilitate biodiversity net gain;
 - Identify the means by which the existing and new residential areas of the town might be better integrated by sustainable modes of transport (including active travel);
 - Link the investment potential and new renewable energy development opportunities of the nearby Bacton Energy Hub, major offshore wind energy schemes and Scottow Enterprise Park to facilitate North Walsham's sustainable expansion and growth;
 - Showcase a new approach to urban expansion in a rural context and illustrate the practical sustainable development principles that can reconcile the conflict between development and conservation and improvement of the natural environment, which could be replicated locally and nationally;
 - Evaluate the outcomes against the baseline position.
- 4.5 This will be achieved through undertaking feasibility studies, based on technical analysis and widespread stakeholder engagement, thereby developing an outline business case for sustainable growth. We intend to demonstrate a sustainable method by which the existing and future needs of the area can be met.
- 4.6 The project will involve the preparation of feasibility studies and modelling options that will become an innovative methodological framework for North Walsham's sustainable growth; reconciling development and conservation objectives. It will sow the seeds for the establishment of green infrastructure,

sustainable water management, renewable energy supply, social infrastructure, active travel and low carbon transportation. The project will build in monitoring and evaluation that will yield valuable lessons for application locally and nationally.

5. Corporate Plan Objectives

- 5.1 This CRF is a predominantly revenue focussed funding stream with an expectation that at least 90% of the funding is allocated to revenue activities as opposed to capital. The funding is very much seen as 'pump priming' ahead of both the Shared Prosperity Fund and Levelling Up Fund, which will be very much focussed around capital delivery and will build upon the work completed as part of the CRF projects, should they be successful.
- 5.2 The UK Community Renewal Fund and Levelling Up Fund would present new opportunities to secure external funding into North Norfolk to deliver a number of priorities identified in the Council's adopted Corporate Plan and should therefore be seen to align well with the Council's established priorities.

6. Medium Term Financial Strategy

- 6.1 As noted at paragraph 5 above, these new Government funding programmes would support the ambitions of the Council's Corporate Plan and therefore contribute to investment in the District and the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy through adding value and capacity to the Council's priority objectives.

7. Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 As outlined above the total funding being requested for the Fakenham bid is £800k, with £600k being requested from the CFR and £200k (25%) being sought from the Council's own resources, giving a total budget allocation of £800k.
- 7.2 As with Fakenham, the total funding being requested for the North Walsham bid is also £800k, with £600k being requested from the CFR and £200k (25%) being sought from the Council's own resources, giving a total budget allocation of £800k.
- 7.3 This means that the combined match funding requirement from NNDC is £400k, with funding requests from the CRF totalling £1.2m, which combined would see an overall funding package of £1.6m.
- 7.4 It should be noted that the focus of the CRF is very much around revenue spend with an expectation that 90% of funding requests will be revenue, with a maximum of 10% to be allocated towards capital spend.
- 7.5 It is anticipated that a number of these work streams will be undertaken by consultants due to the nature of the feasibility work being undertaken. This work will however be supported by a range of staff internally including but not limited to Planning Policy, Sustainable/Economic Growth team, Finance, Legal, CDU, Climate Change and Environment Team, Procurement, admin support etc. There are also elements of the bids which request additional

funding support for project lead roles and further procurement support due to the high level of procurement required.

- 7.6 It is recommended that the match funding requirements are met from the Council's Delivery Plan Reserve.

8. Legal Implications

- 8.1 Any projects developed for submission under either programme will consider the legal issues / implications as part of development and appraisal through the Council's recently adopted Corporate Governance and Project Management Framework.

9. Risks

- 9.1 Each of the bid submissions contains a detailed summary of the perceived risks of the project over the following core areas;

- **Contractors/consultants** – failure to deliver on time/to desired quality, failure to secure suitably qualified/experienced consultants, feasibility not delivered
- **Financial** – risk of cost overruns/monitoring of spend
- **Procurement** – inability to produce tender documentation/specifications in a timely fashion
- **Operational/technical** – COVID lockdowns/further illness occurs, capacity and capability to deliver
- **Strategic** - projects don't achieve desired outcomes/outputs
- **Partnership governance** – Steering Group can't agree priorities, failure to manage expectations of partners/public, reputational damage from failure to deliver, changes in circumstances, loss of key personnel/providers, competing priorities

- 9.2 As part of the bid process roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and identified and while the various Boards and teams will have an overarching responsibility to consider and manage risk there will be a dedicated officer identified as part of the project team with specific responsibility for monitoring and updating the project risk register.

- 9.3 The Council has strong project management/reporting systems in place at officer/Member level, with oversight provided by the Corporate Delivery Unit (CDU) covering project management, performance and governance. The Project Group will include finance representatives who will review/mitigate and cover risk on a monthly basis as a standing item on each meeting agenda. The CDU will provide additional risk analysis.

- 9.4 Risks will be identified through frequent communication with the Board, Project Team, larger Steering Group and key partners/providers. Key risks will be escalated to the Board as appropriate based on any risks scoring 15 or more. The register will be continually monitored and updated as risks are removed, changed and new risks identified as the project progresses.

9.5 Individual risk registers will be developed for each of the work strands along with an overarching risk register for the projects as a whole. The Council's performance management system (InPhase) has a risk module contained within it which will enable the close monitoring and reporting of risk to the Project Team/Board.

9.6 These projects will be managed in line with the Risk Management Framework and Policy, adhering to the same internal processes currently used throughout the organisation to monitor and mitigate risk.

10. Sustainability

10.1 Both project bids have a focus around the sustainability and development of local communities and these aspects are considered within more detail in sections 3 (Fakenham) and 4 (North Walsham) above.

11. Climate / Carbon impact

11.1 As with sustainability, both project bids have a focus around the climate change and the contribution of projects to the government's Net Zero aspirations, and these aspects are considered within more detail in sections 3 (Fakenham) and 4 (North Walsham) above.

12. Equality and Diversity

12.1 Again as with sustainability and climate change, both project bids have a focus around equality and diversity, particularly around things such as accessibility and improvements to some of the walks and cycle ways as part of the Fakenham scheme. These aspects are considered within more detail in sections 3 (Fakenham) and 4 (North Walsham) above.

13. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

13.1 None as a direct result of this report.

14. Conclusion and Recommendations

14.1 Having been recently identified by central government as being one of the 100 'priority areas', the Council has taken the decision to submit 2 bids to the Community Renewal Fund (CRF).

14.2 The match funding being sought to support these bids will strengthen the potential for them to be approved and allocated funding when the bid submissions are assessed by central government.

14.3 Cabinet is therefore asked to resolve the following;

1. To release match funding of £200k for the Fakenham CRF bid and £200k for the North Walsham bid subject to the bids being approved by central government.
2. The match funding element to be released from the Delivery Plan Reserve.

