

Overview & Scrutiny Committee



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Tuesday, 6 July 2021

A meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** of North Norfolk District Council will be held in the **Council Chamber - Council Offices** on **Wednesday, 14 July 2021** at **9.30 am**.

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

Members of the public who wish to ask a question or speak on an agenda item are requested to notify the committee clerk 24 hours in advance of the meeting and arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of the meeting. This is to allow time for the Committee Chair to rearrange the order of items on the agenda for the convenience of members of the public. Further information on the procedure for public speaking can be obtained from Democratic Services, Tel: 01263 516047, Email: matthew.stembrowicz@north-norfolk.gov.uk.

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

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

Emma Denny
Democratic Services Manager

To: Mr N Dixon, Mr S Penfold, Ms L Withington, Mr H Blathwayt, Mr P Heinrich, Dr V Holliday, Mr N Housden, Mrs E Spagnola, Mr A Varley, Mr C Cushing, Mr A Brown and Mr P Fisher

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

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A G E N D A

1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. SUBSTITUTES

3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS & STATEMENTS

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

4. MINUTES

1 - 12

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16th June 2021.

5. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

To determine any other items of business which the Chairman decides should be considered as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

13 - 14

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

7. PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

To consider any petitions received from members of the public.

8. CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY A MEMBER

To consider any requests made by non-executive Members of the Council, and notified to the Monitoring Officer with seven clear working days' notice, to include an item on the agenda of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

9. RESPONSES OF THE COUNCIL OR THE CABINET TO THE COMMITTEE'S REPORTS OR RECOMMENDATIONS

To consider any responses of the Council or the Cabinet to the Committee's reports or recommendations:

At the meeting held on 5th July 2021, Cabinet accepted the following recommendation:

'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.'

- | | | |
|------------|--|---------|
| 10. | SHERINGHAM LEISURE CENTRE PROJECT UPDATE: JULY 2021 | 15 - 22 |
| | To receive and note the update. | |
| 11. | NORTH WALSHAM HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION SCHEME PROJECT UPDATE - JULY 2021 | 23 - 30 |
| | To receive and note the update. | |
| 12. | AMBULANCE RESPONSE TIMES: COASTAL PARISH WORKING PARTY UPDATE | 31 - 38 |
| | To receive and note the update. | |

- 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 approves 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 Officers:

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

- 14. PRE-SCRUTINY: CUSTOMER SERVICES STRATEGY** 95 - 120
- To review and comment on the draft Customer Services Strategy.

WORK PROGRAMMES

- 15. THE CABINET WORK PROGRAMME** 121 - 122
- To note the upcoming Cabinet Work Programme.

- 16. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND UPDATE** 123 - 130
- To receive an update from the Scrutiny Officer on progress made with topics on its agreed work programme, training updates and to receive any further information which Members may have requested at a previous meeting.

- 17. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To pass the following resolution, if necessary:

“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph _ of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act.”

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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday, 16 June 2021 in the Council Chamber - Council Offices at 9.30 am

Committee	Mr N Dixon (Chairman)	Mr S Penfold (Vice-Chairman)
Members Present:	Ms L Withington Mr P Heinrich Mr A Varley Mr A Brown	Mr H Blathwayt Mr N Housden Mr C Cushing Mr P Fisher
Other Members Present:	Ms V Gay (Observer) Mr J Rest (Observer)	Mr N Lloyd (Observer) Mr E Seward (Observer)
Officers in Attendance:	Democratic Services and Governance Officer - Scrutiny (DSGOS), Chief Executive (CE), Democratic Services Manager (DSM), Director for Communities (DFC) and Assistant Director for People Services (ADPS)	

18 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr E Spagnola and Cllr V Holliday.

19 SUBSTITUTES

None.

20 PUBLIC QUESTIONS & STATEMENTS

None received.

21 MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 19th May 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Cllr S Penfold asked whether the recommendation made to Cabinet regarding the resourcing of the Enforcement Board had been agreed. The DSGOS replied that he would determine the outcome and respond via email.

22 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None received.

23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

24 PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None received.

25 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY A MEMBER

None received.

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

The DSGOS informed Members that at the meeting held on 26th May 2021, Council had accepted the Committee's recommendation to reappoint Cllr E Spagnola as the Council's representative on the NCC NHOSC. He added that there had been a change in the recommended substitute, as Cllr W Fredericks had been appointed to Cabinet, and as a result Cllr A Varley was appointed substitute.

27 MANAGING PERFORMANCE QUARTER 4 2020/2021

The CE introduced the report and informed Members that it covered the period from January to March 2021, which had been an unprecedented period for the Council due to Covid-19. He added that up to 80% of staff had worked from home during the period covered by the report, and a considerable amount of resource had been diverted to the Covid-19 response, which had required reprioritisation of the Council's key objectives. It was noted that the reprioritisation had reduced the number of key objectives eighteen, in addition to maintaining core services. The CE stated that from summer 2020, the Planning Service had returned to its normal workload, with caveats on its face to face services. It was noted that the key achievements for the Council included working with partners to deliver 108 new affordable homes, with 43 new homes delivered by Flagship Group on a brownfield site, in addition to the commencement of the Meadow Walk extra care housing scheme. The CE stated that the Council continued to deliver on its climate, coast and environment objectives with the installation of EV charging points, 20k trees planted with plans for an additional 40k, and the successful hosting of Environment Forum events to consult on the newly agreed Environmental Charter. It was noted that the majority of focus on sustaining business growth focused on the payment of grants, to the sum of £120m with 30k more payments than a normal year. Other achievements included the appointment of consultants and the development of a cultural programme for the NW HAZ project, and the ongoing work on the new Sheringham Leisure Centre.

Questions and Discussion

- i. The Chairman read a statement on behalf of Cllr A Fitch-Tillett who was unable to attend due to social distancing limitations. It was noted that the Coastal Management achievements had been overlooked within the report, despite the coast being of significant importance to the Council. The performance of the area was described as good, with an operational report available for circulation amongst Members.
- ii. The CE noted that he had responded to Cllr A Fitch-Tillett and accepted the importance of the Coast to the Council, but stated that during the period covered by the report, there were no major actions on coastal adaption projects warranting inclusion. He added that the Team continued to work on projects such as the Mundesley and Cromer coastal protection schemes which had secured funding of £2.8m. It was noted that the Coastal Management Team had also prepared a briefing for local stakeholders in

Bacton and Walcott to respond to public interest around performance of the Sandscaping Scheme.

- iii. The DSGOS read a question on behalf of Cllr V Holliday who was unable to attend the meeting, and had asked whether the Council had access to a performance benchmarking service. The CE replied that the Council used LG Inform for benchmarking purposes, and any specific concerns could be raised for review. It was noted that the Council used to belong to a group of similar authorities for comparative purposes, though the validity of these groups had now diminished.
- iv. Cllr C Cushing raised concerns that the financial sustainability strategy was not included within the Council's priorities, given the future deficits forecasted. He added that the status of some priorities also appeared unduly generous, with little reason given for their status, whilst objectives appeared unclear. Action 6.3.3 on taking a strategic approach to commercial development opportunities was given as an example, for which no supporting information on methodology or updates had been provided. The CE replied that that a more strategic approach for the acquisition of properties was being developed, and if necessary officers could provide further details. He added that the Council was in the process of developing proposals for the former public toilets at Melbourne Slope, as well as advertising the vacant site at North Lodge Park. It was suggested that the use of car parks and public conveniences could be reviewed in the future, though it was deemed inappropriate during the Pandemic.
- v. Cllr E Seward stated that the Council had to start early on developing the 2022-23 budget, and whilst not complacent, it was often the case that forecasted deficits decreased. With regards to developing a financial sustainability strategy, he stated that commercial development opportunities had been impacted by changes to legislation limiting commercial investment.
- vi. The CTA referred to issues raised regarding limitations on commercialisation projects, and stated that CIPFA would be backing this position which made it difficult for authorities to comply with the prudential code, making commercial projects unviable for local authorities. She added that there was still no confirmation of the fair funding review or whether the business rates retention scheme would be effective from April 22, which would have a significant impact on the Council's ability to balance the budget. It was noted that the forecasted deficit was based on prudent assumptions, and it remained unclear at this stage how it would develop. The CTA stated that commercial markets had also been impacted by Covid-19, which meant that previous proposals may also no longer be viable. On the zero based budgeting exercise, Members were informed that this would begin with service planning, followed by the budget setting process. It was suggested that an update on other cost-saving proposals could be expected in September.
- vii. The Chairman suggested that given the limited understanding of zero based budgeting, it would be helpful to arrange a training session. The CTA confirmed that she could arrange training once the work programme for the project had been established.
- viii. Cllr L Withington referred to the Meadow Walk scheme, and suggested that it was a good example of what the Council could achieve. She added that it should be used as a positive example for other projects.

- ix. The Chairman stated that whilst the highlights of the report had been covered, concerns remained that other actions taking place were not being monitored, as they fell outside of the performance monitoring framework.
- x. Cllr N Housden referred to a priority on page 33 to 'investigate ways to support and assist affordable housing providers', and suggested that whilst marked as complete, the comments were too simplistic to understand what had been achieved. He added that positive results should be brought forward for further discussion. The Chairman suggested that this example showed that the performance framework didn't necessarily provide the required information, which needed to be addressed. The CE replied that whilst the information could be improved, the report aimed to provide performance information on highlight areas to help the Committee identify where performance had not been satisfactory. He added that for a small authority, the Council continued to provide a high number of core and discretionary services to residents and visitors, and the Council had to remain focused on its key priorities to make the most of the limited resources available. The Chairman accepted the comments but suggested that there were points where reporting could be improved.
- xi. Cllr P Heinrich stated that training on zero based budgeting in relation to local authorities could be helpful, and raised concerns that he could not see a success criteria against which progress was being evaluated. He referred to a priorities on developing support for start-up business and the Youth Council, as suggested that they should be prioritised. Cllr E Seward confirmed that these were important issues that would be progressed as soon as possible.
- xii. Cllr H Blathwayt stated that the report provided a good overview for identifying areas for scrutiny, and asked whether it was a new report format. The CE confirmed that the report was a new and evolving format, developed to cover the administration's priorities via the InPhase system. The DSGOS noted that frustrations remained around access to InPhase, and that discussions continued to take place on the purchase of licenses for all Members to provide full access. Cllr N Lloyd stated that InPhase was a significant improvement, and Members had to appreciate that it was a high level report that provided a starting point for discussion.
- xiii. Cllr A Brown stated that a clear omission from the report was the progress made on the implementation of the Uniform planning system. He added that whilst he was aware of initial teething problems, it would be helpful to monitor implementation under the Customer Focus or Planning priorities.
- xiv. Cllr S Penfold referred to the 20k trees planted and asked whether this was the total since May 2019, or the number planted during the reporting period. Cllr N Lloyd confirmed that it was the total number planted since May 2019, and in response to a further question, stated that he was nervous about reaching the planting target of the administration. He added that the Council had worked with organisations such as the Woodland Trust and Holkham Hall on projects that had the potential to exceed the target, but it remained a significant task for a small organisation. It was noted that whilst small planting events had continued, social distancing had limited the ability to host large planting events. Cllr S Penfold referred to a North Norfolk biodiversity audit, and suggested that the Council should consider involvement.

- xv. Cllr L Withington referred to comments made on housing priorities, and suggested that there were positive achievements to be proud of, but suggested that amber and red performance objectives should be given greater attention.
- xvi. The CE summarised the comments made by the Committee which included sharing a progress note on the Work of Coastal Partnership East and improving reporting on coastal management. He added that the Committee had requested that details of the LG Inform service be shared with Members, and that a request for a briefing on zero based budgeting had been made. It was noted that a request was also made to improve the supporting information provided for amber and red performance indicators, with the required steps for improvement identified, as well as improving the supporting information provided for housing priorities. Finally, it was noted that the Committee had requested that a performance indicator be provided for the implementation of the Uniform planning system under the Customer Focus or Planning Priorities. The comments were proposed as formal recommendations by Cllr H Blathwayt and seconded by Cllr P Fisher.

RESOLVED

- 1. To note this report and endorse the actions being taken by Corporate Leadership Team detailed in Appendix A – Managing Performance.**
- 2. To request that a note on the progress of Coastal Partnership East be shared, and recommend that consideration be given to improving the visibility of performance reporting on coastal management.**
- 3. To request that details of the LG Inform benchmarking tool be shared with Members for comparative performance analysis.**
- 4. To request that a briefing be provided to inform Members of the process and timeline of the Council’s Zero-based budgeting exercise.**
- 5. To recommend that consideration be given to improve the supporting information on amber and red performance indicators, with clear reasons given for designation and the steps required for improvement.**
- 6. To recommend that consideration be given to improve the supporting information on affordable housing objectives.**
- 7. To recommend that a performance indicator be provided on the implementation of the Uniform Planning System within the Customer Focus or Planning priority.**

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

The DFC introduced the report and outlined the corporate use of policies, strategies, plans, procedures and charters, and noted that when a previous draft of the Policy had been presented, there was confusion over whether it was policy or strategy. He added that a framework of definitions was being developed, with a policy identified as a principle of action proposed by an organisation, whereas a strategy was a broad and evolving plan designed to achieve a long-term aim. It was noted that a

plan explained how the strategy would be implemented, and the procedure was a statement of specific actions listed to deliver the plan. The DFC stated that a review of the Council's existing corporate documents was underway to ensure that they aligned with this framework, in addition to developing the role of charters as a means for outlining the aims and values of the organisation.

Questions and Discussion

- i. The Chairman explained that the Policy had come to the Committee for pre-scrutiny previously, and the Committee were now asked to review an amended version, which had been subject to the Committee's recommendations. It was confirmed that pages 5-7 of the Policy were footnotes, definitions and explanatory notes referred to within the Policy. The DFC stated that these had been separated in order to make the Policy as clear and easy to understand as possible. The Chairman suggested that it be made clear that the latter pages of the document were a separate footnote.
- ii. The Chairman sought clarification that once agreed, further work would take place to develop a strategy, action plan and procedures to ensure that the Policy was implemented. The DFC replied that once the Policy and equality objectives were accepted, then a strategy would be developed to support the document, with regular reviews planned. In response to a further question from the Chairman, it was suggested that a strategy and action plan would be developed via the project planning process of the CDU, once the Policy was agreed.
- iii. Cllr V Gay stated that the issue regarding pages 5-7 of the document had been raised at Cabinet, where it had also been suggested that they should be marked as such. She added that the definitions provided were good examples that would be beneficial to adhere to.
- iv. Cllr E Seward stated that when considered by Cabinet there had been a request for an annual review that would be reported to relevant Committees. He added that there was also a request that the Policy be read in conjunction with other plans, which had been addressed.
- v. Cllr S Penfold referred to the first line of the Policy, and asked whether the wording should be amended to cover non-residents. The DFC replied that whilst he understood the concern, he expected issues relating to interviews would be covered in the relevant employment and interview policies, as the Council could not implement a Policy beyond its sphere of influence. He added that he would confirm with HR whether an amendment was necessary.
- vi. In response to a question from Cllr L Withington, it was confirmed that the Policy would be amended as requested by Cabinet, with the inclusion of a requirement for an annual review, prior to seeking Council approval.
- vii. It was proposed by Cllr A Varley and seconded by Cllr H Blathwayt that the Policy be recommended to Full Council for approval, subject to the discussed amendments.

RESOLVED

To recommend to Full Council the formal adoption of its Equality Objectives

and subject to amendment, the approval the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2021.

29 SHERINGHAM LEISURE CENTRE PROJECT UPDATE: JUNE 2021

Cllr V Gay – Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Wellbeing and Culture introduced the report and informed Members that whilst the expected completion date had been August 16th, it was likely that this would slip to August 31st. She added that the reasons provided related to supply issues, as some materials had to be returned, but despite this the budget remained unchanged. Cllr V Gay stated that material had been accumulated for the time capsule, and it was likely that this would be buried around the opening date. She added that planning was underway for an opening day event, though a date was yet to be confirmed.

Questions and Discussion

- i. The CE clarified that an official opening event would take place after a soft opening, to ensure that any initial issues were resolved.
- ii. Cllr H Blathwayt referred to difficulties recruiting staff within the leisure industry, and asked whether the recruitment process had begun. Cllr V Gay replied that whilst she was aware that the contractor had staff on furlough, who would return to work, recruitment remained the concern of the contractor, though she hadn't been alerted to any issues.
- iii. Cllr A Brown sought to clarify that a request had been made for updates to be moved earlier in the agenda. It was confirmed that whilst it had been overlooked on this occasion, it would be brought forward at future meetings, though the updates were not expected to continue much longer as the opening date approached.