GREENS ROAD FOOTBALL FACILITY, NORTH WALSHAM

Summary and Conclusion:

There are some capital maintenance works required at the football ground site on Greens Road, North Walsham. Whilst the site is leased to North Walsham Town Football Club on a full repairing lease, it cannot afford these works (c£60k). It is possible for the Council to undertake these works on behalf of the club, and write into an extended lease a commercial rent that enables the club to pay back the finance over a set period. An extension to the lease, to 21 years, will enable the club to further grow and develop and support the proposed 3G pitch installation project at the site.

Options considered:

Option 1: Do not extend the lease, do not fund the works.

Option 2: Extend the lease, fund the cost of the capital works. This is the preferred option.

Recommendations:

1) That the Council extends the lease with North Walsham Town Football Club for a period of 21 years.

2) That, subject to the inclusion in the lease a requirement for an increased rent which covers the cost of the work over an agreed period of time, the Council procures and funds the necessary works to bring the site up to a fit for purpose standard.

Reasons for Recommendations:

The above provides certainty for the club which continues to grow. It also assists the Council in its funding application to the Football Foundation for the potential installation of the 3G pitch

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

Cabinet Member(s)
Cllr Virginia Gay

Ward(s) affected
North Walsham West

Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Karl Read, 01263 516002,
karl.read@north-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report sets out the position in respect of the Greens Road Football site in North Walsham; the issues associated with some maintenance works

required on the site to bring it up to a fit for purpose standard and the potential to extend the lease of the current tenant which would recoup the cost over the extended lease period.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council owns land at Greens Road North Walsham which is used as a football facility. The site is currently leased to North Walsham Town Football Club on a full repairing lease. There are seven years remaining on the lease. The club has expressed a desire to extend the current terms to 21 years which would provide the club with longer term certainty and enable them to access external funding more effectively.
- 2.2 The club operates 24 teams including girls and women has recently amalgamated with North Walsham Youth Football Club enabling a seamless pathway from youth to senior football. The club provides football training, coaching throughout the week and access to competitive matches to participants from both North Walsham and surrounding areas.
- 2.3 The club is also an FA 'Charter Standard Club' and has shown a forward thinking approach to recent issues such as the merger of the youth teams.
- 2.4 There is potential to improve the site further with the proposed installation of a 3G pitch at this site, supported by Norfolk FA and The Football Foundation, who have confirmed their desire to part fund this facility.

3. Current Position

- 3.1 The club have met their responsibilities under the all repairing lease to date, maintaining the facility very well.
- 3.2 It has been identified that a number of larger items of work are required at the site. This includes the
 - replacement of sewage pumps
 - installation of new boilers
 - some electrical rewiring.
- 3.3 The estimated cost of these works is £60k and the club is not in a position to afford such significant capital outlay. The relatively short period remaining on the lease does not make this viable investment.
- 3.4 The Club has approached the Council with a proposition to extend the lease from the remaining seven years on the term to 21 years. In conjunction with the extension of the lease, they have requested the Council fund the required capital work items, with the club repaying the cost of the works through an increased rent over a set period, e.g. 10 years, which is subject to agreement with the club.
- 3.5 In order for the Council to access Football Foundation funding, there would need to be sufficient security of tender (21 years) to satisfy the funding criteria. An extension of the lease would satisfy the requirement of the funding application.

4. Corporate Plan Objectives

4.1 The project is in line with the Quality of Life corporate objective. It will provide further certainty for the football club, and help to increase participation in sport. This will improve the health and wellbeing of thousands of local residents over the term of the lease.

4.2 The current boilers in the facility are over 20 years old, and not fuel efficient. The installation of new energy efficient boilers will vastly improve their performance and save running costs for the club as well as help the Council meet its net zero carbon commitment.

5. Medium Term Financial Strategy

5.1 This proposal represents a capital cost to the Council but would increase revenue income with costs fully recovered, albeit over a longer time period.

5.2 The outlined proposal will assist in the application to the Football Foundation funding as part of the proposed 3G pitch project by both putting the facilities at the club in a fit state to support further pitch provision and by meeting the length of tenure funding requirement.

6. Financial and Resource Implications

6.1 The estimated cost is £60k in year one. The cost would be recovered through increased rental income from the club over an agreed period of the lease term.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are no legal issues identified with the proposed approach. Work would be required to draw up the necessary Heads of Terms and lease documents

8. Risks

8.1 Should the works not be undertaken there is a risk that the club is unable to maintain the site, and management of it will return to the Council. This would inevitably require additional funding to resource the operation of the site

8.2 Failure to extend the lease could also disrupt the football club's existence. It would also prevent the Council in accessing the funding for the 3G pitch.

9. Sustainability

9.1 Replacement of the old and inefficient boilers at the club provided an opportunity to install more fuel efficient boiler systems that will reduce energy consumption and contribute to the Council's net zero carbon objectives.

10. Climate / Carbon impact

10.1 Installation of new boilers will provide for a cleaner and energy efficient solution to heating of the facility.

11. Equality and Diversity

11.1 There are no equality and diversity issues linked to this project. The club operates via its Sports Equity Policy and maintains an inclusive approach.

12. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

12.1 No issues, but further development and growth of football provision provides opportunities for positive diversion activities for young people and so supports the reduction of crime and disorder in the locality.

13. Options Considered:

Option 1: Do not extend the lease, do not fund the works.

The club are responsible under the all repairing lease for the works and the council is within its rights to rely on this contractual position. The Council is under no obligation to extend the lease.

This option is not considered feasible as:

- it puts the football club's future at significant risk
- it would not contribute to the delivery the Corporate Plan objectives, the Sports Development Strategy, Playing Pitch Strategy or the FA's Local Football Facilities Plan
- it is possible that the site would return to the Council either at the end of the seven-year lease period or before with these works still outstanding.
- there would not be sufficient security of tenure (21 years) to satisfy the funding criteria to allow the Council to access Football Foundation funding
- There would be a reputational risk to the Council.

Options involving variations of funding the works but not extending the lease or extending the lease but not funding the works were not considered as they present the same issues that are identified above

Option 2: Extend the lease, fund the cost of the capital works

This option is preferred as it addresses the issues of the capital work but allows the club to afford these through an increased rental payment for a defined period of the lease term. It secures long term certainty for the club and enables the club to meet the security of tenure criteria which provides access to the Football Foundation funding around the 3G pitch project.

13. Summary and Conclusion

There are some capital maintenance works required at the football ground site on Greens Road, North Walsham. Whilst the site is leased to North Walsham Town Football Club on a full repairing lease, it cannot afford these works (c£60k). It is possible for the Council to undertake these works on behalf of the club, and write into an extended lease a commercial rent that enables the club to pay back the finance over a set period. An extension to the lease, to 21 years, will enable the club to further grow and develop and support the proposed 3G pitch installation project at the site.

14. Recommendations

1) That the Council extends the lease with North Walsham Town Football Club for a period of 21 years.