RESOLVED

To receive and note the update

ACTIONS

To place the update as the first substantive item on future agendas.

30 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20 & 2020/21

The DSGOS introduced the report and informed Members that the Committee was required to provide a summary of the work completed in the previous year, for review by Full Council. He added that due to the limitations placed on the Work Programme during the initial outbreak of the Pandemic, the report covered two years to account for the 19/20 report being missed. It was noted that the report provided a high level summary of the role of the Committee, highlights of the work undertaken, and a summary of any achievements or issues encountered. The DSGOS stated that a key issue caused by the Pandemic were apologies given at short notice, where substitutes were not available. He added that where possible, substitutes should be contacted as soon as possible to allow time to respond. It was stated that increased opportunities for pre-scrutiny and no occurrences of call-ins should be seen as positive outcome for the Committee.

Questions and Discussion

- i. The Chairman noted that from his perspective the process of Overview and Scrutiny had evolved to deliver better scrutiny, which had a greater impact on the workings and functions of the Cabinet and Council. He added that there were three barriers that he wished to address which included late changes to the Work Programme, the timely submission of reports, and a limited number of substitutes. It was noted that the late submission of reports in particular, led to volatility in the Work Programme and hindered meaningful pre-agenda discussions. The Chairman suggested that addressing these issues would help the Committee function more smoothly and effectively, and should therefore be included as part of the recommendation within the report.
- ii. The recommendations were proposed by Cllr A Varley and seconded by Cllr C Cushing.

RESOLVED

To recommend subject to amendment, that Council notes the report, affirms the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, and considers the three concerns raised relating to the late submission of reports, the subsequent impact on the Work Programme and appointment of additional substitutes.

31 THE CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The DSGOS introduced the item and informed Members that there had been significant changes to the Cabinet Work Programme following publication of the agenda. He added that the three financial reports including Treasury Management, Debt Management and Outturn reports had all been delayed until September. It was noted that conversations were expected between the Finance Team and relevant Portfolio Holder, though it was not expected that this would change.

Questions and Discussion

- i. Cllr E Seward stated that he was not comfortable with the delays to financial reports, but circumstances meant that ongoing delays were possible. He added that delays with External Audit continued to impact the accounts process, and whilst this was unfortunate, it was beyond the Council's control.
- ii. The Chairman asked whether there was any action the Committee could take to increase pressure on External Audit to address the ongoing delays. It was noted that the CE had contacted the External Auditor to express concerns regarding the delays. The CE stated that whilst the delays were a national issue, the Council had limited options for resolution, as exiting the contract would present significant reputational and corporate risk. He added that he had received an acknowledgement of the letter sent to the External Auditors, though it was still expected that the 19/20 accounts would not be audited until December, with the 20/21 accounts to follow soon after. The Chairman asked whether any ministerial response could be expected, and asked whether this could be raised by the CE. The CE replied that he would seek to determine whether a collective response to the issue had been discussed by the LGA, and noted that any ministerial response would likely come from MHCLG. The Chairman suggested that it was time that a collective response or statement was made regarding the dissatisfaction with external audit delays.

RESOLVED

To note the Cabinet Work Programme.

32 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND UPDATE

The DSGOS introduced the item and informed Members that the delays to financial reports previously mentioned would have a significant impact on the Committee's Work Programme. As a result, the remaining items for July would consist of the Sheringham Leisure Centre Update, the Housing Strategy and potentially an update on the North Walsham Hight Streets and Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) Project. It was noted that Cllr V Holliday had also suggested that she could provide an update on ambulance response times, as Chair of a Parish Working Group monitoring the issue, which would address an additional outstanding Work Programme item. The CE stated that the Customer Services Strategy was also expected to come forward in July.

Questions and Discussion

- i. The Chairman noted that whilst NHOSC did monitor ambulance response times, it was done at a county-wide level, whereas as the Coastal Parish Working Group focused specifically on rural areas of the North Norfolk Coast. It was proposed by Cllr A Varley and seconded by Cllr N Housden that an update on ambulance response times be added the Work Programme for the July meeting.
- ii. Cllr S Penfold noted that there was a public consultation taking place in North Walsham regarding the HAZ project, and suggested that a July update would be timely.
- iii. The Chairman referred to limitations placed on remote attendance for Members, and suggested that it appeared to be a disenfranchisement, given that presenting officers were able to attend remotely. The DSGOS replied that the current position following a change in legislation on 7th May, meant that fully hybrid meetings were not yet permitted, and that the legal opinion provided on the current legislation stated that all actively participating Members must attend the meeting in person. It was noted that some flexibility had been granted to allow officers to attend remotely, in order to create more space for Members whilst adhering to social distancing requirements. It was noted that other Councils had interpreted the legislation differently, and if necessary the Committee could ask that the MO reconsider the current position. The CE stated that the current position was in line with the Lawyers in Local Government (LLG) position, and noted that the Council would be responding to the Government consultation on hybrid meetings. It was noted that the current meeting was at capacity adhering to social distancing requirements, and any increase in numbers would be a breach of current legislation. The CE stated that with the extension of social distancing requirements into July, officers were asked to continue working from home where possible.
- iv. Cllr V Gay stated that the current requirements for physical attendance placed unnecessary time constraints on Members that forced some Members to attend remote meetings from the office. The Chairman agreed and raised concerns about why officers could attend remotely, whilst Members were not permitted. The CE stated that if required, he could seek further advice from the MO on whether the legislation could allow further flexibility, but this had to take into account the requirement for legal decisions to be made in person by

Members at Committee meetings.

- v. The DSM stated that whilst the current situation was frustrating, the end of the remote meetings legislation had placed significant constraints on the Council's ability to hold remote Committee meetings. She accepted that in the short term, the legislation would have a negative impact on wider Member engagement. The DSM stated that she would consider the approaches taken by other Councils, but because Overview and Scrutiny was a statutory Committee, legislation required it must meet in person. It was suggested that where possible, running different meetings in varying hybrid formats should be avoided, in order to avoid confusion. The Chairman noted that he was satisfied that officers would seek further legal advice on remote attendance and respond when able.
- vi. Cllr L Withington referred to the current consultation on remote meetings and suggested that the concerns raised should be submitted as part of the Council's response to the consultation. The DSM replied that she would seek to ensure that the concerns were part of the consultation response, if possible.
- vii. Cllr N Housden referred to the beach huts monitoring and suggested that this should be delayed to allow full summer occupancy levels to be taken into account as part of the report. The DSGOS replied that subsequent to the management restructure, there had been a change in responsibility for the beach huts and chalets, which were now covered by the Estates and Assets Strategy Manager. He added that September had been given as a suggestion as the relevant officer was looking to make changes to the management of the beach huts. The CE noted that the change in management had been aimed to create a more commercial approach to the beach huts and chalets, which had historically been run by the Leisure Service. The DSGOS stated that he would speak to the relevant officer to check whether the report could be delayed, in order to ensure that full summer occupancy figures were included.
- viii. Cllr H Blathwayt noted that physical meetings at another authority had suffered due to social distancing requirements, and stated that strong representations should be made to Government to resolve issues with hybrid meeting limitations, as soon as possible.

RESOLVED

- 1. To note the Work Programme**
- 2. To request that Cllr V Holliday provides an update on coastal ambulance response times monitoring at the July Committee meeting.**

ACTIONS

- 1. Chief Executive and Democratic Services Manager to seek further legal advice on whether non-committee members may attend meetings remotely.**

The meeting ended at 11.59 am.

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.

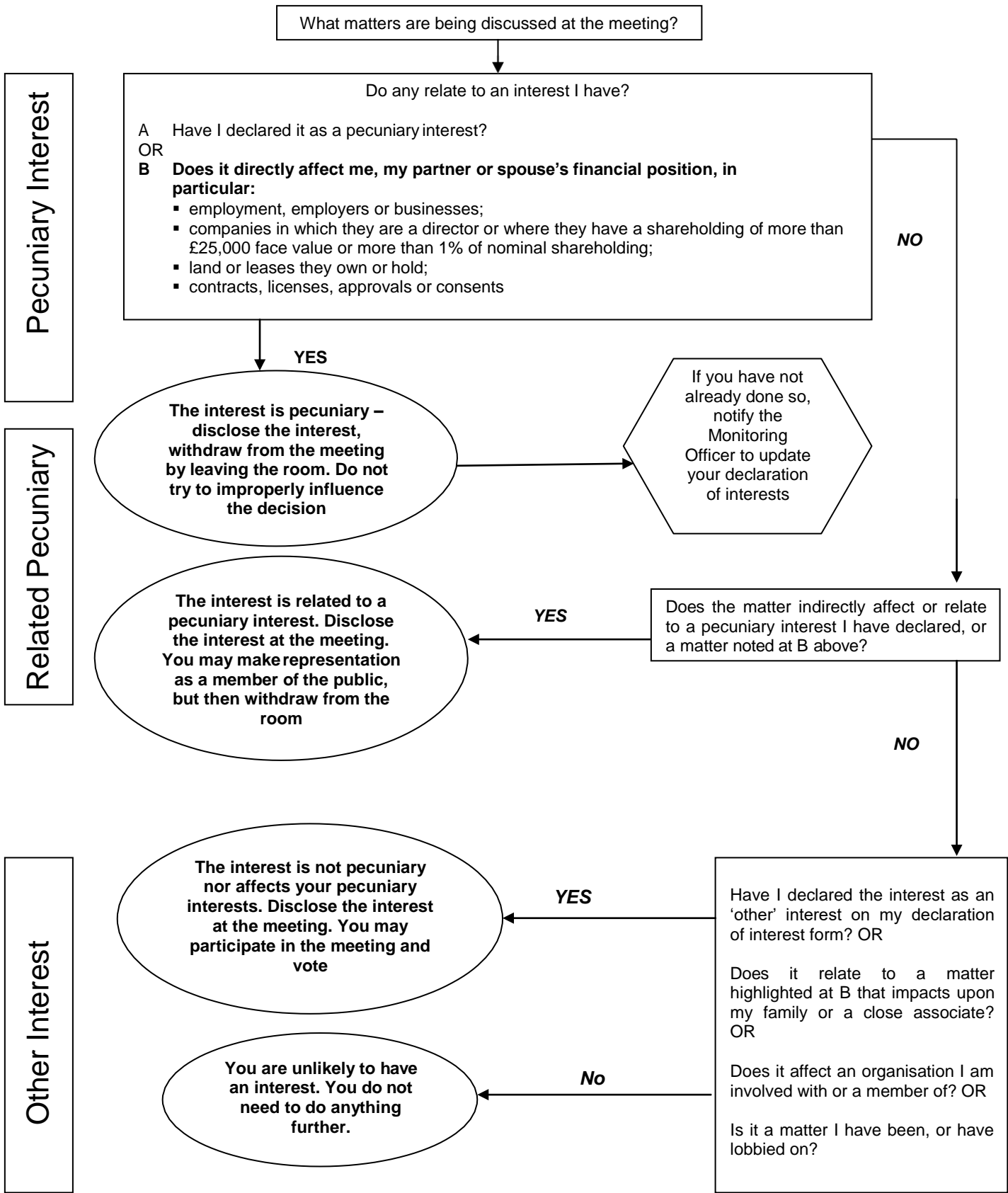
FOR GUIDANCE REFER TO THE FLOWCHART OVERLEAF

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



Sheringham Leisure Centre: project update July 2021

Detailed information relating to any aspect of the project can be obtained from Robert Young (Senior Reporting Officer) or Kate Rawlings (Project Manager) and clarification of any aspect of the table's content can be provided at or following the meeting.

	Forecast/ expected position	Current position	Notes/ comments
Time	Completion of phases 1 & 2 of the project (completion of the new building, demolition of Splash and completion of car park) originally programmed to be 29 Aug 2021.	As was reported at the last meeting, the revised contractual completion date was 31 August 2021; however, it has since come to light that key materials that are critical to the completion of the pool tank have proven difficult to obtain (due to the pressure imposed by the pandemic and delays with the importation of goods). This is likely to delay pool filling and testing. A target completion date of 17 th September is therefore being realistically contemplated.	Work on site is progressing well but there have been some supply issues with products being late or not of the required specification. All parties will use their best endeavours to complete the project earlier but it is considered wisest to work on the basis of the centre opening in September (to allow sufficient contingency) and to give time for the operator to set up and undertake the necessary training and familiarisation prior to opening.
Budget	£12,697,139	£12,826,794	No significant change to overall budget compared to that previously reported (please see detailed budget breakdown in Appendix 1)
Issues log		Minor issues are being dealt with by the project team and Project Board	Some of the landscaping around the Skate Park is being re-modelled to address its juxtaposition with the new car park. There was a need to re-close the skatepark while work was carried out, but the Skate Park users are being kept informed. The project team are working closely with colleagues who are dealing with the proposed disposal of the adjacent 'enabling' land and efforts are being made to ensure the two developments, during construction and once completed, can operate effectively together. The

			project team are also liaising closely with Sheringham Sports Association over boundary design matters.
Risk log	A risk log is being maintained. These are routinely monitored and revised, and controls are introduced to manage/mitigate risks and provide assurance	The risks remain as previously reported. The risk log will be updated to take account of the current situation and any anticipated risks, with mitigation.	As the project approaches the final stages many of the risks had been considered closed; however, matters relating to the supply of materials – a national problem for the construction industry – had not been anticipated. It had been assumed that the UK's exit from the EU would not impact upon this project and that the project had largely escaped the direct impacts of the pandemic; although it seems the lag in materials supply is hitting this project at a critical time.
Project Governance	The Portfolio Holder (PH) is Cllr Virginia Gay, the Council's Senior Reporting Officer (SRO) is Robert Young and the internal Project Manager is Kate Rawlings. Various other technical experts from within the Council are involved in the project as appropriate. The Council has procured the services of: an Employer's Agent, Project Manager and Cost Consultant (all provided by REAL Consulting); a Technical Architect (Saunders Boston Architects); and a Mechanical, Electrical and Pool Filtration Consultant (Silcock Dawson)	Under the newly adopted project governance arrangements, a Project Board has been established and has met twice so far. The project team and responsibilities remain unchanged and meetings and reporting are occurring as scheduled. Meetings have largely been virtual, however, more frequent site visits have taken place, in order to understand and address issues in a timely fashion, as appropriate.	The project board has met in accordance with the Council's new project management arrangements.
Communications	The Communications Plan covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planned activities at key milestones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The timelapse video is regularly updated and can be viewed at: https://www.north- 	Local schools have produced some excellent material to put into the time capsule and a date for its burial has been set for 20 th July. It

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responses to issues and events as they occur• Routine communications to interested parties (including via the website)	norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/projects/timelapse-video/	<p>is to be buried at the entrance to the building. If members have any further suggestions for items please email them to newleisurecentre@north-norfolk.gov.uk asap. Arrangements for the official opening of The Reef are still being considered in conjunction with Everyone Active. The affixing of the signage to the western elevation (details of which have been submitted to planning) will be a significant milestone in communicating the project.</p>
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Table 1: Budget Summary at 30 June 2021

Approved Budget	£12,697,139.00
Committed Spend	£12,424,624.34
Anticipated Budget Required (Committed Spend plus Estimated Additional Budget Requirements – see table 2)	£12,826,794.00
Current Budget Position (Approved Budget minus Anticipated Budget)	-£129,655.00

Table 2: Breakdown of Sheringham Leisure Centre Construction Budget

	Committed Spend	Spend to date	Estimated Additional Budget Requirements
Enabling Works	£402,532.00	£392,146.65	
Skate Park	£154,016.00	£154,016.00	
Professional Fees Pre-Construction	£504,582.00	£504,582.00	
Professional Fees During Construction	£247,720.00	£219,820.00	
Surveys Pre Construction	£124,249.00	£124,249.00	
Utilities	£21,012.00	£21,012.00	
Main Construction Contract	£10,903,389.00	£8,686,253.00 ¹	£308,294.00 ²
Construction Contingency			£21,000.00
NNDC Direct Costs ³	£67,124.34	£64,480.44	£22,875.66
Client Contingency			£50,000.00
TOTAL	£12,424,624.34	£10,166,559.09	£402,169.66

¹ The spend profile for the main construction contract is shown in figures 1a and 1b

² A Breakdown of the current anticipated variations to the main construction contract are shown in table 3