2) That, subject to the inclusion in the lease a requirement for an increased rent which covers the cost of the work over an agreed period of time, the Council procures and funds the necessary works to bring the site up to a fit for purpose standard.

PROPOSED REFURBISHMENT AND LETTING OF THE CEDARS PROPERTY AT NORTH WALSHAM AND POSSIBLE FUTURE SALE OR DEVELOPMENT OF ADJACENT LAND & BUILDINGS

Summary: This is an update to a report previously presented to Cabinet on the 30th March 2020, which identifies opportunities that would see the regeneration of a heritage building, known as The Cedars, and adjoining land. The proposal would require the Council to withdraw from a previously expressed intention dated November 2014 to dispose of the asset and move forward with a proposal for the main building to be refurbished and retained by the Council for letting and consideration of options for the remainder of the site.

Options considered: A range of options and uses have been considered and a feasibility study recently produced which makes recommendations for future uses. The alternative option is to continue with the previously agreed decision to dispose, however this would lead to a further long period in which the building remains vacant, at risk and deteriorating; it would also lead to the loss of grant support for the building's restoration.

Conclusions: The property has stood empty since 2016 whilst the sale of the property was under negotiation. During this time there has been considerable officer resource needed in managing the vacant property and budget required to hold it, without the property providing any benefit to the local community or wider district.

The prospective purchaser has in the period since November 2014 been unable/unwilling to commit to the acquisition of the property. In more recent times officers have explored alternative options and have succeeded in securing grant support for the building's restoration and conversion. Beneficial alternative options are now open to the Council following the completion of a feasibility study.

In evaluating the options and the inability of the prospective purchaser to complete, it is recommended that the disposal is not pursued; rather that the premises be refurbished and offered to let on the basis of a commercial rent either to community uses or to the private sector or a combination of both. The land and ancillary buildings offer some potential for development/conversion and it is recommended that options for its alternative use and possible disposal be further investigated. In both cases this would now represent best value and would support the objectives of the Corporate Plan, Asset Management Plan and furthermore would meet the criteria as stated in the Council's Disposal Policy.

Recommendations: It is recommended that Cabinet should resolve:

- A. To formally withdraw from the current disposal transaction which, after more than six years has not progressed to completion.**
- B. To retain the main Cedars building for letting purposes subject to a refurbishment as per the revised specification of works and then to market the premises to let.**
- C. That the previously allocated capital funding and the grant secured from Historic England is utilised for the refurbishment as per the revised cost plan.**
- D. That options are investigated for the separate use and possible disposal of the remaining parts and that marketing commences for the sale of the surplus site for potential third party development. (A further report being brought to Cabinet if disposal is deemed the most appropriate option).**

Reasons for Recommendations:

The proposed retention and refurbishment of the property and letting for a commercial rent to community organisations or private sector would bring the property back into beneficial use. This would prevent this important Listed Building from being further at risk and would utilise grant funds already secured. The refurbishment of the property supports the following key corporate priorities:

- Boosting Business Sustainability and Growth within North Walsham and surrounding areas (as part of the overall HSHAZ town centre improvement project).
- Financial Sustainability - by utilising grant funding to invest in the restoration of the building and reducing the Council's financial liabilities, revenue costs of holding the vacant, at risk, property, as well as providing both revenue income and a potential future receipt.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected North
Cllr Eric Seward	Walsham

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 In the summer of 2014 the District Council received an unsolicited offer for the property known as The Cedars, North Walsham, and after receiving independent valuation advice the Council's Cabinet, at its meeting of 4th November 2014 agreed to the sale of the property and terms were agreed with the purchaser.
- 1.2 However, despite contract paperwork being prepared in early 2015, the disposal of the property became protracted and following further negotiations with the purchaser and an options paper having been prepared, a further report was presented in to Cabinet in March 2020. This report gained approval from Cabinet to continue with the existing prospective purchaser on the basis that the revised terms represented best value and supported the Council objectives at that time.
- 1.3 The proposed disposal of the property has still yet to complete and, given COVID and levels of investor confidence at this time, there would appear no prospect of this producing the desired outcome within any reasonable period of time; meanwhile the property has been vacant and becoming dilapidated and at risk, costing the Council money and causing reputational damage. This report therefore seeks to provide an alternative option to the Council following the completion of a feasibility study and the receipt of external grant funds.

2. The Property

- 2.1 The property was previously operated as a town council office and occupies a prominent location within the town to the east of North Walsham Market Place, opposite the town's post office, and close to the library and community centre. It was identified in the application for High Street Heritage Action Zone funding as an important building at the gateway to the town centre.
- 2.2 The property comprises the main building that was divided into office and meeting space with ancillary accommodation; a yard and parking area, portakabins (now removed) and barns/outbuildings.
- 2.3 The main council offices building, and some historic barn structures within the curtilage of the property are Listed; and the site lies within the North Walsham Conservation Area.
- 2.4 A further area of land, owned by the District Council and which adjoins the site, is largely vacant with a small storage shed that is let under licence (see plan Appendix 1).

3. Background

- 3.1 A condition survey of the property was commissioned in 2010/11 to assess the then current and future maintenance requirements over a period of 5 years. At

that time, the report indicated that repair work to the building would have a cost in excess of £200,000. This cost was calculated at 1Q2010 BICS prices and did not allow for professional fees or management costs.

- 3.2 These works in the main included like for like replacements of doors/windows, works to the roof, replacement boiler and heating system, decoration, repointing walls, upgrade of electric services to the barn, rebuilding the rear external/boundary walls, and resurfacing the parking areas. There was no allowance for improvement except where it is necessary to upgrade at the time of replacement to comply with current regulations.
- 3.3 Since this time, the condition of the building and grounds has deteriorated since the property became vacant. There has been little repair and maintenance undertaken on the building since this time, on the basis that it was assumed a disposal was forthcoming which would have resulted in the major refurbishment of the building and site. The property is now suffering from dampness and some structural cracking.
- 3.4 In 2014, the District Council received an unsolicited letter expressing interest in acquiring the property for redevelopment to create a pub/restaurant. A conditional offer to acquire the freehold of the property was agreed subject to a number of conditions.
- 3.5 Following the Cabinet approval of November 2014 to dispose of the property, the Council instructed its solicitors to move forward with the legal transaction by way of a conditional contract, including a number of conditions required by the purchaser.
- 3.6 By September 2016 the Council had relocated the occupiers of the building to other accommodation in readiness for the disposal. However, the property has remained vacant since this time.
- 3.7 During 2017 a Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 application was made proposing the confirmation of a claimed Public Right of Way from Hall Lane to New Road through the site. The Council discussed this issue with the prospective purchaser and proposed that this issue be addressed as part of any subsequent planning application for the pub/restaurant through proposing the diversion of any claimed Public Right of Way across the site.
- 3.8 In late 2019, because the sale had not completed, a site visit and review discussion meeting was held with members to consider the future of the property. It was agreed that minor remedial work to improve the appearance of the property and to stop further dilapidations was to be undertaken, this included the removal of the vacant, dilapidated porta-cabins from the site (which occurred in 2020). It was also agreed that a number of options for the future of the building would be considered. Further discussions were also held with the prospective purchaser who re-stated their commitment to proceed with the purchase of the property in early 2020, prior to the onset of the COVID pandemic.
- 3.9 An opportunity for grant funding became available in 2019 and the Council was successful in North Walsham becoming a High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) during spring 2020. An element of the grant funding was proposed in order to bring this important Listed Building back into use, as at that time as the legal exchange of the conditional contract had still not been achieved. This funding would contribute a substantial sum towards the refurbishment costs, matched by the Council. The Council would, however, not be eligible for this grant if it were to dispose of the property.