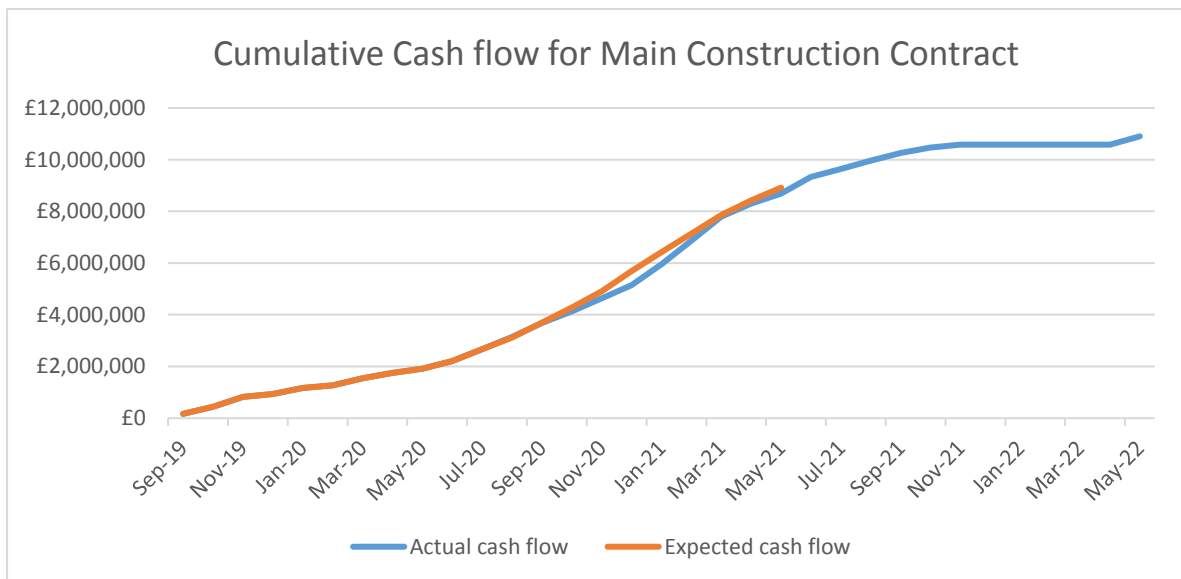
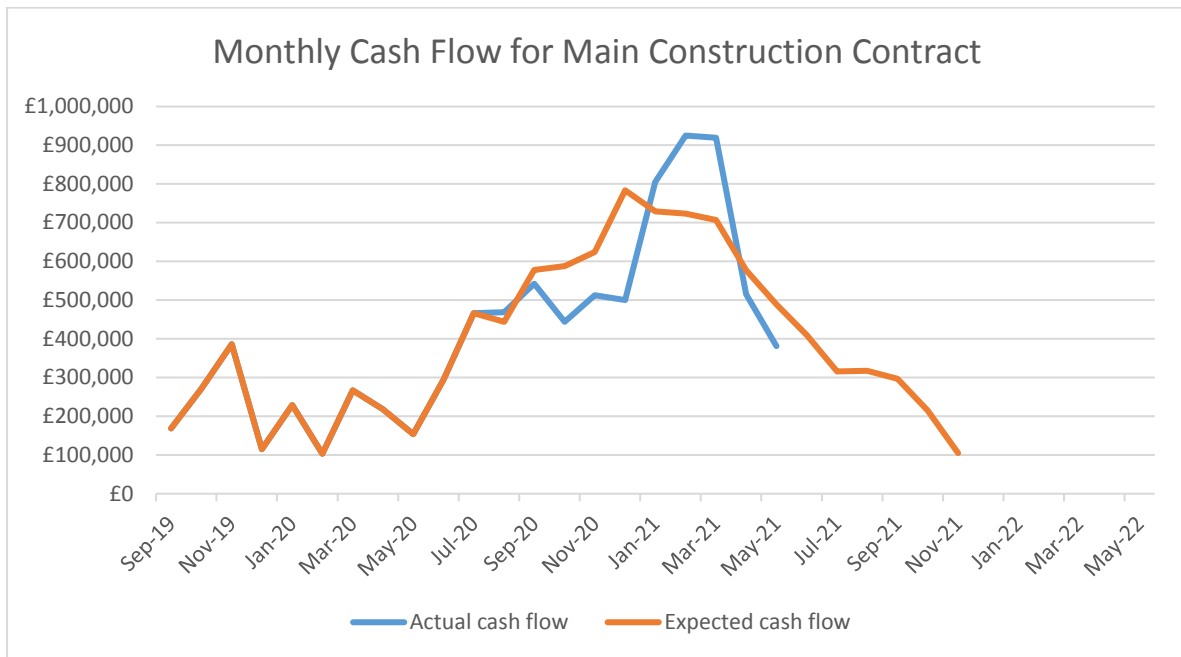
³ NNDC direct costs include for example, capital salaries, temporary car parking, signage and design works

Table 3 Variations to the main construction contract

Variation	Associated Cost
Increase to vibrio replacement works	£748.78
Increase in piling mat due to fill levels	£54,633.22
Additional fill to make up levels following topographical survey	£44,024.46
Expose and removal of redundant services pipes	£1,682.31
Adjustment of structural engineers fees paid direct by NNDC	-£6000
Adjustment of architect fees paid direct by NNDC	-£45,000
Auger drilling of concrete slab and ground reinstatement	£10,847.72
Sub-contractor remobilisation costs due to gas main discovery	£4,785.15
Gas main diversions and associated costs	£20,010.60
Water main diversion and associated costs	£2,609.82
Design change relating to vending machine alcove	-£1,050.00
Learner Pool Omit Gate & Continue Barrier and Upstand	-£173.00
Design fees for floor changes	£3,386.25
Operator Contribution to Design Changes	-£13,249.09
Foam Glass Insulation	£75000
Upgrade to learner pool walkway glass	£1253.30
Change in light fittings	-£17190.50
Move studio doors	£500
Demolition cost saving	-£5590
Anti peep rails to cubicles	£3709.95
BRUKL Model	£4138.75
CCTV inspection to sunken area of site access	£1,048.13
Omit UKPN quote paid direct by NNDC	-13,664.00
Omit dividing wall between studios	-£7,185
Stainless steel hand rails to Learner Pool	£4,407.50
External lighting	£2620.50
Omit sum for pumping station fencing / walling	-£21,500
Ladder to undercroft saving	-£163.37
Black finish to spin studio	£1762.57
SI during demolition	£4584.88
Paint pool store	-£4116.39
Data Link to reception	£362.29
Foul water diversion*	£20,000
Improvements to cubicles	£6022
Paint finish to steelwork	£7500
AV Subscription	£10624.23
Chemical Controller	£1000
Impact of COVID-19 on construction programme*	£22,500.00
Slope failure and foul water sewer diversion: extended programme*	£130,000.00
External Signage saving	-£3391.62
Level sensor specification change to balance tanks	£1,206.90
Standing time due to additional SI	£5,597.66
TOTAL anticipated variations to the main construction contract	£308,294

*These figures are estimates and not yet confirmed

Figures 1a and 1b Main Construction Contract Spend Profile



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NORTH WALSHAM HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION SCHEME PROJECT REPORT TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 14 JULY 2021

1. Background

- 1.1 North Walsham is presently embarking on an exciting scheme to renew its historic town centre. In Spring 2020, North Norfolk District Council submitted a successful application to Historic England to develop and deliver a town centre revitalisation scheme, securing initial funding through the national High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) Programme. The overall aim of the Historic England programme is to make the high street a 'more attractive, engaging and vibrant place for people to live, work and spend time'.
- 1.2 The initial funding application to Historic England secured £975,000 which was match funded by NNDC, resulting in a budget of £1.95 million. To capitalise on this, a further funding application was made to the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP), securing an additional MHCLG *Build Back Better* grant award of £1.17 million towards the town centre placemaking project strand of the scheme. Recognising that there were further opportunities, an additional £80,000 has been recently secured from Historic England. This will provide £50,000 towards the purchase of land west of Black Swan Loke and £30,000 towards additional public realm design costs. This brings the total HSHAZ scheme budget to £3.2 million.
- 1.3 In addition, an independent Cultural Consortium has been established by a group of volunteers in North Walsham. They have successfully applied for £90,000 in funding from Historic England to develop and deliver a Cultural Programme to complement and sit alongside the HSHAZ scheme.
- 1.4 The North Walsham HSHAZ will be delivered over the period of 2020-2024. However, the NALEP (MHCLG) element of investment has to be committed and spent by March 2022.

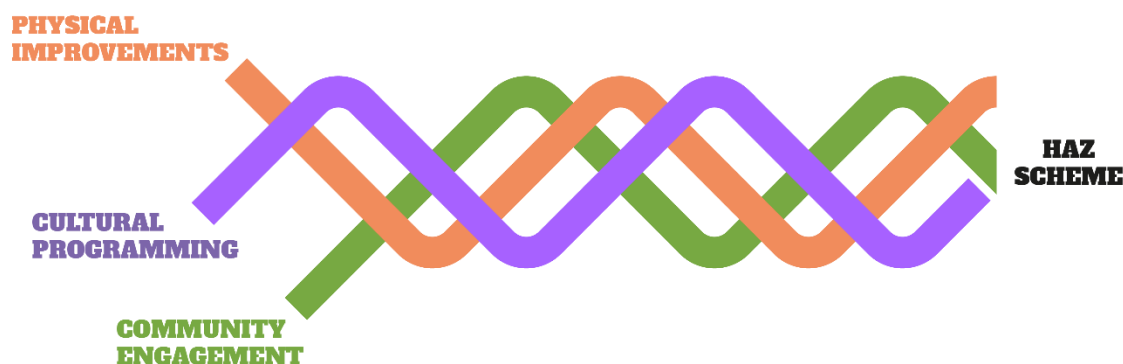
2. Area of Delivery

- 2.1 The North Walsham High Street Heritage Action Zone covers the centre of the town within the North Walsham Conservation Area, focused on the Market Place and immediate surroundings.



3. Programme Scope

- 3.1 There are three core elements to the HSHAZ programme, which are designed to deliver a holistic approach to revitalising the town centre:



- 3.2 The programme is composed of a number of separate project strands. Collectively their delivery is intended to create a lasting change and serve as a catalyst for future investment into the town; through attracting investment in the form of regeneration of land and buildings in private ownership and through providing a locally 'tested' steer for further town centre development that may possibly not be delivered within the scope of the present funding.
- 3.3 The key deliverable of the project include:
- Town centre place-making improvements – streetscaping, including the Market Place and surrounding streets and reconnecting the lokes and gateways to facilitate better movement around the town centre;
 - The Cedars Grade II Listed building - repairs and restoration and returning the main building to occupiable use;
 - A Building Improvement Grants scheme – to support the restoration and repair of buildings within the town, including shop front improvements and supporting projects that will help to fill vacant units and presently unoccupied floorspace;
 - Heritage research and training;
 - Cultural Programme and community activities.
- 3.4 Community Engagement is a vital and key element of the programme. The involvement of local people in local decision-making will play a strong role in determining its success and they will play an integral part in shaping the final outputs and ensuring the legacy of the project. A community stakeholder group has also been established, involving representatives from a number of local groups and organisations, including North Walsham Town Council, Regenerate North Walsham, Paston College, North Walsham Cultural Consortium, Phoenix Group youth CIC and local Members. The stakeholder group meets regularly to develop opportunities to involve local people, groups and businesses in the development and delivery of the HAZ scheme.

4. Progress Update

4.1 Town centre Place-making

4.1.1 A competitive tendering procurement process was undertaken in January 2021 and a multidisciplinary team of landscape architects, placemaking consultants, highways engineers, heritage architects and quantity surveyors were appointed, including Influence Environmental, HETA architects, BSP, Gleeds and Rees Bolter Architects.

4.1.2 There are three key project stages involved in the town centre place-making project:

- **Stage 1** - Masterplan, design and community and stakeholder consultation;
- **Stage 2** - Implementation Plan - detailed design, construction and liaison including early contractor engagement;
- **Stage 3** - Delivery – Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) and framework contractors implementing the public realm and highways detailed designs

The first project stage is shortly to reach completion in July 2021. However, in reality a number of tasks are purposely overlapped within the project delivery plan, particularly around early contractor engagement and identifying where TROs will be required.

4.1.3 To date the following activities have been delivered:

Site and Context: Research and Analysis – March-April 2021

- Analysis of the town centre's physical context
- Review of existing community engagement and research
- Broader context research into what's happening within high streets and town centres

Concept Design - May-June 2021

- Development of a distinct town story and shared identity
- Consultation on options for improving and stitching together the public realm
- Consultation on improving the quality of the public realm and pedestrian safety of the Marketplace and Market Street
- Preliminary proposals for the selection of the materials to be used to create a coherent streetscape
- Identify the phasing and prioritisation of the works

Developed Design - July-August 2021

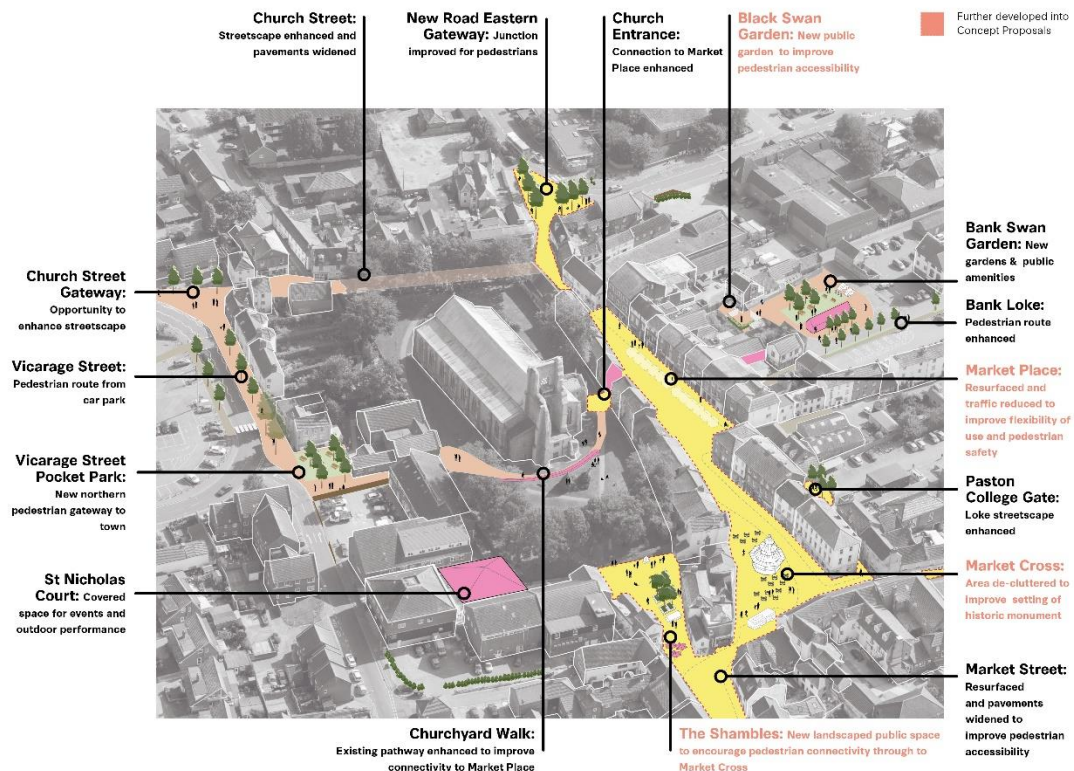
Development of the design of preferred options identified through consultation in the previous phase.

The place-making and public realm masterplan has been developed to deliver specifically:

- a safe and inclusive environment;
- a healthy environment that supports wellbeing;
- a high quality environment;
- economic benefit;
- a flexible and sustainable townscape.

4.1.4 Collectively, these measures will help to support the sustainable use of the town and meet the long-term needs of the community. In particular, an overarching aim of the project is to strengthen the sense of civic pride within the town.

4.1.5 The below diagram illustrates some of the high-level options presently being considered to regenerate the town centre and as was used to initiate conversations and to inspire thoughts and ideas during the consultation process with local stakeholders and the community.



4.1.5 The consultation programme has been designed to ascertain views around the following three key areas.

- i. Masterplan - the Masterplan identifies an overall vision for the town centre and is presented as a suite of projects that can be delivered within the present funding and then as further funding is identified and secured;
- ii. Public Realm Concepts - initial concept illustrations were drawn up for certain key areas identified within the masterplan. These served to inspire peoples thoughts as to how they would like to see these areas reimaged; and
- iii. Town Identity - proposal of four potential story themes around which to build a *shared identity* – inspired by North Walsham’s history and the people who live, work and visit there.