- 3.10 In early 2020 the Covid pandemic and consequent lockdowns caused business uncertainty, particularly in the hospitality sector, and that lack of certainty has adversely impacted on investment confidence. This is thought to have had a particularly negative financial impact on the prospective purchaser of this property and, whilst the legal documents were largely agreed, the company has not progressed with its proposed acquisition of the property.

4. Current Position

- 4.1 The HSHAZ project is now well established and as part of this programme, a detailed survey of the property was commissioned in order to provide an updated position on the property condition. This survey identified a range of essential repairs and improvement works required to the building to bring it back into use. An associated cost plan was also produced.
- 4.2 Alongside this, a feasibility study was completed that highlighted several opportunities for the future beneficial use of the property, with the aim that its restoration and use would assist in the overall package of town centre improvements under the HSHAZ programme, reflecting its location and heritage status. It established that office use would be one of the most straight forward and suitable options for the main building due to the need for only simple conversion with minimal alterations required, giving flexibility to range of potential future users.
- 4.3 Having assessed the findings of the survey, cost plan and feasibility study a value engineering exercise was undertaken which highlighted opportunities to make cost savings whilst still being able to undertake essential repairs and bring the property back into use.
- 4.4 The assessment from the options undertaken in 2019 for the land and barn has also been updated, which contemplates potential residential development amongst other things, as the housing market has remained strong.
- 4.5 As part of the Open Public Estate programme (OPE) the Council previously identified the opportunity for a 'community hub' within the town that could provide an enhanced customer experience of public services through bringing together a number of public sector partners. Whilst this concept was supported the project did not proceed due to the substantial financial commitment and questionable viability in developing a new hub. However, by assessing the merits of such a facility it did identify a number of community focused organisations that would welcome the opportunity to work with likeminded organisations within a hub environment.
- 4.6 The disposal of the property to the prospective purchaser now appears highly unlikely to complete, and even if it did, there would be a considerable hiatus before any development materialised. There is a desperate need to ensure that the property is repaired and maintained and that it is able to fulfil a valuable role in the future improvement of the town centre. With the grant funding that has been secured and the options that appear to be viable as a result, it is proposed that the Council does not continue to hold out for the disposal but that it capitalises on more immediate opportunities that will be beneficial to the fabric of this historic building, the Council, and the town centre of North Walsham.

5. Proposal

- 5.1 Having assessed the feasibility study, condition survey, cost plan and appraisals the opportunity to retain and refurbish the building appears to be compelling. There would appear to be a variety of options relating to both the main building, the ancillary barns and the remainder of the site, which would be financially attractive but moreover would assist with the wider regeneration of the town in the short and longer terms. The option of bringing in a new hospitality business into the town, whilst attractive in many ways, did generate negative comment from some interests in the town. The HSHAZ scheme is motivated towards the improving the vitality and viability of North Walsham town centre and the Council believes this building can play an important role in that vision. The wider project (town centre place making, building improvements and cultural programming) will help to reinforce the existing hospitality businesses in the town and to some extent therefore, the use of this property for alternative uses will help to further reinforce that objective.
- 5.2 Whilst the Council's Cabinet had previously agreed in November 2014 to dispose of the property, as this has not completed, and as new opportunities have emerged, it is proposed to withdraw from the disposal and instead to:
- 5.2.1 Retain, refurbish and let the main property for a use or uses that will be appropriate to its characteristics and its location and that will cover its revenue costs; and
 - 5.2.2 consider further the available options for the remainder of the site and the barns
- 5.3 Through the OPE project the Council is aware of local public service and community organisations which have an interest in co-locating in this area, and officers have commenced discussions with these as potential tenants. It is proposed to undertake additional marketing of the building for letting alongside this.
- 5.4 As the land and barn adjoining the property are not essential to the retention and letting of the main building, these could be used or developed independently (subject to planning consent), with the potential for a capital receipt, which could help cover the cost of the Council's contribution to the Cost of repair/ restoration of The Cedars.
- 5.5 It is therefore recommended that further investigations and feasibility work be undertaken to explore the further potential of the site in order to optimise its value. It is proposed that a further report be presented to Cabinet following a comprehensive marketing of the site and once appropriate options have been evaluated.
- 5.6 It is proposed with the third parcel of land and storage shed, to terminate the licence so that this area can be incorporated into any hub scheme as a parking area.

6. Conclusion

The property has stood empty since 2016 whilst the sale of the property was under negotiation. During this time there has been considerable officer resource needed in managing the vacant property and budget required to hold it, without the property providing any benefit to the local community or wider district.

The previous prospective purchaser has been unable/unwilling to commit to the acquisition of the property. Meanwhile officers have explored alternative options and have succeeded in securing grant support for the building's restoration and conversion. Beneficial alternatives options are now open to the Council following the completion of a feasibility study.

In evaluating the options and the inability of the prospective purchaser to complete, it is recommended that disposal is not pursued but that the premises be refurbished and offered to let either to public service / community uses or to the private sector or a combination of both. The land and ancillary buildings offer some potential for development/conversion and it is recommended that options for its alternative use and possible disposal be investigated. In both cases this would now represent best value and would support the objectives of the Corporate Plan, Asset Management Plan and furthermore would meet the criteria as stated in the Council's Disposal Policy.

7. Asset Management Policies

7.1 The Councils Asset Management Plan strategic vision and focus for its portfolio is to be creative and entrepreneurial whilst having a fair and transparent use of its land and property and asset management approaches.

7.2 The retention and refurbishment of The Cedars alongside a potential disposal of part of this asset would support the following key aims of this document:

- Manage investment land and property assets soundly to optimise revenue income and capital receipts
- Reduce operating costs whilst ensuring assets remain fit for purpose and support service delivery
- Assets are sustainable and flexible for current and future needs whilst minimising the future costs to the Council of energy costs and maintenance liabilities
- Drive economic growth enabling businesses to thrive and grow
- Support our town centres, making them popular destinations to visit and enjoy
- Create opportunities that deliver community benefits.

7.3 Alongside the Asset Management Plan is the Council's Disposal Policy and a sale of part of this property would meet a number of this document's disposal criteria. An asset may be considered for disposal, where it:

- No longer contributes to the delivery of the Council's services, strategic or corporate objectives
- Provides a financial benefit to the council in terms of a capital sum to provide a more suitable re-provision
- Is not fit for purpose and is no longer economical, environmentally or culturally sustainable
- May be required for larger scale redevelopment opportunities, which would deliver greater economic development or regeneration through a wider land assembly.
- Has no strategic, regeneration or redevelopment potential to the Council

- Is a risk or poses a future risk to the Council
 - Is under performing and offers no future capital appreciation or investment rate of return
 - Would offer social, community or environmental benefit
-
- Improves economic development of the area or encourages start up or business growth.

8 Implications and Risks

- 8.1 Legal implications and risks are shown in the options appraisal and in the exempt Appendix C.

9 Financial Implications and Risks

- 9.1 Commercially sensitive financial implications and risks are shown in the options appraisal in the exempt Appendix C.
- 9.2 Costs involved since agreeing the now abortive sale have been mainly revenue costs incurred in managing the site as a vacant building. In 2018/19 the cost was circa £10,000 which is mainly business rates on the now removed portakabins, but excludes officer time in undertaking weekly inspections.
- 9.3 Whilst the Council is still responsible for the property and would manage any lettings and ongoing repairs and maintenance, this would be countered by a rental income and service charge.
- 9.4 If a sale of the car park and barns/outbuildings was to proceed the Council would no longer need to fund the substantial repairs required and all revenue costs associated with the management of the outbuildings/ barn and the car park.

10 Sustainability

- 10.1 The redevelopment of the property would require that the property meets the current Building Regulations at that time relating to sustainability. The repairs and improvements currently contemplated would substantially improve its energy efficiency and carbon footprint.
- 10.2 In addition to this, it is believed that the new proposal would strengthen the vibrancy and vitality of North Walsham town centre through establishing a new business or community hub.

11 Equality and Diversity

- 11.1 The property being vacant and in its current form is limited in supporting equality and diversity within the town. A refurbishment and re-letting of the property would be required to meet current legislation in relation to equality and diversity and it envisaged that the new lettings would provide improved accessibility to many groups within the local community.

12 Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

- 12.1 The property has suffered from some anti-social behaviour whilst vacant.

12.2 This report does not raise any further issues relating to Crime and Disorder.

13.0 Appendices

13.1 NNDC ownership plan

13.2 Revised specification of works (the current draft)

CEDARS – REVISED INTERNAL SPECIFICATION OF WORKS

7TH MAY 2021

Room numbers refer to the plans contained within the report by Kings & Dunne

B01 - Main basement room

General tidy up and sweep out all materials (no redecorations required)

New lighting if required to meet Fire Regs

Use remains as a general store

B02 – Basement corridor & stairs

As B01 – no redec required

Threshold repair to 2x lower steps

New lighting if required for Fire Regs

Use remains as corridor and stairwell

G01 – Entrance Hall

General making good and redecoration

Minor repair to tiled floor at entrance to basement

New lighting

New door furniture to Fire Door

Fix any loose cabling

G02 – Office

General making good and redecoration

Removal of suspended ceiling & repairs to original lathe & plaster ceiling and cornice above

Replace missing tiles in hearth

New door furniture if existing is unserviceable

Floor finish - re-carpet or consider exposing timber floor

Service existing sash windows

Replace 2x vents if required

G03 – Meeting Room

General making good and redec

Remove pin board and make good

Repair cracking

Window to be serviced

Renew blinds to window

G04 – Rear Hall

General making good and redecor

Remove pin board

Tiled floor repairs

New lighting

G05 – Rear Porch

Complete removal of existing timber structure and make good

Overhaul existing door to become reinstated external back door

G06 – Staircase Hall

General making good and redecoration

New lighting throughout

Redecorate timber staircase and provide new carpets

G07 – Safe Room

Retain safe

New boiler location to be reviewed (from G09 corridor)

New door and frame to meet Fire Rating (if required)

New lighting

G08 – WC

Refurbish existing sanitary ware – only renew if unserviceable

New lighting

Review extract arrangements as required

G09 – Corridor

Remove boiler & make good

Replace damaged plaster near boiler

Consider new location for boiler in WC adjacent

General making good and redecoration

Repair existing floor and deep clean

Remove or tidy exposed wiring as required

G10 – Reception

General making good and redecoration

New carpet to floor

Remove window insert/vision panel if not serviceable

G11 – Office

Stud walls to remain in situ

Generally make good and redecorate

New carpet to floor

New lighting

G12 – Office

Stud walls to remain in situ – otherwise as G11 above

G13 1a New Road – Office

No work required other than door cleaning and repainting

Use to be as a separate NNDC storage facility

F01 – Landing area

Replace door to F12 store

General make good and redecorate

New carpets

New lighting

F02 – Upper stairs and landing

General make good and redecorate

New carpets

New lighting

F03 – WC

Refurb sanitary ware if serviceable otherwise renew

New floor finishes as required

New lighting as required

Mechanical extract vent through external wall

F04 – Office

General make good and redecorate

New carpets

New lighting

F05 – Office

As F04 above

Remove secondary glazing

Leave open fireplace

F06 Office

Refurb internal doors

General make good and redecorate

New carpets

New lighting

Tidy cupboards and fix as required

F07 – Office

Stud walls to remain in situ

Potential re-glazing if required

General make good and redecorate

New carpets

New lighting

F08 – Lobby

As above F07

F09 – Office

General make good and redecorate

New carpets

New lighting

F10 – Office

As above

Refurb and retain built in cupboards

F11 – Store

Chipboard to remain and to be re-clad

General make good and redecorate

New vinyl floor finish

New lighting

F12 – Store

New door and new frame if frame required New vinyl floor finish

New lighting

F13 – Kitchen

Construct new timber stud wall beneath existing beam to create smaller kitchen area and new WC

Form new door into F13 kitchen by re-opening blocked doorway in F12

Fit new kitchenette

Generally make good and redecorate

New vinyl floor finish

F14 – New WC formed out of F13

General make good and redecorate

New vinyl floor finish

New lighting

New sanitaryware

Associated plumbing & drainage (note existing WC in G08 below)

General Items

Remove any secondary glazing if unserviceable

Consider provision of window blinds throughout (tenant fix?)