4.1.6 To support this, a number of community and stakeholder engagement activities have been undertaken:

- Ongoing online community engagement through a dedicated interactive community engagement platform (visit bit.ly/HiNorthWalsham)
- Online public engagement at the North Walsham Big Bash community event April 2021
- Public exhibition held in North Walsham town centre on 16, 17 and 23 June 2021

- Public engagement and display at North Walsham FunDay 27 June 2021
- Paston College exhibition 28 June - 2 July 2021
- Stakeholder meetings, both before and during the project's implementation

4.2 The Cedars

- 4.2.1 Owned by NNDC and standing at a key gateway and juncture to the town centre, Market Place and New Road, The Cedars is a prominent Grade II listed historic building and heritage site.
- 4.2.2 In September 2020, the Council tendered for a detailed Condition Survey to be undertaken on the site, to which conservation architects Kings and Dunne were appointed. In addition to this, several specialist investigations have now been completed, including an electrical test and inspection, a disabled access audit report, an ecological survey, an asbestos survey and a drainage survey.
- 4.2.3 Despite being unused for some time, it has been established that the property is generally in a serviceable condition and the main property appears to be generally in sound structural condition. Some parts of the building require essential repair, mainly on areas of water ingress where rainwater goods and flashings are failing and there are some isolated cracks on the walls. Contractors appointed by NNDC are already addressing essential repairs.
- 4.2.4 The appointed architects were also commissioned to undertake a scoping study to identify the possible types of use for the building and the wider site. The report established that a predominantly office use would be the most straight forward and suitable option for the main building and this would require a simple conversion with minimal alterations required, giving flexibility to a range of potential future users. There is presently limited accessibility to the upper floors which would mean that these may be better suited to commercial office use and a range of options could then be considered for the lower floor spaces, including a number of potential community uses.
- 4.2.5 A specification and cost plan has been produced to determine the cost of refurbishing the building and the wider site, including the Grade II listed barns. From this report it was identified that the projected costs for a 'comprehensive' scheme exceeded the funding available within the HAZ budget. A value engineering exercise was therefore undertaken, which highlighted opportunities to make a number of cost savings that would still deliver a habitable building with all the essential repairs undertaken and bring the property back into use. The revised specification for the main Cedars House building has subsequently been agreed with Historic England. This is presently being developed to a detailed design stage and is due to be completed in July 2021. Procurement will then take place to appoint contractors to carry out the repairs and restoration work required to bring the Cedars back into use during the autumn of 2021.
- 4.2.6 In addition to letting out the main building, the Council is presently exploring the opportunities for the adjoining land, including potential disposal for development by a third party.
- 4.2.7 The Council had previously been in talks, dating back to the summer of 2014, with national pub and restaurant chain JD Wetherspoon, who had indicated an interest in acquiring The Cedars site. However, despite protracted conversations, JD Wetherspoon have been unable to formally commit to purchasing the site. The

Council's Cabinet therefore took the decision (5 July 2021) to press ahead with proposals to restore and refurbish the building itself and invite other businesses or community groups to express their interest in renting space within the premises.

4.2.8 The following next steps for the Cedars project are to:

- To repair and restore the building;
- Invite interested parties to come forward with proposals;
- Consider types of use and feasibility including financial viability;
- Explore and identify the preferred uses for the building, barns and wider site.

4.3 Building Improvement Grants Scheme

4.3.1 There are a wealth of historic buildings within and surrounding the Market Place in North Walsham, including 103 that are Listed. The Building Improvement Grant scheme will offer grants to support the restoration and reinstatement of traditional shopfronts and architectural features, the repair and restoration of heritage buildings, and help bring unused floor space back into use.

4.3.2 Detailed Guidance on the grant scheme criteria has been produced in conjunction with Historic England and the scheme will be open for formal application in July 2021. A number of informal conversations and expressions of interest have already been received for the grant scheme.

4.3.3 Conservation architects are shortly to be appointed to act as lead professionals, providing expert advice to potential applicants and to work with the HAZ Team to identify eligible projects to progress to formal applications. An NNDC panel, working with the lead professional, will determine the application approvals. Projects involving Listed buildings and those with a value of over £20,000 will be referred to Historic England. The council's Conservation and Design Manager will also be consulted on projects to ensure that they comply with Conservation Area requirements.

4.4 Heritage Research and Training

4.4.1 Historic England have identified North Walsham as the focus for an in-depth research study, which will be the largest research project within the East of England region. Given the shortage of existing detailed studies of North Walsham's buildings and the significance of the town, HE concluded that a Historic Area Assessment (HAA) will help to improve the understanding of the town centre and provide a good evidence base for future planning and improvement decisions.

4.4.2 The Historic England research team are working closely with the Project Manager along with North Walsham Heritage Group and North Walsham & District Community Archive to engage with local businesses and property owners. The Historic Area Assessment research will be conducted throughout HSHAZ project delivery period and will involve both in-depth desk research and fieldwork, archaeological investigation, geospatial surveys, photography and other methodologies. Quarterly meetings are being held for the duration of the HAZ project.

4.4.3 In January 2021, NNDC/HE announced the launch of the Historic England research and invited property owners and occupiers to allow access to investigate their buildings. The team have visited a number of buildings in the town centre, which has

been extremely insightful and informative. This research is being separately funded by Historic England and will make a valuable contribution to the North Walsham HSHAZ project.

- 4.4.4 The in-depth architectural research, conducted by a team of Historic England investigators to produce the Historic Area Assessment, is expected to generate further ongoing research as information about the history of the town centre buildings emerges. This additional research will be carried out by local groups and volunteers and material generated by the HAA and local historic research will be used for events such as talks, heritage trails, publications and leaflets. Research findings will also feed into the interpretation and signage elements of the town centre place making. It is envisaged that the research will help to increase the awareness and appreciation of the history of North Walsham.
- 4.4.5 The HSHAZ project also presents the opportunity to support the development of skills, both within the heritage elements of the project and the wider regeneration of the town centre. This will likely take the form of a range of training and skills workshops and will seek to develop a variety of both hard and soft skills. For example, training for community volunteers is currently being explored in relation to the research and proposed digitisation of the photographic archive of the town and workshops.

4.5 Cultural Programme and Community Activities

- 4.5.1 Alongside the physical improvements that will be delivered within the programme, NNDC and North Walsham's Cultural Consortium have successfully bid and secured a £90,000 grant from Historic England to create and deliver community-led cultural activities within the town over the next three years. Led by a consortium of local groups and arts organisations, this funding will help celebrate the town's heritage and culture and make the town centre a more attractive, engaging and vibrant place.
- 4.5.2 A programme of activities is presently in development.

5. Governance

- 5.1 A Working Party was established by Cabinet to oversee delivery of the North Walsham High Street HAZ. Following the establishment of the Corporate Delivery Unit, the governance structure for the HAZ scheme has been revised in line with the new guidance.
- 5.2 The Project Team meets weekly to oversee the operational delivery of the scheme. A Project Board is shortly to convene to continue to monitor and support the project delivery. This will be chaired by the Assistant Director for Sustainable Growth and will be comprised of the Project Manager, the Economic Growth Manager, other officers involved in delivery of specific projects being delivered through the scheme, the relevant Portfolio Holders and representatives of Historic England and the Community Stakeholder Group.

6. Communications

- 6.1 Communication Delivery meetings are held on a weekly basis with the relevant Officers. An overarching Communication and Engagement Strategy, which outlines a range of key activities and intervention points and identifies the methodology and vehicles required to support them, underpins these meetings. Within this, individual Communication Plans have been developed for each of the project strands.

- 6.2 To date, a number of media releases, radio interviews and other communications actions have been carried out since the HAZ scheme was launched. However, given the growing and pressing need to maintain strong communication and engagement throughout the project, it has been identified that additional resources will be required. To support this, funding has been identified within the HAZ budget to provide for a part time Communications and Engagement Assistant which will shortly be advertised.
- 6.3 A specific communications and engagement platform has been established for this project in order to ensure that communication can be inclusive, innovative, relevant, responsive and up-to-date. The link to the site is here: <https://northnorfolkdistrictcouncil.mysocialpinpoint.co.uk/north-walsham-haz/home/> (or type in to the web browser: bit.ly/HiNorthWalsham). The use of this site has been encouraging, with 569 'page views', 103 'unique users', and an average visit time of approximately four minutes, in the week commencing 28th June.
- 6.4 As mentioned above, a wide variety of methods have been used to engage relevant local interested parties in this initiative, including virtual workshops, public exhibitions, walking tours, appearing at town events, exhibition at Paston College, meeting property owners and a planned stall at the market (once-a-month).

7. Monitoring and Budget

- 7.1 A robust project monitoring tool sits behind the delivery of the programme and is reviewed on an ongoing basis. This suite of reports tracks the progress of the deliverables within each project strand, contains the risk log and a comprehensive budget forecast and expenditure monitor.
- 7.2 In addition to the Project Team and Project Board meetings, quarterly reports are submitted to the funders Historic England and the LEP.
- 7.3 As a complex, multi-faceted programme, the budget report is dynamic and is routinely monitored as costs become better known. Expenditures are documented and all purchases and services are conducted within the Council's own procurement procedures.

North Norfolk Coastal Ambulance Response Times Working Party

Drivers to form this working party

- Delays in ambulance response times on North Norfolk coast – BBC reported Wells as having UK's longest emergency response times at 21 mins (March 2019)
- Stroke post code lottery - stroke patients at that time needed to be in hospital within an hour to receive thrombolysis which was not possible in rural locations in North Norfolk (and North Norfolk has highest incidence of stroke in England)
- Lack of data - response times were generally reported at the district/CCG level. Postcode level data has to be obtained via FOI.

Initial data

April/May 19 NR23 (Wells)

C1 mean 18.34 mins

C2 mean 35.57 mins

April/May 19 NR25 (Holt, Blakeney, Morston)

C1 mean 11.33 mins

Ambulance emergency response times should be as follows:

- **Category 1 (C1)** – cardiac arrest, serious traumatic injury, severe allergic reaction – target mean 7 mins, 90th centile 15 mins.
- **Category 2 (C2)** – acute breathing problems, stroke/chest pain, fitting – target mean 18 mins, 90th centile 40 mins.

EEAST resources across North Norfolk

EEAST are budgeted for the following ambulances and rapid response vehicles (RRVs) across North Norfolk:

Cromer x 6 (4 x 24 hour vehicles, 2 x 18 hour per day)

North Walsham x 2 (1 x 24 hour vehicle, 1 x 20 hour per day)

Fakenham x 4 (1 x 24 hour vehicle, 1 x 20 hour vehicle, 1 x 12 hour vehicle, 1 x 10 hour vehicle)

Cromer and North Walsham 2 x rapid response vehicles (2 x 24 hour)

Factors causing long response times

Ambulance response times are a complex multifactorial issue reflecting the performance of the acutes, community and mental health trusts, primary care and, of course, the ambulance trust. But EEAST can only deliver the service which is commissioned by N&WCCG.

Here are some of the other factors causing long response times:

- Handovers at acutes – ambulances kept waiting at A&Es to offload patients
- Staffing – lack of paramedics

- Demand – perceived difficulty accessing primary care and 111 triage system increasing numbers calling 999
- Roads and rurality – travel times are longer for our rural communities (for example, Wells’ closest RRV is Cromer and ambulance is Fakenham)
- Lack of acute capacity in mental health – the default safe destination is A&E, lack of acute beds mean out of area transfers

Working party

Terms of Reference for the Working Party: objectives

- To hold N&WCCG to account on Ambulance Emergency Response Times and help the CCG shape the system in a way that benefits our population
- To increase the number of community first responders
- To play a more active role in dissemination of information to our towns and parishes

Membership

NNDC, EEAST, N&WCCG, Blakeney Parish Council, Cley Parish Council, Cromer Town Council, High Kelling Parish Council, Holt Town Council, Kelling Parish Council, Morston Parish Council, Stiffkey Parish Council, Sheringham Town Council, Wells Parish Council, Weybourne Parish Council, Wiveton Parish Council. Membership is open to any North Norfolk Town or Parish Council or Stakeholder.

Working party actions taken forward by EEAST during this period

- Piloted access to mental health practitioners in the three ambulance control rooms
- Retained the two rapid response vehicles in North Norfolk
- Piloted stroke ambulance in Norfolk for bedside scanning and thrombolysis - this was a research project with the UEA and is being evaluated but some positive results
- Developed summer demand deflection strategy – parishes to help distribute 111 First campaign materials

Still in process

- Improving ambulance routing to take account of local traffic conditions to reduce avoidable delays to journeys
- Requesting the inclusion of postcode level response times in the EEAST contract

Still to begin

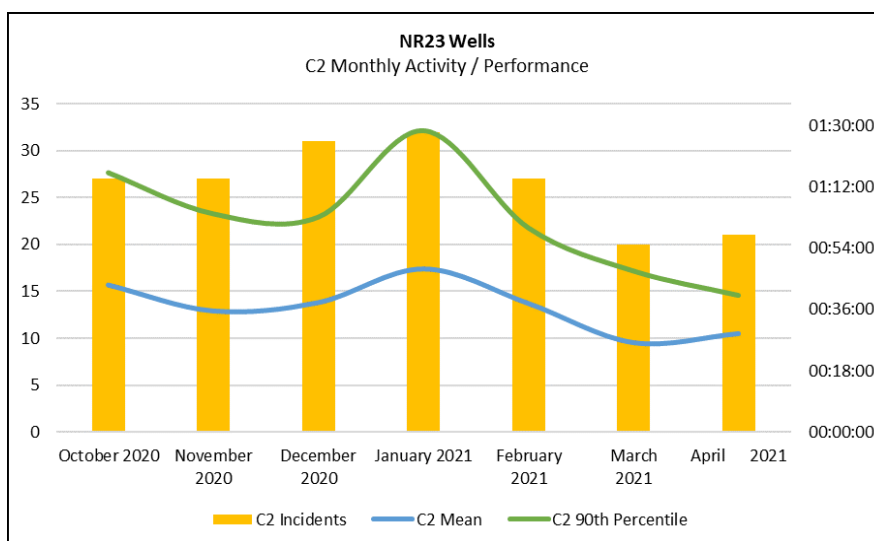
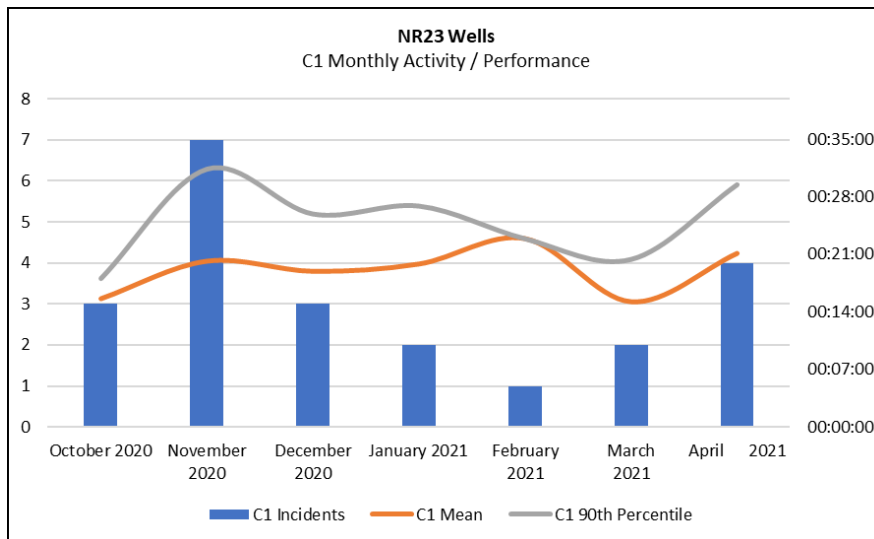
- Supporting EEAST’s campaign to recruit more Community First Responders

However, more needs to be done as response times remain too long in our rural areas. It’s difficult to analyse the effectiveness of these measures given the huge impact of the Covid pandemic on the health service in the last 18 months. Overall, there has been little improvement, though response times in the more urban postcodes are better, however with variability.

Oct 20-April 21 response times

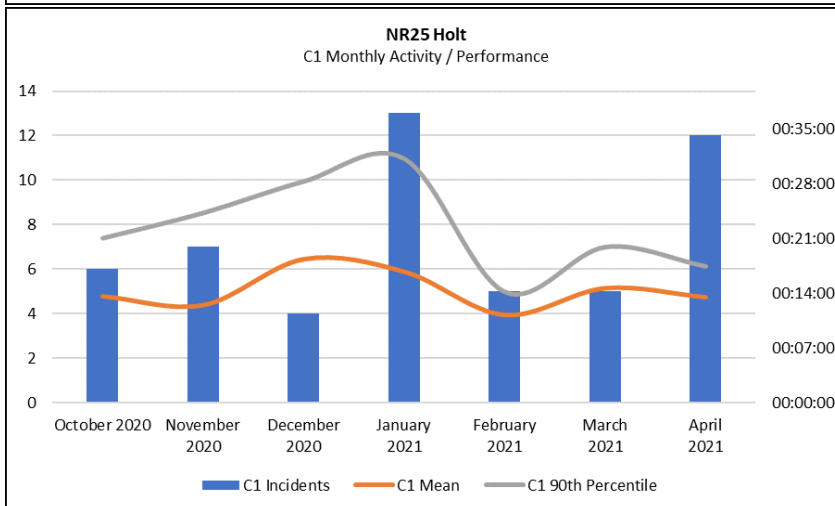
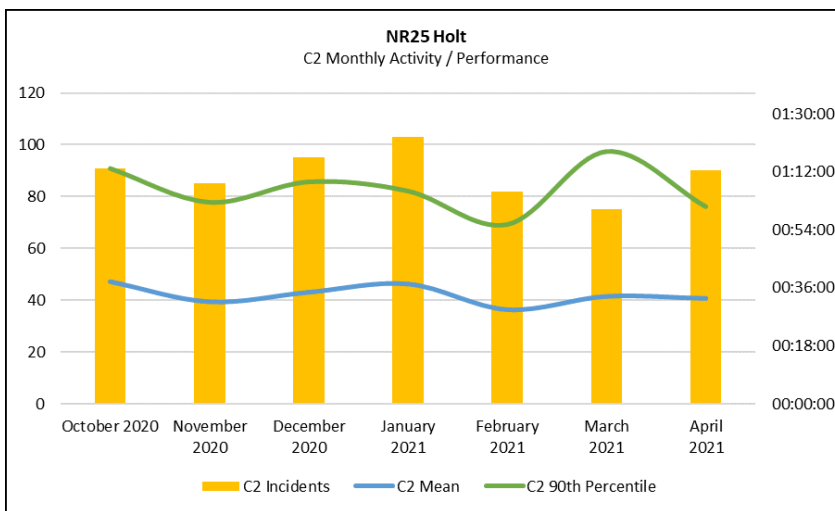
NR23 (Wells, Wighton etc)

District	Month	C1 Incidents	C1 Mean	C1 90th Percentile	C2 Incidents	C2 Mean	C2 90th Percentile
Wells	October 2020	3	00:15:36	00:18:02	27	00:43:06	01:16:14
	November 2020	7	00:20:09	00:31:22	27	00:35:29	01:04:09
	December 2020	3	00:18:55	00:25:54	31	00:37:56	01:03:12
	January 2021	2	00:19:48	00:26:52	32	00:47:48	01:28:33
	February 2021	1	00:22:53	00:22:53	27	00:37:40	01:00:02
	March 2021	2	00:15:14	00:20:22	20	00:26:11	00:47:24
	April 2021	4	00:21:05	00:29:28	21	00:28:49	00:40:14



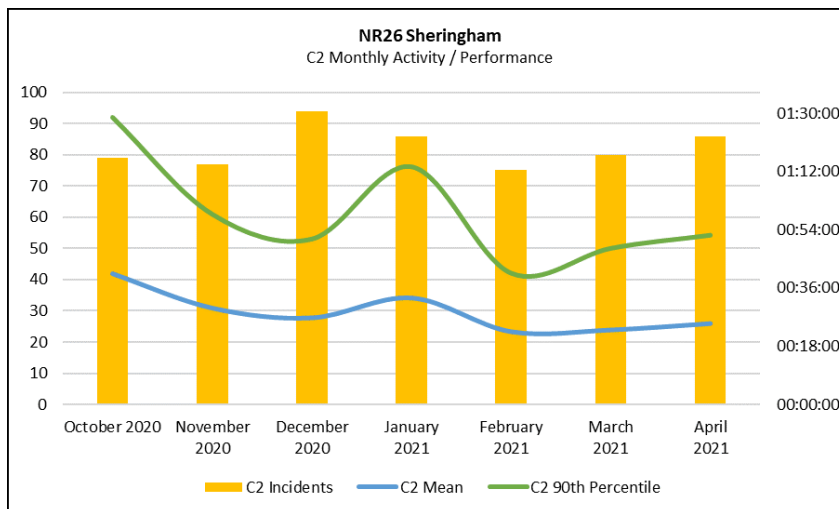
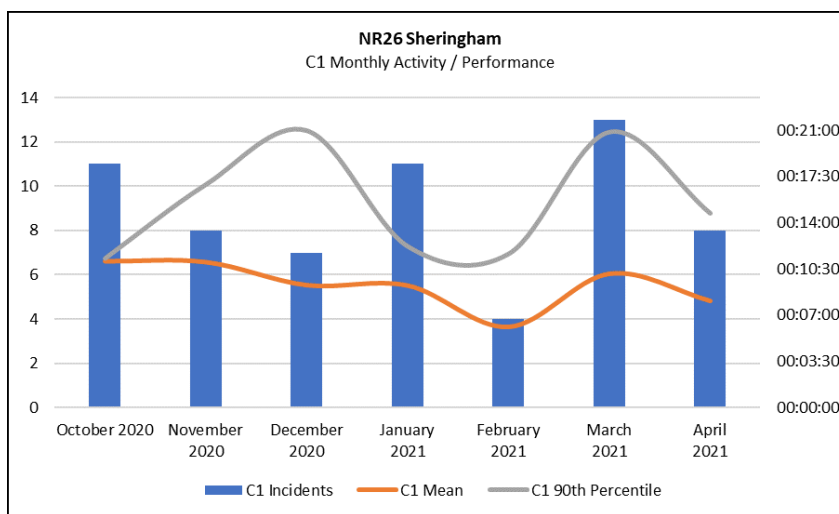
NR25 (Holt, Blakeney, Langham, Cley etc)

District	Month	C1 Incidents	C1 Mean	C1 90th Percentile	C2 Incidents	C2 Mean	C2 90th Percentile
Holt	October 2020	6	00:13:41	00:21:05	91	00:37:50	01:12:59
	November 2020	7	00:12:33	00:24:18	85	00:31:46	01:02:31
	December 2020	4	00:18:24	00:28:19	95	00:34:38	01:08:50
	January 2021	13	00:16:48	00:31:13	103	00:37:08	01:05:59
	February 2021	5	00:11:18	00:14:15	82	00:29:23	00:55:38
	March 2021	5	00:14:42	00:19:57	75	00:33:23	01:18:14
	April 2021	12	00:13:33	00:17:30	90	00:32:45	01:01:09



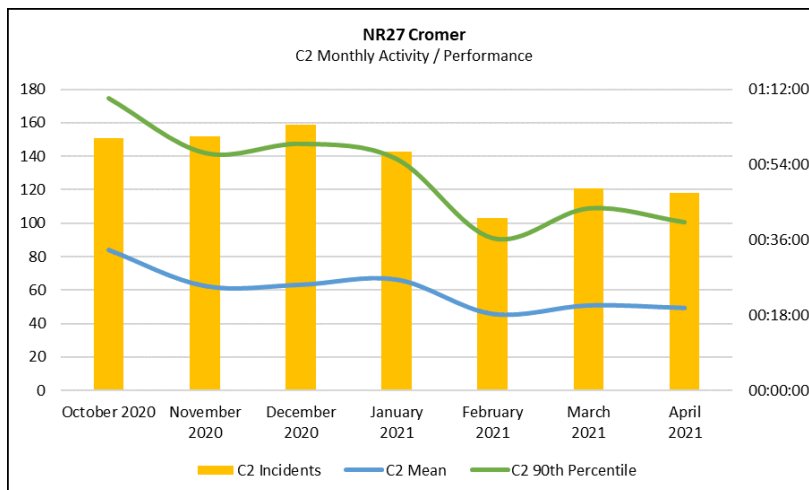
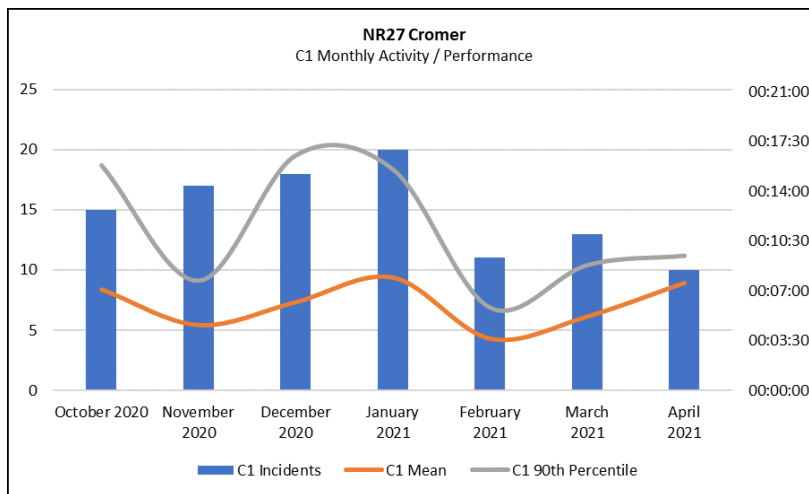
NR26 (Sheringham, Beeston Regis etc)

District	Month	C1 Incidents	C1 Mean	C1 90th Percentile	C2 Incidents	C2 Mean	C2 90th Percentile
Sheringham	October 2020	11	00:11:03	00:11:18	79	00:40:34	01:28:43
	November 2020	8	00:10:59	00:16:54	77	00:29:55	00:58:46
	December 2020	7	00:09:14	00:20:59	94	00:26:53	00:51:04
	January 2021	11	00:09:13	00:12:13	86	00:33:03	01:13:27
	February 2021	4	00:06:05	00:11:38	75	00:22:35	00:40:31
	March 2021	13	00:10:06	00:20:53	80	00:23:08	00:48:12
	April 2021	8	00:08:03	00:14:43	86	00:25:07	00:52:16



NR27 (Cromer, Overstrand, Runtons etc)

District	Month	C1 Incidents	C1 Mean	C1 90th Percentile	C2 Incidents	C2 Mean	C2 90th Percentile
Cromer	October 2020	15	00:07:07	00:15:50	151	00:33:30	01:09:57
	November 2020	17	00:04:37	00:07:43	152	00:25:00	00:56:54
	December 2020	18	00:06:14	00:16:32	159	00:25:18	00:59:04
	January 2021	20	00:07:57	00:15:33	143	00:26:31	00:55:26
	February 2021	11	00:03:40	00:05:49	103	00:18:24	00:36:30
	March 2021	13	00:05:13	00:08:49	121	00:20:24	00:43:36
	April 2021	10	00:07:35	00:09:28	118	00:19:49	00:40:19



Data from the wider NNDC area has been requested, this is the first tranche:

NR12 (Bacton, Happisburgh, Sea Palling, Stalham etc) and NR29 (Potter Heigham. Ludham etc)

District	Month	C1 Incidents	C1 Mean	C1 90th Percentile	C2 Incidents	C2 Mean	C2 90th Percentile
NR12	February 2021	21	00:08:36	00:14:46	153	00:25:41	00:42:27
	March 2021	21	00:10:33	00:16:21	182	00:23:07	00:43:14
	April 2021	30	00:11:56	00:16:19	181	00:26:06	00:46:04
	May 2021	23	00:11:52	00:16:40	241	00:34:41	01:03:43
NR29	February 2021	22	00:09:40	00:15:23	152	00:26:34	00:47:18
	March 2021	19	00:10:33	00:17:05	161	00:23:00	00:45:55
	April 2021	18	00:11:24	00:17:50	186	00:24:42	00:44:09
	May 2021	25	00:09:09	00:15:13	217	00:34:12	01:04:05

Working party next steps

- Support EEAST’s recruitment of Community First Responders
- Continue campaign for the retention of rapid response vehicles in North Norfolk
- Use parish communication networks to help deflect emergency demand
- Review evaluation of Stroke Ambulance and its role in North Norfolk
- Require provision of postcode level data from the N&WCCG-EEAST contract
- Consider rolling out this project NNDC-wide

Cllr Victoria Holliday, Coastal Ward

July 5th 2021

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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 approves 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:
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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).

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’s target for delivery of new homes over the last 3-years (2017-2020) was 1,450. Over that period 1,500 new homes were built – so North Norfolk met our Housing Delivery Test.

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.

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.

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 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			
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. <i>(Corporate Plan Action Plan 1.5.3)</i>	The Council will work with Flagship to review all proposed disposals and consider alternative options (including NNDC purchase).	Monthly Meetings established. March 2021	Housing Strategy Manager
	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).		
Supporting Access to Home Ownership			
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 <i>(Corporate Plan Action Plan 1.5.2)</i>	The council will work with partners to raise awareness and understanding of shared ownership and other low cost home ownership homes.	Promotional campaign in place. December 2021	Housing Strategy Manager
	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.	Report with recommendations on potential benefits. September 2022	Housing Strategy Manager
	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	Included in new Local Plan. September 2021 Housing Policy and Processes. March 2022	Planning Policy Manager, Housing Strategy Manager and Principal Lawyer.

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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Housing in North Norfolk District

A Summary of Issues - 2020



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Housing in North Norfolk District - A Summary 2020

Main Themes

People and Households

- The district has a growing population – largely driven by migration of retirees from other parts of England.
- In consequence the district’s population is old and getting older - 33% of the population are age 65+ (18% in England) and the average age is 50 (41 in England).
- By contrast, the district has few young people. Only 19% of households in the district have dependent children (26% in England).

Emerging Policy Issues

1. Provision of housing and support services to meet the needs of older people.

Existing Housing

- There are 55,000 homes in the district.
- 70% of housing in the district is owner-occupied.
- 30% of housing is rented of which 17% is privately rented and 13% is affordable rent (housing association).
- Over 10% of the homes are holiday or second homes.
- 27% of homes in the private sector have a category 1 HHSRS¹ hazard. The largest single problem is excess cold resulting from poor heat insulation in many older properties.
- 19%, nearly one in five, of tenants in private rent homes face fuel poverty².
- In the district, some homes are at risk from coastal erosion and others are located in areas at risk of flooding.
- In the private rent sector the Council’s Environmental Protection Team investigate complaints of housing disrepair and carry out programmed inspections of houses in multiple occupation.
- The Council’s Integrated Housing Adaptations Team support people who need adaptations to their homes to help maintain independent living.

Emerging Policy Issues

2. Managing the impact of holiday and second homes.
3. Improving the quality of homes in the privately owned sector. In particular poor heat insulation, which is a major cause of fuel poverty in the private rent sector.
4. Policies in the new Housing Strategy should complement policies from other areas of the Council’s activities including managing flood risk and coastal erosion.

New Housing

- To meet the needs of additional households the Council has a target of 479 new homes per year. In the five years to March 2019 new homes built averaged 475 per year.

¹ The housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities 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.

² Fuel Poverty (Low income high cost) – A household that would fall below the poverty level of income if it spent the money required to maintain an adequate level of warmth.

Housing in North Norfolk District - A Summary 2020

- To meet the needs of households who cannot afford to buy or rent a home in the market the district needs 100 new affordable homes each year. In the five years to March 2019 the average number of new affordable homes was 84 per year.
- Unfortunately Right to Buy sales and voluntary sales by registered providers reduced the net number of new affordable homes in the five years to March 2019 to an average of 19 per year.

Emerging Policy Issues

5. Increasing the supply of affordable homes and managing the impact of voluntary sales by RPs.

Affordability of Housing

- House prices in North Norfolk are expensive compared to earnings. There are parts of the District, particularly the coastal and adjacent inland area from Holkham to Sheringham that are especially expensive.
- Lower quartile house prices range from £130,000 in Bacton ward to £362,500 in Wells with Holkham ward (June 2019).
- Local residents compete for market housing with holiday and second home owners and retirees.
- Most market rents exceed the Local Housing Allowance³. In a sample of 82 properties to let in June 2020 only 15 were within the local housing allowance rate. In practice this means the private rent sector is not an option for households dependent upon benefit to help pay rent.