Replace any door hardware that is not serviceable

Fixed wire test, undertake recommendations and add further sockets as required

Fire exit signage – check all signage & replace extinguishers as required

Fire detection and alarms throughout

Complete Legionella testing prior to any letting

Roof – inspect and review loft insulation – replace if required

Replacement of switchgear as required

Data cabling removals and new installations

Intruder detection alarms to Ground Floor

New boiler, pumps and associated equipment / replacement of all radiators and controls

Builders work in connection with services

Roof

Generally in good order – attend to minor repairs

Guttering and downpipes & fascia boards

Renew all items as required

External windows and doors

Repair all items as required

Externals linked to building

Timber bike shed to be cleared & retained and corrugated plastic roof to be cleaned

Boundary Walls – inspect and repair brickwork as necessary

Externals

Bike shed structure outside rear door to be retained, cleared and roof covering cleaned

CEDARS – REVISED INTERNAL SPECIFICATION OF WORKS

7TH MAY 2021

Room numbers refer to the plans contained within the report by Kings & Dunne

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Removal of suspended ceiling & repairs to original lathe & plaster ceiling and cornice above

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Remove pin board and make good

Repair cracking

Window to be serviced

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New carpets

New lighting

F03 – WC

Refurb sanitary ware if serviceable otherwise renew

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New lighting as required

Mechanical extract vent through external wall

F04 – Office

General make good and redecorate

New carpets

New lighting

F05 – Office

As F04 above

Remove secondary glazing

Leave open fireplace

F06 Office

Refurb internal doors

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New carpets

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General Items

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Replace any door hardware that is not serviceable

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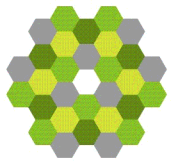
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The electronic official copy of the title plan follows this message.

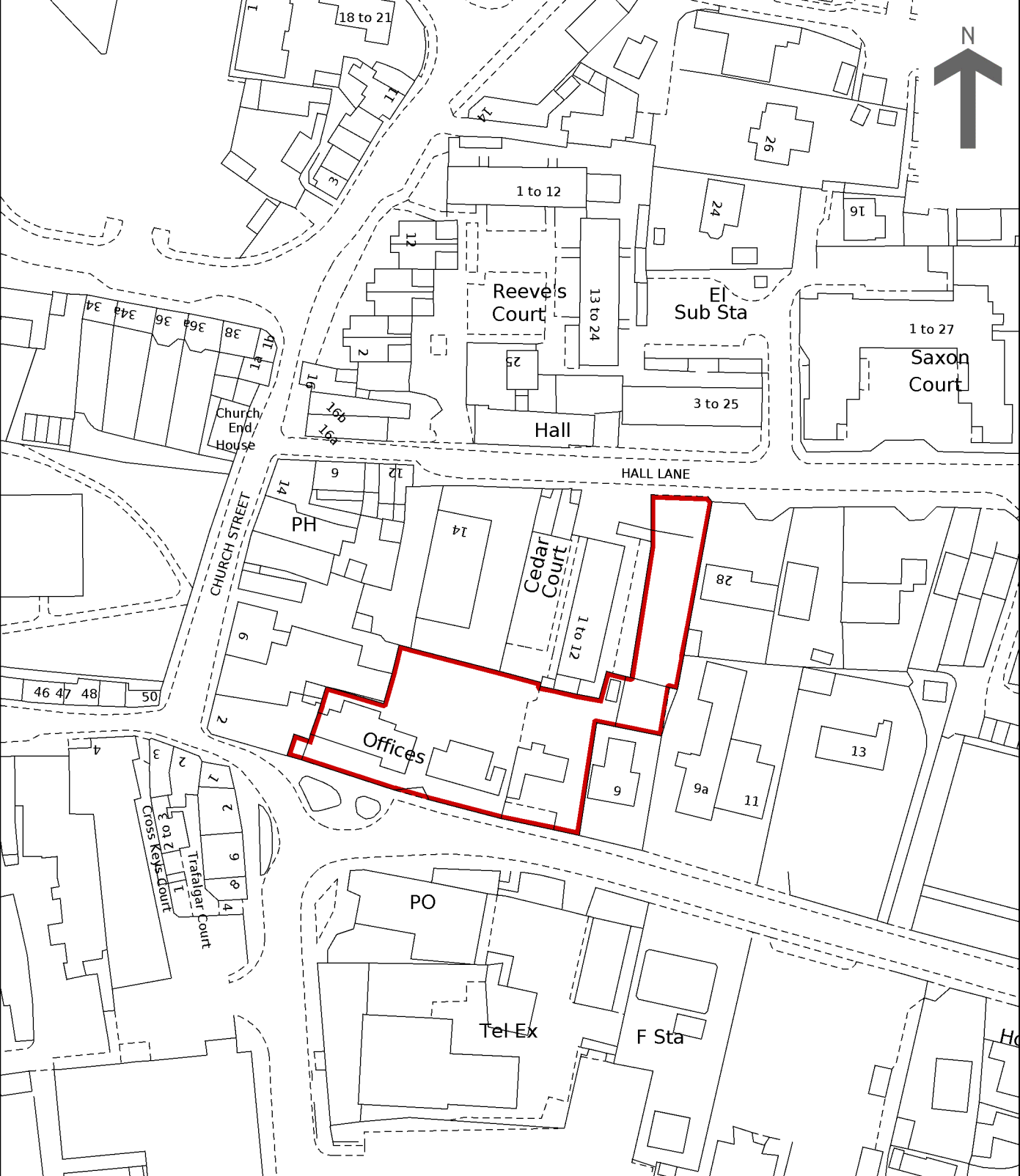
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This official copy is issued on 16 June 2021 shows the state of this title plan on 16 June 2021 at 10:18:36. It is admissible in evidence to the same extent as the original (s.67 Land Registration Act 2002). This title plan shows the general position, not the exact line, of the boundaries. It may be subject to distortions in scale. Measurements scaled from this plan may not match measurements between the same points on the ground. This title is dealt with by the HM Land Registry, Kingston Upon Hull Office .



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CROMER, MELBOURNE SLOPE FORMER TOILETS – PROPOSED LETTING

Summary: The Council owned former Public Toilets at the Melbourne Slope in Cromer closed several years ago and new facilities were developed elsewhere on the promenade. The currently vacant property has been widely advertised to let over the course of the month of April 2021 using Right Move, facebook & Twitter with a link to marketing particulars on the NNDC Property website page.

Options considered: Following that exposure six proposals were received and this report outlines the options available to the Council to bring the building back into use and then outlines the potential benefits and risks of doing so.

Conclusions: The six proposals received by the Council from businesses interested in renovating and leasing the building have been summarised in this report and a recommendation put forward.

Recommendations: **It is recommended that Cabinet should make a resolution to allow the Estates team to continue discussions with the preferred party and to finalise terms and to execute the letting. Should any further material changes be made to either the proposal or the proposed tenant then any decision should be delegated to the s151 officer in consultation with the portfolio holder.**

Reasons for Recommendations: This recommendation is being made in order to provide the Estates team with the remit to progress negotiations with the preferred party and to secure the best deal possible to secure an early lease completion.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

Cabinet Member(s); Cllr Ward(s) affected; Cromer
Eric Seward

Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Neil Turvey, 01263 516124
neil.turvey@north-norfolk.gov.uk

1.0 Introduction and background

- 1.1 The Melbourne Slope Toilets are located in a prime location on Cromer west promenade north of the Melbourne Slope, see plan below. They are of brick construction with a high concrete flat roof.