Emerging Policy Issues

6. Helping low income households to access the private sale and private rent markets.

Housing Need and Homelessness

- As at 28th February 2020 there were 2,903 household on the Council's housing list. Of these 416 were in priority bands 1 and 2.
- In 2019/20 there were 283 properties let⁴. In 2018/19 there were 380 properties let.
- In consequence the Council allocates most available lets to applicants in priority bands 1 and 2 many of whom are homeless.
- The Council provided advice and support to 906 households in 2019/20 threatened with homelessness. For 62 households the Council accepted a main housing duty and who therefore have a priority band 1 on the housing list.
- The Council provided temporary housing for 135 households in 2019/20. The cost to the Council in rent not recoverable from the benefits system is £233,000.

Emerging Policy Issues

7. The shortage of affordable homes to let – resulting in most housing applicants having little hope of securing an affordable home.
8. The Council providing housing for use as temporary accommodation both to improve the quality of temporary housing and to reduce the cost of providing temporary housing.

³ In March 2020 the government increased LHA rates as part of the response to the Covid 19 pandemic.

⁴ Including a small number of shared ownership sales/resales.

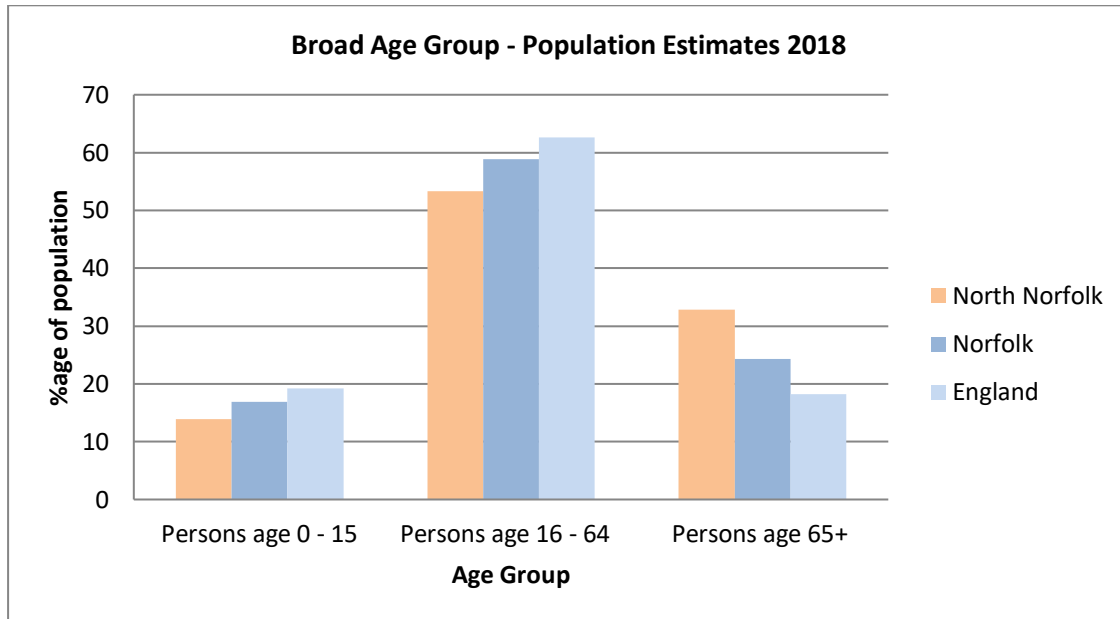
Housing in North Norfolk District - A Summary 2020

Demographic Information

North Norfolk’s population is older than the rest of Norfolk and the rest of England. Consequently, there are a high proportion of ‘pensioner’ households (all age 65+) and a low proportion of households with dependent children.

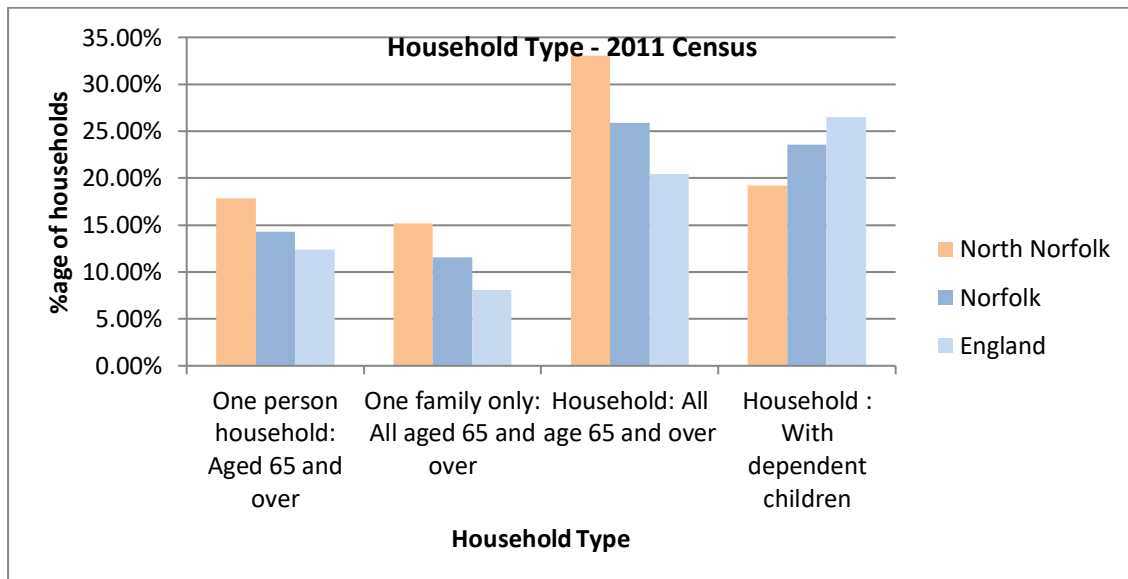
Age

North Norfolk District has a high proportion of people aged 65+ and a lower proportion of people in younger age groups. The Office for National Statistics predicts the proportion of people aged 65+ will grow from 32.8% in 2018 to 40.4% in 2041.



Household Type

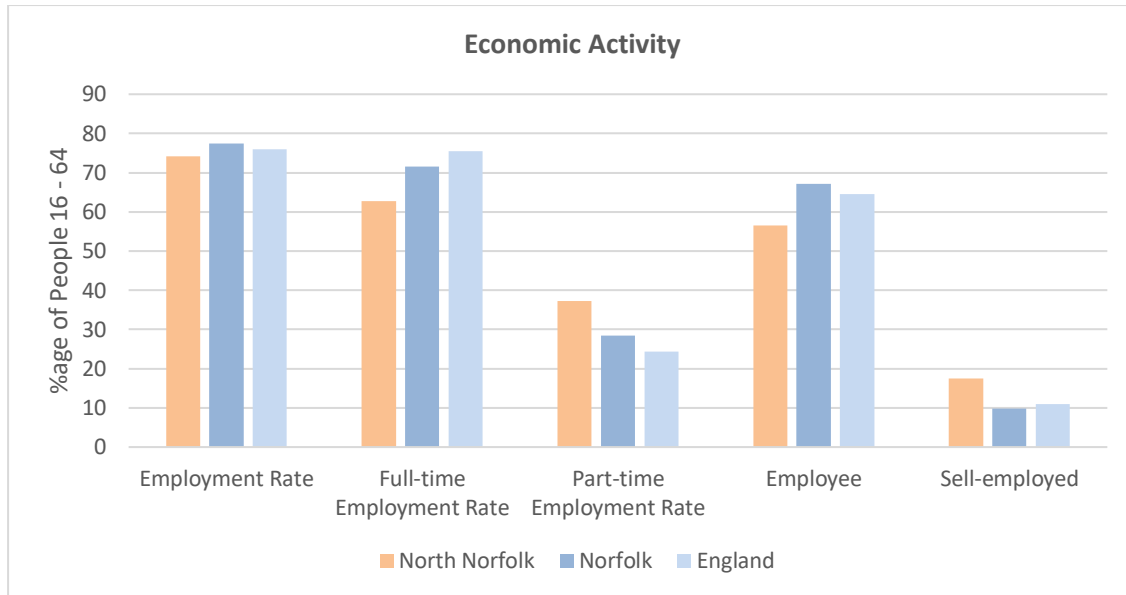
In the 2011 Census North Norfolk has a high proportion of households age 65+ and a low proportion of households with dependent children compared to Norfolk and England.



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Economic Activity

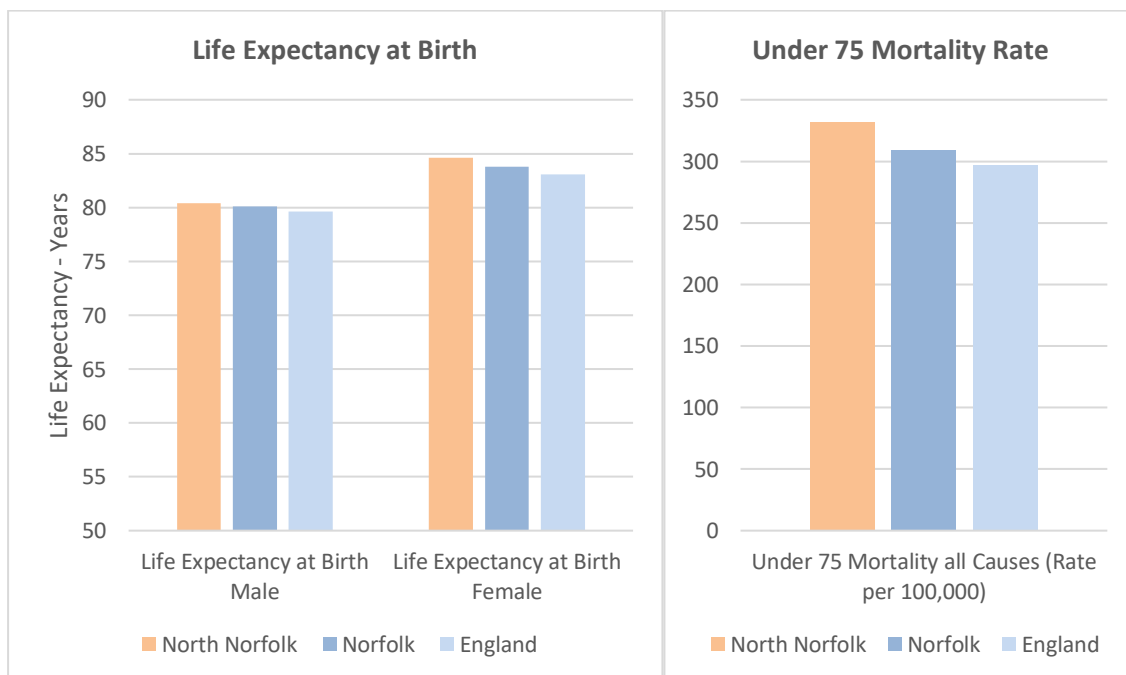
People aged 16 – 64 in North Norfolk are slightly less likely to be working than in Norfolk or England. North Norfolk residents are more likely to be working part-time and more likely to be self-employed than residents of Norfolk and England.



Source ONS (2019) Note: Full and part-time employment rate expressed as percentage of those in employment and therefore sum to 100%.

Life Expectancy and Mortality

People in North Norfolk have a slightly higher life expectancy than the rest of Norfolk and England. The under 75 mortality rate however is higher than the rest of Norfolk and England and is due to the predominance of older people (more people age 60 – 74) in the North Norfolk population.

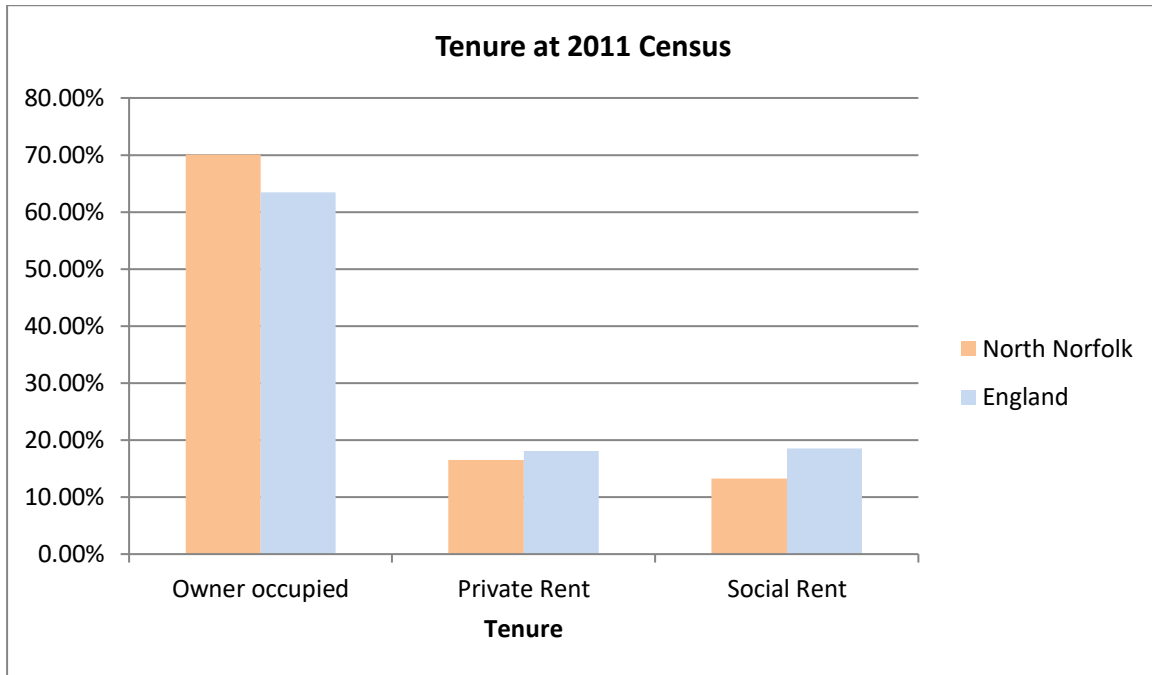


Source Public Health England

Housing in North Norfolk District - A Summary 2020

Housing Stock

Housing Tenure



At the time of the 2011 census the tenure of housing in North Norfolk District showed owner occupation at 70.1% which is above the average for England at 63.4%. By contrast, the proportion of tenants in both the private and social sector was lower in North Norfolk than in England.

Housing Stock Turnover

There were 3,443 property sales and lets in 2018/19. Most will result in a change of property occupier. (However, a property sale in which a landlord sells with a sitting tenant will not result in a change of occupier). As we would expect private rent property turns over more frequently than social rent property, there are more lets as a proportion of the stock than for social rent.

Tenure	Number of Sales/Lets (2018/19)	Sales/Lets as %age of Properties ⁵
Property Sales	2,090	5.4%
Private Rent Lets	960	10.6%
Affordable Rent Lets	393	5.4%
Total	3,443	6.2%

⁵ The VOA calculates there are 55,040 homes in North Norfolk in 2019. We use the 2011 census to apportion these by tenure.

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Housing Stock Condition

Building Research Establishment Report

In 2019 North Norfolk District secured a grant of £44,000 to undertake research into the condition of housing in the district with particular focus on the estimated 11,000 privately rented homes in the district. The Building Research Establishment (BRE) carried out the research on behalf of the Council using a number of datasets. Some of the headline interim results (April 2020):

- There are 55,111 dwellings in North Norfolk of which 68% (70.2% at the 2011 census) are owner occupied, 20% (16.5%) private rented and 12% (13.2%) social rented.
- 13,106 dwellings in the private sector have category 1 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) hazards⁶. This equates to 27% of properties. The proportion of 27% is the same for both owner-occupied and private rented properties.
- By contrast only 710 dwellings in the social sector have category 1 Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) hazards. This equates to 11% of properties.
- The total cost of mitigating category 1 hazards in North Norfolk's private sector stock is estimated to be £49.1million – with £38.0 million in the owner occupied sector, and £11.2 million in the private rented sector.

Nationally 18.8% of housing is non-decent⁷ (English Housing Survey 2017-18). The BRE report identifies 13,816 homes (all tenures) which have a category 1 HHSRS hazard. This represents 25% of the housing stock and all these properties are, by definition, non-decent.

Fuel Poverty

In their report BRE looked at two measure of fuel poverty;

1. Fuel Poverty (10%) – A household that spends more than 10% of its income to maintain an adequate level of warmth.
2. Fuel Poverty (Low income high cost) – A household that would fall below the poverty level of income if it spent the money required to maintain an adequate level of warmth.

This second measure illustrates how fuel poverty is particularly a problem in the private rented sector.

⁶ The housing health and safety rating system (HHSRS) is a risk-based evaluation tool to help local authorities 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.

⁷ The English Housing Survey is an annual analysis of English housing. When considering the condition of a property it uses the decent homes standard. A decent home:

1. Is free of hazards which provide an immediate risk to health and safety.
2. Is in a reasonable state of repair.
3. Will have modern facilities.
4. Provides a reasonable level of thermal comfort.

A non-decent home will fail one or more of these tests.

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	Owner Occupied Homes		Privately Rented Homes		Affordable Rented Homes	
	Number	%age	Number	%age	Number	%age
Fuel Poverty (10%)	5,741	15%	1,485	13%	671	10%
Fuel Poverty (low income high cost)	3,097	8%	2,048	19%	610	9%
Low income Households	3,727	10%	5,185	47%	3,892	61%

In affordable rented homes 61% of households have low incomes but only 9% are in fuel poverty (low income high cost). This is because their social landlords try to ensure the homes they let have good heat insulation and are therefore inexpensive to heat. By contrast only 47% of privately rented tenants have low incomes but 19% are in fuel poverty (low income high cost). In the private rented sector many homes are expensive to heat.

Disrepair and Enforcement Action

North Norfolk District Council's Environmental Protection Housing team investigate complaints of housing disrepair in the private rented sector and carry out programmed inspections of houses in multiple occupation. The Environmental Protection team serve an improvement notice if an inspection identifies one or more Category 1 HHSRS hazard.

The most common hazard is Excess Cold. In the example below the Environmental Protection team identified a Category 1 hazard following receipt of a complaint about damp and mould in an early 1900s built bungalow. The team served an improvement notice requiring insulation of the vaulted ceilings and the solid North facing external walls and the mechanical insulation of the bathroom. The following winter, condensation and black mould were all but absent.

Before enforcement notice



Following works required by enforcement notice



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The following statistics for the financial year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 show the volume of work undertaken by the Environmental Protection Housing team:

- Number of complaints received: **78**
- Number of those complaints resulting in inspections: **53**
- Number of those dwellings inspected with category 1 hazards: **27**
- Number of dwellings made decent of those above dwellings assessed: **16**
- Total number of dwellings made decent: **16 + 11 = 27** (i.e. includes 11 cases where initial complaint was made before 01 April 2019 but made decent within last financial year).

IHAT

The Council integrated housing adaptations team (IHAT) support people who need adaptations to their homes. Members of this team visit applicants in their homes to assess their needs. On rare occasions the team find that properties in the private sector are in such a poor state of repair that they cannot proceed with adaptations.

In 2019/20 the IHAT completed 110 grants and spent £1,165,764. By tenure the breakdown is:

Registered Provider: 71 grants – spent £790,313

Privately Rented: Nine grants – spent £71,534

Privately Owned: 30 grants – spent £303,917

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Housing in Flood Risk and Coastal Erosion Zones

Flood Risk

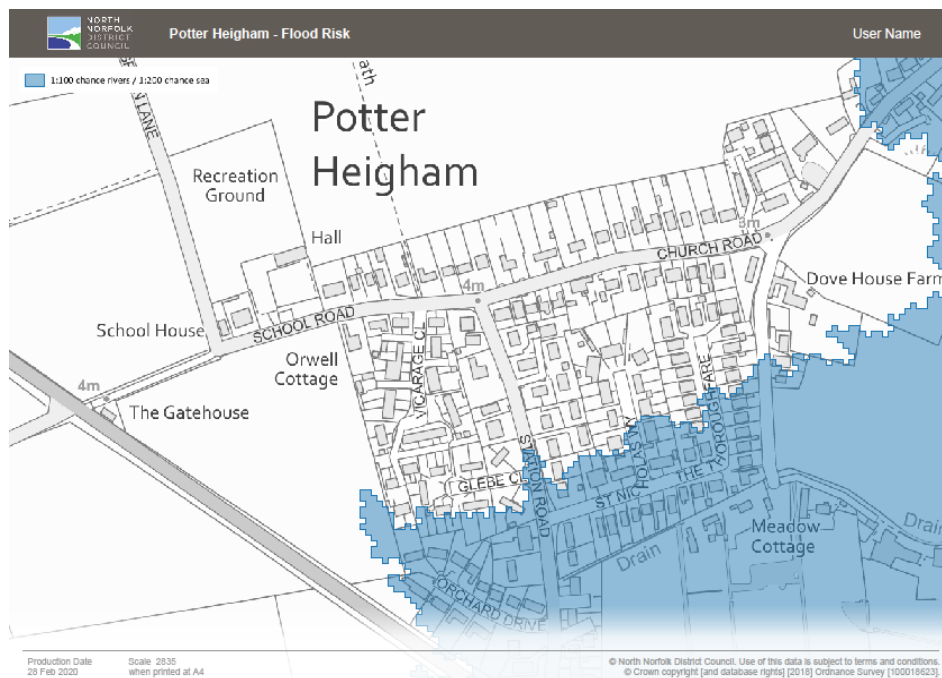
The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) identifies land at risk of flooding within the district.

Flood Risk Zone	Description	Risk Level – Annual Probability of Flooding	
Zone 1	Low	Less than 1 in 1,000	
Zone 2	Medium	Greater than 1 in 1,000	Less than 1 in 100 risk from river Less than 1 in 200 risk from sea
Zone 3a	High	Greater than 1 in 100 risk from river Greater than 1 in 200 risk from sea	
Zone 3b	Functional Flood Plain	This zone comprises land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood.	

Nearly all new housing development will be in Zone 1. Only in exceptional circumstances, will the Council permit development in other flood risk zones. Parts of the district, particularly in the Broads area to the south of the district, have extensive areas in zones, 2, 3a and 3b. This will restrict the opportunities for housing development in these areas.

There are many existing homes outside of Zone 1. These homes are at greater risk of flooding.

Example of Homes in Flood Risk Zone 3A in Potter Heigham

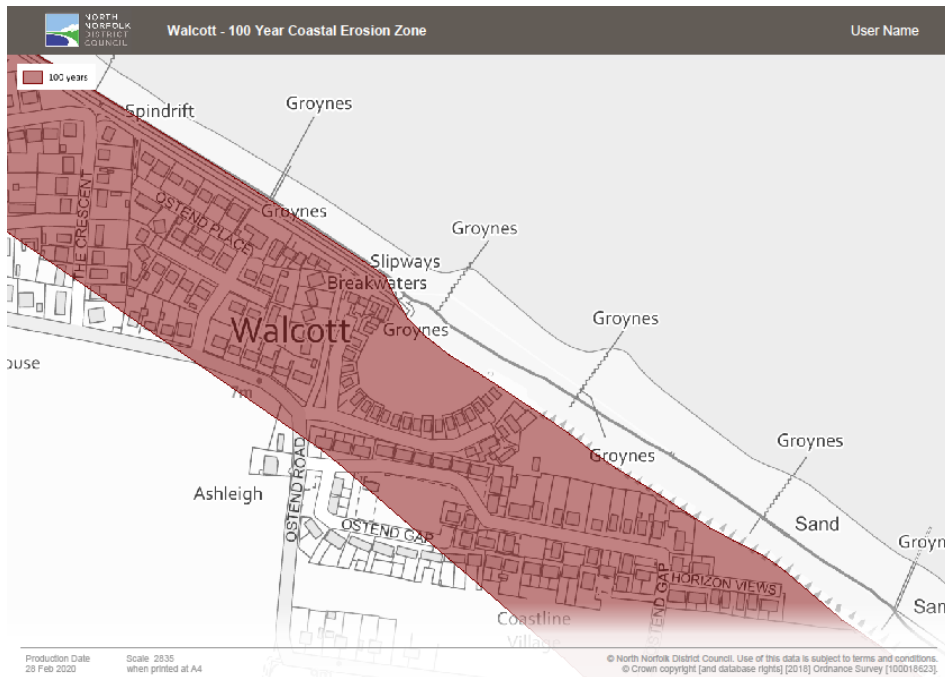


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Coastal Erosion

Large parts of the North Norfolk Coastline are at risk of coastal erosion. There are 450 to 1,300 homes assessed in the Shoreline Management Plan (covering Kelling Hard to Lowestoft Ness)⁸ as potentially at risk in the period to 2105. The emerging local plan proposes that property owners at risk (within the next 20 years) may seek to relocate their home. This relocation can take place within the existing community.

Example of Predicted Impact of Coastal Erosion on Homes in Walcott



⁸ This Shoreline Management Plan covers part of the North Norfolk Coast and areas of coast south of the district.

Housing in North Norfolk District - A Summary 2020

Changes in Housing Stock

North Norfolk District has a growing number of people and households. The District requires new homes for these additional households. Different research methodologies result in differing estimates of the number of new homes needed ranging from 420 to 553 per year.

Evidence for Number of New Homes

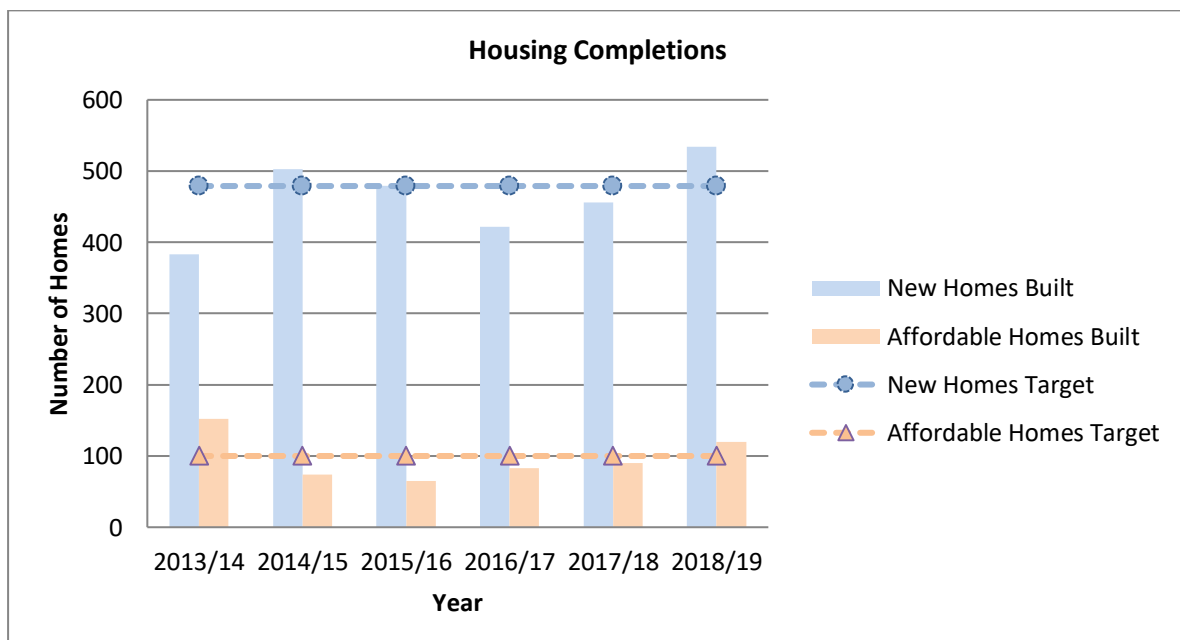
To inform planning policy North Norfolk District Council jointly with other Norfolk District Councils commissioned Opinion Research Services (ORS) to carry out a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Central Norfolk, including North Norfolk.

This research completed in 2017. For North Norfolk District, ORS identified a need for 408 new homes per year in the 21-year period 2015 – 2036. The National Planning Policy Framework requires local councils to add a 5% buffer to the need and so the new homes target for North Norfolk was 420 homes per year. Within this total, the District needs just under 100 of the new homes to be affordable to meet the needs of households who cannot afford to buy or rent a home in the market.

In 2019, the government established a revised formula to calculate the need for new homes. This new formula increased the number of new homes required per year in North Norfolk District to 553. ORS carried out a further study for the Council in 2019 to see if the Council could challenge this revised number of new homes. ORS believes there are grounds to challenge the governments figure and as a result, the Council are now working on a revised target of 479 new homes per year.

New Housing

The table shows housing completions for the six years to March 2019. The target for new homes (479 per year) is the revised target. The target for new affordable homes (100 per year) is from the original 2017 ORS SHMA.



Housing in North Norfolk District - A Summary 2020

Registered Provider Stock Disposals

Stock disposals by Registered Providers (RPs) do not change the amount of housing in the district. In most cases,⁹ a stock disposal will move the property into the private market and result in a loss of an affordable home. As a result, stock disposals have a significant negative impact on the Council's ability to deliver our affordable housing target.

Stock disposals take two forms:

1. Sale to the tenant under the Preserved Right to Buy or, more rarely, the Right to Acquire.
2. Voluntary sales.

In the case of voluntary sales, the RP will choose to sell because the property will cost too much to bring up to a reasonable standard of repair.

Year	New Affordable Homes	Right to Buy Sales	Voluntary Sales	Net Change in Affordable Homes
2014/15	74	20	40	14
2015/16	65	30	44	-9
2016/17	83	24	38	21
2017/18	90	23	56	11
2018/19	107	16	45	46

⁹ In a small number of cases, North Norfolk District Council has helped a Community-led housing group to buy the property and so retain the property as an affordable home.

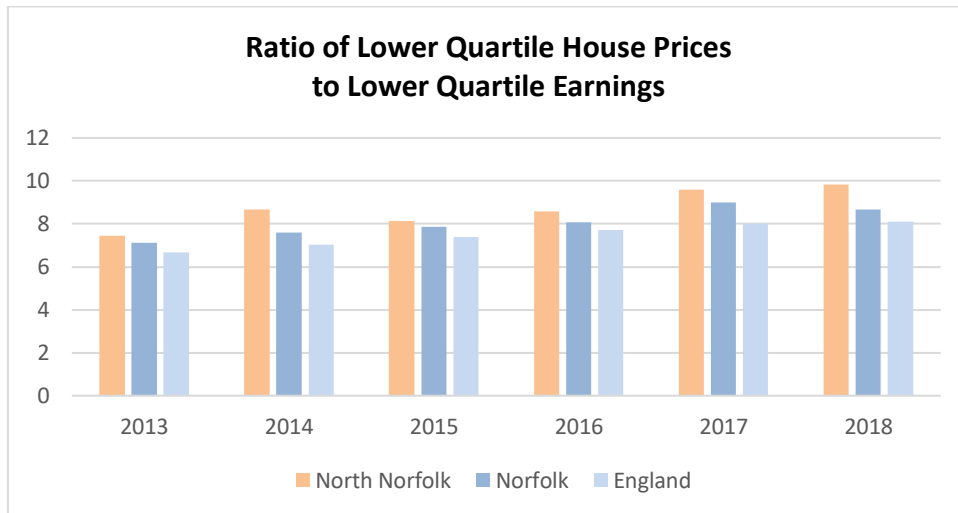
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Housing Affordability

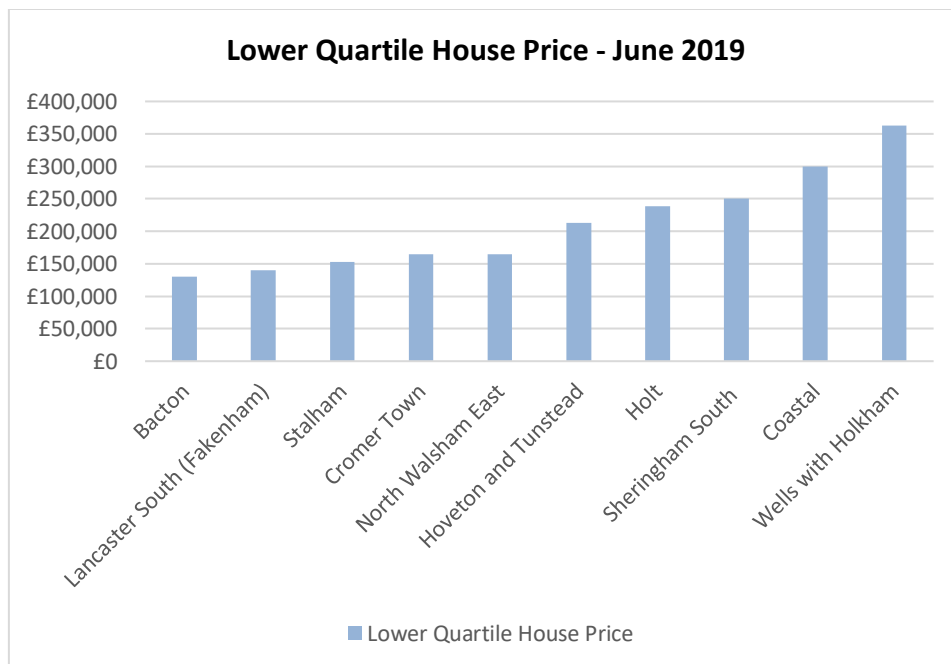
House prices in North Norfolk are expensive compared to earnings. There are parts of the District, particularly the coastal area from Holkham to Sheringham that are especially expensive.