- 1.2 They were decommissioned in 2017/18 due to high maintenance costs following which the opportunity for a new modular unit to be developed in the West Promenade as part of a wider development project.
- 1.3 Since this time they have been use as informal none income producing storage space for both the Council and Openwide but have recently been cleared to allow for marketing and viewing of the property.
- 1.4 The building as a whole has an approximate floor area of 80 m² (861 sq.ft) and is accessible from the promenade with steps leading to a roof terrace with amenity seating. The steps continue up the cliff to the retail area of Cromer.
- 1.5 It is in close proximity to several buildings/structures that have been listed by Historic England - Cromer Pier, the sea defences, Jetty Cliff, properties on New Street, and terraced beach chalets.
- 1.6 The building with its iconic archways consists of a tall single storey property built into the cliff and with rendered brick walls to the front and sides. The majority of the building extends to the front of the cliff face with a rear area in the form of an arched chamber constructed into the cliff face. The building is plastered internally, has a concrete floor tile covering throughout a woodchip false ceiling in timber baton frame hung from original arched brick and steel beamed with flat shuttered concrete asphalt coated above forming a flat

platform used as public viewing and seating area which is well used.

- 1.7 Due to the level of investment required to bring this building back into use and the current inability of the Council to borrow funding for commercial development, the Estates team have marketed the premises as an opportunity for tenants who would be willing to undertake refurbishment works at their own cost as part of an agreement to lease over the premises. The premises were marketed as an investment opportunity throughout April.
- 1.8 There was a good level of interest from existing businesses in Cromer and prospective new businesses from the wider area. Six of these businesses have submitted formal expressions of interest which include details of their proposed business, the level of capital investment they are able to put forward and the level of rent they are ultimately willing to pay for the premises.
- 1.6 This report outlines these six applicants and their proposals – some of the applicants have provided a very detailed proposal whilst others are more limited (see Appendix A).

2. Current Position

- 2.1 This building currently generates no income for the Council and the building adds no amenity to the promenade other than a tired albeit aesthetic façade. The Council currently has an obligation to pay business rates and insurance costs for the premises.
- 2.2 The building had been deteriorating for many years prior to its closure as a public toilet block. There are problems with damp internally from the ingress of water from the cliffs. Whilst we believe that the structure of the building is very solid and stable, if no repairs or ongoing maintenance is done to the building it will eventually deteriorate to the point that the structure and roof seating may become compromised.

3. Options

- 3.1 It is advised that the option to do nothing and allow this building to continue to deteriorate should be discounted as this will lead to high costs in the future. The option for the Council to renovate the building into a 'shell condition' for letting has also been discounted due to the high capital costs involved and the difficulty of sourcing necessary funding.
- 3.2 Advertising the building on the market as an investment opportunity has resulted in the six businesses expressing formal interest to bring the building back into use. The building has been marketed with a suggested term of 20 years and with prospective tenants being responsible for the renovation of the premises and all associated costs.

4. Corporate Plan Objectives

4.1 Contribution to Corporate Plan Objectives

By bringing this building back into use the Council will meet the following Corporate Plan objectives:

4.2 Boosting Business Sustainability and Growth

This building is in a prime location on Cromer promenade and could offer a new or existing business an excellent opportunity to generate income.

4.3 Financial Sustainability and Growth

Allowing a new business to invest their own money to develop this building with the incentive of a long commercial lease and possible rent free period allows the Council to facilitate bringing this building back into use without putting forward substantial capital funds. It is anticipated that after any initial rent free incentive period is over this building could generate an annual rental income for the council of between £8,000 and £10,000 per annum depending on the tenant and use. The buildings running costs including, insurance, rates, internal repairs and maintenance can also be passed to the tenant.

4.4 Quality of life

Depending on the use of the premises this building could further add to the amenity and aesthetics of Cromer promenade.

4.5 Medium Term Financial Strategy

The premises are surplus and create no income for the Council. Letting the premises creates the potential to generate an annual income of up to £10,000 per annum, which is £200,000 over the course of a 20 year lease minus any rent free incentive that is agreed with the tenant to renovate the premises. Any income generated from this building would be an entirely new income source for the Council and a lease could also pass other ongoing cost to the tenant.

4.6 Financial and resource implications

As the intention here is that the ingoing tenant invests in refurbishing the premises there will be no requirement for the Council to fund any capital expenditure although there may be some professional and legal fees for the Council to pay.

As noted above in 4.2, letting the premises provides the potential to generate up to £10,000 per annum in rental income after any rent free period.

Over the course of any lease there could be the opportunity to review and revise the rent upwards depending on the market conditions.

Staff resource requirements include: negotiating lease terms with tenants, producing legal documentation, managing the redevelopment process, and managing the lease once in place.

4.4 Legal implications

Any refurbishment by tenants will be through a formal Agreement to Lease the Lease, including a full specification of tenants works and legal rights will be granted to the tenant business through a lease for the agreed term.

4.5 Communications

The premises were widely marketed on right move, the Council's social media and on the Council's website. A large advertising board was erected on the building frontage along with two smaller boards on the West Cliff.

4.6 Risks

See Appendix A

4.7 Sustainability

The ongoing sustainability of the premises has been considered and the considered best option is for the premises to be re-used as recommended.

4.8 Climate / Carbon impact

These matters will be considered once we have progressed with the chosen operator

4.9 Equality and Diversity - N/A

4.10 Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations - N/A

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Whilst the six proposals are generally similar in their proposed use it is clear that certain applicants have provided much more information and given greater thought and effort to their proposals

5.2 The opportunity to see considerable investment in the property by a third party tenant has been provided to the Council with a range of applicant types, all of whom are local to the area and some of which have existing track records in business.

5.3 Notwithstanding this, the over-riding and determining factor from an Estates point of view would be to encourage new investment in the promenade from operators that can provide something different in terms of the offering and that would complement the existing offerings nearby.

5.4 All matters considered, the recommendation from Estates is that negotiations are pursued with the preferred party for the healthy food café option. This proposal would add to the range of offerings on the promenade and chime with the current and most likely enduring demand for a more local and healthy food and beverage based option. The health food café option is also the operation that would least impact on existing businesses in this location. In those negotiations we would endeavour to seek the best financial terms but this will depend upon the applicants' more detailed financial business plan.

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of the Local Government Act 1972.

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PROPERTY TRANSACTION: LEASE PROPOSAL AT UNIT D, HORNBEAM ROAD, NORTH WALSHAM AND RENT RECYCLING PROPOSAL

Summary: The Council has received a lease proposal from a local business to rent commercial premises in North Walsham. The proposal represent a market rent/terms and initial due diligence indicate the tenant is of good covenant strength.

During negotiations it has been identified that a clear and transparent policy regarding Council investment into assets is required to respond to recent changes in the Public Works Loan Board lending terms. A rent recycling scheme is proposed to be developed to enable investment into assets where regeneration is needed to bring them back into use.

Options considered: The alternative option would be not to accept the lease proposal however, the property was acquired for income generation purposes and the rent and terms proposed are appropriate and therefore this option has been discounted.

The Council could decide not to develop a rent recycling policy and make direct investment into assets, however that would be in conflict with lending terms and would have significant financial implications. This option therefore would not be recommended.

Conclusions: Having advertised the units to let on the open market, Officers have gained a lease proposal from a local business to rent unit D. With rent/terms that reflect the local current market it provides an appropriate level of investment return in accordance with the Asset Management Plan.

Due to the changes to the Public Works Load Board (PWLB) lending terms, the development a rent recycling policy as a clear and transparent financial strategy to demonstrate how the Council may seek to fund future asset regeneration opportunities.

Recommendations: **It is recommended that Cabinet should resolve:**

- A. To approve the lease terms as described in Appendix A.**
- B. Should there be any further negotiations to the offer made, to delegate to the s151 officer, in consultation with the portfolio holder, the ability to vary the terms of the lease and a rental value not exceeding a 10% variation the original lease proposal.**
- C. To approve officers in the development of a financial strategy for a rent recycle scheme and that approval of the policy is delegated to**

**the Director of Resources and in consultation
with the relevant portfolio holder.**

**Reasons for
Recommendations:** Principally to support the financial sustainability and growth of the Council by leasing the premises and generating rental income that is used to support Council services.

To provide a clear and transparent policy on how property rents can be recycled to facilitate regeneration of Council assets.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

(Papers relied on to write the report, which do not contain exempt information and which are not published elsewhere)

Cabinet Member(s) Cllr. E Seward	Ward(s) affected North Walsham
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email:

Renata Garfoot, Asset Strategy Manager.

Tel: 01263 516086 Email: Renata.garfoot@north-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council acquired 3 brand new commercial units with B2/B8 use at Hornbeam Road, North Walsham in 2020.
- 1.2 The units have been marketed to let with a local commercial agent and whilst Cabinet previously approved a lease proposal from a local business, this did not complete as the tenant decided not to proceed. The appointed commercial letting agent has continued to market the units since this time and have had a number of viewings and subsequent offers.
- 1.3 The units are being marketed to let at £18,360 per annum for the 2 larger units (D &F) and £17,472 for the smaller unit E. (£8psft), which reflects that they are brand new.

2. Lease Proposal

- 2.1 A lease proposal has been received by a local business for Unit D. The terms of this proposal can be found in the exempt appendix A.
- 2.2 The proposal is subject to contract and obtaining a change of use from B2/B8 to the planning use class E.
- 2.3 Initial due diligence indicate the tenant is of appropriate covenant strength and financial stability to meet the lease obligations.

3. Rent Recycling Scheme

- 3.1 During the course of this lease negotiation there was a request for the Council to consider investment into a mezzanine floor to increase the floor area of the unit.

- 3.2 After consideration the proposal was rejected as this investment would be in conflict with the recent changes to the Public Works Loan Board lending terms. These terms have been amended to dis-incentivise Councils making direct investment in to asset which are primarily held for income generation/yield. Any Council doing this will not be able to borrow from the PWLB for the financial year.
- 3.3 Whilst the Council could chose to secure funds from other sources, this constraint causes significant financial implications for the Council in terms of investment in other property and/or capital projects and a future solution is required.
- 4.3 The Council is however able to fund investment in assets or project where there is a regeneration need, using a financial strategy such as a rent recycle scheme, without being in conflict with the new PWLB lending terms. This is important as the Council has a number of vacant long term assets that may meet the definition of regeneration and could be brought back into use.
- 4.4. It is proposed therefore for Officers to develop a clear and transparent rent recycle scheme for such regeneration circumstances.

4. Corporate Plan Objectives

- 4.1 This proposal aligns with the following key corporate priorities as contained within the current Corporate Plan;
- 4.2 Boosting Business Sustainability and Growth – by providing good quality business premises to a local business.
- 4.3 Financial Sustainability and Growth – generating rental income that is used to support Council services.
- 4.4 Quality of Life – the proposed tenants business facilitates health and wellbeing by the form of exercise.

5. Medium Term Financial Strategy

- 5.1 The proposal contributes to the Council's MTFS by generating rental income that will grow by way of a stepped rent as proposed and is further envisaged to grow in the longer term.
- 5.2 Whilst the Council has existing repairs and maintenance budgets a rent recycle scheme would sit alongside this.

6. Financial and Resource Implications

- 5.1 Financial information regarding the proposal can be found in the exempt Appendix A.
- 5.2 The tenant will be responsible for repairs and maintenance of the premises either directly or through a service charge.
- 5.3 Officers have undertaken a financial check on the tenant that is acceptable.

7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The lease is subject to contract and planning consent being obtained for a change of use.
- 7.2 Eastlaw will provide legal advice during the lease transaction.
- 7.3 Legal and other professional advice maybe required around a rent recycling scheme and this will be sought if needed

8. Risks

- 8.1 Typical property investment risks, including the lease not completing, tenant defaults on rental payments, dilapidations may occur, however these can be mitigated with active asset management.
- 8.2 Planning/Building Regulation consent may not be granted for change of use and/or any building alterations resulting in the proposed tenant withdrawing, in which case officers will recommence marketing of the unit to let.
- 8.3 There is a risk that long term vacant assets are not brought back into use if a rent recycling financial strategy is not developed.

9. Sustainability

- 9.1 The letting of the premises provides financial sustainability to the Council.

10. Climate / Carbon impact

- 10.1 The Energy Performance Certificate rating of the premises is D

11. Equality and Diversity

- 11.1 There are no direct equality and diversity implications with this proposal

12. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

- 12.1 There are no Section 17 implications with this proposal

13. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 13.1 Having marketed the units to let, Officers have gained a lease proposal from a local business to rent Unit D.
- 13.2 The Estates team supports the proposed tenant use of the unit which would provide services to the community that offer health and wellbeing, encompassing confidence and fitness through martial arts to all age groups, which would be well suited to the unit and location.
- 13.3 The proposed tenant possesses a good covenant strength and the rental terms negotiated represents a market rent offer, which provide an appropriate level of investment return in accordance with the Asset Management Plan. On this basis, it is officer's recommendation to approve the lease terms as described in Appendix A. Should there be any further negotiations to the offer made to delegate to the s151 officer, in consultation with the portfolio holder, the ability to vary the terms of the lease and a rental value not exceeding a 10% variation the original lease proposal.
- 13.4 Due to the changes to the Public Works Load Board lending terms, it is recommended that officers develop a financial strategy for a rent recycle scheme to fund asset regeneration opportunities and that approval of the

policy is delegated to the Director of Resources and in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder.

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