Private Sale Sector

The ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings is used to measure house price affordability. The higher the ratio the less affordable are property prices. Statistics from LG inform show that affordability has been getting worse in the period to 2018. Property prices in North Norfolk are less affordable than in Norfolk as a whole and less affordable than for England.

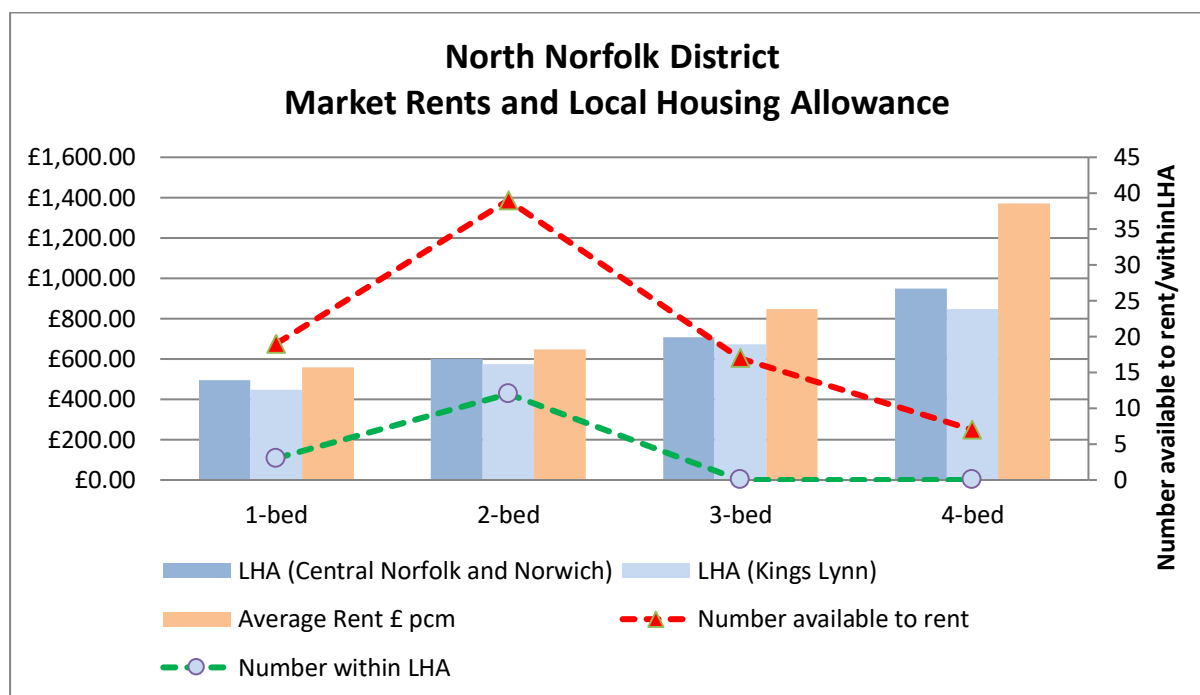


The ONS provide property prices by local authority ward. The most recent data for June 2019 shows a wide variation in property prices across the district. We show lower quartile prices as properties in the lower quartile price range of the market are those most affordable to households with low incomes. Lower quartile prices range from £130,000 in Bacton ward to £362,500 in Wells with Holkham ward.



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Private Rented Sector



Properties Available to Rent				
Bedroom Size	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed
Average Rent £ pcm	£558.42	£646.79	£848.24	£1,370.71
Number available to rent	19	39	17	7
LHA (Central Norfolk and Norwich)	£493.65	£598.35	£708.07	£947.40
LHA (Kings Lynn)	£448.76	£573.43	£673.14	£847.69
Number within LHA	3	12	0	0

In June 2020 we looked at properties advertised to let on Rightmove. We looked for properties to let within three miles of the district's main settlements of Cromer, Fakenham, Holt, Hoveton, North Walsham, Sheringham, Stalham and Wells. We found 82 properties in total with the largest concentration of 20 located in and around Cromer. By contrast, there were only two properties advertised to let within three miles of Wells.

The market rent sector provides a housing option for households who cannot afford to buy a home or choose to rent. Market rent homes are not a viable option for most low-income households.

A low-income household can seek help to meet their rent costs. This will take the form of housing benefit or form part of universal credit. In either case, the government caps the housing element at the local housing allowance (LHA) rate¹⁰. Across the district, 15 of the properties available for rent

¹⁰ The Valuation Office Agency on behalf of government sets LHA rates for Broad Housing Market Areas (BHMAs). The west of the district, including Wells and Fakenham is in the Kings Lynn BHMA. Most of the rest of North Norfolk, including the other six main settlements are in the Central Norfolk and Norwich BHMA. The

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were within LHA rates. All 15 properties are one and two-bed and 12 are in and around Cromer and Sheringham. The government has recently increased LHA rates in response to the Covid 19 pandemic. A similar analysis in August 2019 found only five properties for rent within the LHA rates.

A low-income household seeking a market rent home faces two hurdles. Firstly, to find a market rent home which is within its budget. Secondly, to find a landlord willing to accept a tenant in receipt of benefit and who will therefore fail the usual credit referencing checks.

Data collected by the Valuation Office Agency for market rent lets is consistent with our snapshot. It also shows that there were 960 lets in 2018/19 which gives an indication of the importance of the private rented sector. For comparison, there were just fewer than 400¹¹ affordable lets in 2018/19 and 2,090¹² market sales in 2018 calendar year.

Table 2.7: Summary of monthly rents recorded 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019

	All bedroom sizes categories				
Area	Count of rents	Mean	Lower quartile	Median	Upper quartile
North Norfolk	960	£637	£525	£600	£715

eastern edge of the district is in the Great Yarmouth BHMA. None of the properties we looked at were in the Great Yarmouth BHMA.

¹¹ From data on the Council's Locata database (housing applicants and lettings).

¹² From the Office for National Statistics – Residential freehold and leasehold sales in 2018 calendar year.

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Housing Need

Two separate sources provide information about housing need in the district.

1. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment – an evidence based projection for the housing required in the district to meet the needs of an increasing number of household for both market and affordable homes.
2. The Council’s housing list – which provides a snapshot of housing need now.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment

In 2017 Opinion Research Services (ORS) carried out a Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the five central Norfolk Districts (Breckland, Broadland, North Norfolk, Norwich and South Norfolk).

For North Norfolk District, this report identified the requirement for 8,881 additional homes in the period 2015 to 2036. This represents 409 homes per year. ORS provided a breakdown of the required homes by property type and between market and affordable.

Property Type		Market	Affordable	Total
Flats	1 bedroom	171	212	383
	2+ bedrooms	204	107	312
Houses	2 bedrooms	687	912	1,599
	3 bedrooms	4,333	579	4,912
	4 bedrooms	956	187	1,142
	5+ bedrooms	232	1	233
Total		6,583	1,998	8,581

Subsequently the government introduced a change to the methodology for calculating the housing requirement. The new methodology resulted in a requirement for 533 homes per year. In a supplementary report, ORS concluded that the new methodology was flawed and that a lower figure of 456 homes per year was the correct figure. The original ORS report and supplementary report are available on the Council’s website.

Council Housing List

As at 28th February 2020 there were 2,903 household on the Council’s housing list. Of these 416 were in priority bands 1 and 2.

Priority Band	Number of Households
Band 1	225
Band 2	191
Transfer	484
Home Options	2,003
Total	2,903

Households in band 1 include:

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- Those who are homeless and in priority need.
- Lack two or more bedrooms.
- Need to move for medical or welfare reasons.

To place these numbers in context in 2018/19 there were 380 affordable homes let (or sold in case of shared ownership). In 2019/20 there were only 283.

The Council operates a choice based letting system. Housing Applicants 'bid' for (express interest in) available properties. The Council allocates the property to the household with the highest priority band¹³. Where two or more household have the same priority band the Council allocates to the household who has waited longest in the band. In practice this means that nearly all lettings go to households in priority band 1.

It is no surprise that most properties receive multiple bids. In 2019/20 the 35 three-bed homes had an average of 72 bids per home and the 132 two-bed homes had an average of 187 bids per home. There are no towns or villages in the district where affordable rent properties have low demand.

¹³ On rural exceptions sites which represent about 10% of lettings the Council gives priority to households with the strongest local connection to the property. A household has a local connection if they live, work or have close family in the Parish (or an adjoining Parish) which contains the home.

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Homelessness

The Council has a duty to support households who are at risk of becoming homeless or who are homeless.

In 2019/20 the housing options team provided advice and support to 906 households (927 households in 2018/19) of these the Council:

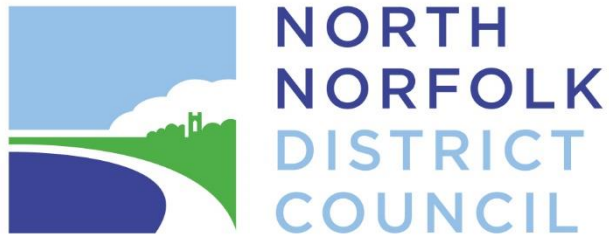
- Provided support to prevent homelessness for 151 households with successful prevention in 105 cases.
- Helped households find alternative homes for 149 households with successful outcomes for 76 households.
- Accepted a main housing duty for 62 households – in most cases the Council provided temporary housing pending the offer of a suitable permanent home.

Many households threatened with homelessness live in private rented homes. For private rented homes the landlord can end a tenancy at the end of the fixed term. The landlord may choose to do this if he can get a higher rent from another tenant, or can convert the property to a holiday let and generate more income.

In 2019/20 the Council provided temporary accommodation for 135 households¹⁴. The Council can recover some of the cost of temporary accommodation from the housing element of the household's universal credit/benefits. The amount the Council can recover is capped at 90% of the local housing allowance. This resulted in a shortfall of £233,000 in 2019/20 (£77,000 in 2018/19). The Council has to fund the shortfall from other income.

The Council provides support for people 'sleeping rough' in the district. The Council's Rough Sleeper co-ordinator identifies and keeps in contact with rough sleepers and helps them engage with support services. In March 2020 as part of the Council's response to the Covid 19 pandemic the Council provided temporary housing for 12 of the 15 known rough sleepers in the district. The remaining three rough sleepers refused offers of temporary housing.

¹⁴ These include homeless households where the Council has a temporary duty but not a main duty to help secure housing.



Customer Service Strategy

Publication date

Version X

Foreword

XX

Signed [if required]

Name

Officer role

North Norfolk District Council

Cllr Name

Member role

North Norfolk District Council

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Executive Summary

The North Norfolk district covers an area of 360 square miles and has a population of over 100,000 people living in 121 distinct communities and settlements. While our main office is centrally located in Cromer and we have a small office in Fakenham. The public transport across the District is limited and many of our residents and customers find accessing the Council offices difficult. Our customers are also not a single group of people with singular interests in common – we provide a diverse range of services, both directly and through contractors and partner organisations, and our customers and service users are not only local residents, but also visitors and local businesses.

The Customer Service Strategy explains how we will continue transforming the services we provide to the residents, visitors and businesses of North Norfolk. It outlines our aspirations for the service quality and user experience we want for all of our customers.

This strategy provides a vision and direction to show how the Council can take advantage of new technology to deliver improved access to our services, communicate better and consistent, high quality service standards across all of our teams.

We will make the Council's services as easy to access as possible and will use a variety of channels to facilitate this – including self-service via the Council's website, and also for customers making personal visits to the Council's offices, or communicating with us by letter, telephone, webchat and online.

Where we provide services in the community – e.g. amenity areas, public car parks, public conveniences, leisure centres, refuse and recycling collections, we want our services to be recognised as being of good quality, inclusive and responsive to customer needs.

We want our customers to be at the heart of everything we do and we will strive to improve access to our services.

- At the heart of our customer charter will be our commitment to improving the quality of service delivery to our customers and responding to their needs.
- We will place customers at the heart of what we do and embed that focus in our service delivery.
- We will provide good quality, responsive services that people find simple and easy to access.

- We will establish strong mechanisms to encourage customer feedback and use that information to improve service delivery.
- We will work to understand our customer's needs and ensure that we have contact points which enable access to services by all.

This Customer Service Strategy will, once fully implemented, allow the council to provide a consistent 'one front door' customer experience across a variety of channels, meeting people's service expectations while delivering value for money.

This strategy details our vision for services to our customers, how the vision will be delivered through a range of investment and change, and how we will listen to our customers and improve.

Scope

This Strategy applies all aspects of customer service and customer contact throughout the Council.

1 Introduction

The Council is the only place to get local car park season tickets, hire beach huts, to organise essential financial support such as housing benefit, to register so that you can vote and ensure your waste is collected regularly. Our customers also come to the Council seeking help, advice and guidance often at the most critical and emotional points in their lives such as facing eviction or financial vulnerabilities.

It is the place where elected councillors organise local resources to make sure they work for the people who live, work and visit here through services such as planning, housing, environmental services, parking, economic growth, coastal management and many others.

We want contacting the Council to be easy, helpful and friendly. We have all experienced bad customer service: being on hold for what feels like hours waiting for the call to be answered; having to speak to several different people for a simple query or request; receiving letters that don't clearly tell you what you need to know or do; completing lengthy and unclear online forms only to find you have to call or visit with additional information; having to chase someone repeatedly to do something they said they would do; or simply dealing with someone who was clearly not genuinely interested in your circumstances. These are not the experiences we want for our customers.

Customer service across the council must recognise in its design, and in its delivery, that it is about helping people and that it is our duty to do this in the best way possible and accepting that one size does not fit all. It is everyone's personal

responsibility, irrespective of their role, to deal with customer issues politely promptly and effectively.

2 The Customer Vision

Through this strategy our aim is to make sure each customers experience of contacting the Council is a positive one.

We want our customers to:

- Easily access whatever service they need from the Council.
- Feel reassured and confident that their needs have been understood, that action will be taken promptly and that their time has been well spent.
- Find it easy to submit an online form or application.

The council believes when our customers contact us they want to:

- Feel they are treated as an individual, for their opinion to be heard and their input and response appreciated
- Receive respect and kindness in all interaction with the Council
- Feel their contact with the Council is a positive and compassionate experience
- Receive information that is clear and understandable and free from specialist acronyms and jargon. However well intended, this may lead to customers feeling they are being talked down to.
- Their wider needs and circumstances to be understood and to be taken into consideration
- Trust that action will be taken in a timely manner
- Have access to services by all appropriate means in accordance with the Council's published service hours
- Be able to contact the Council outside of the published service for help in an emergency
- Be kept informed of the progress and outcome of their requests
- Trust that information published or provided by the Council is correct, relevant, easily found, and accessible
- Feel social media is responsive, open and a two-way communication channel
- Have their issue resolved at the first point of contact – being directed to another officer or service only where the issue is complex and the customer can be better helped by the alternative

- Receive contact details of other appropriate agencies where the Council can't provide what's needed

The Customer Service Strategy explains how we will continue transforming the services we provide to the people of North Norfolk. It outlines our aspirations for the quality and experience we want for our customers.

This strategy provides a vision and direction to show how the Council can take advantage of new technology to communicate better and deliver improved services to our customers, alongside consistent, high quality service standards across all our teams.

In achieving this, there is no compromise in our commitment to understanding our customers and their needs. We aim to increase our customers' control over their experience with us whilst utilising digital channels as a way of delivering services in the most efficient way.

We will ask those customers who are able to self-serve through online services to do so which will assist staff to provide support and help to those who are less confident in doing this, or do not have access to technology.

The digital by design principles embedded in the strategy will move more of the simple transactional processes to our website and into our Customer Services Team.

The ability to do straightforward tasks online such as renew a parking permit, claim benefits or grants, notify us of change of circumstance, book an appointment or make an application for a licence are basic expectations and the most convenient way for most people to get what they need. We all do this in other aspects of our lives, and people expect the same from the Council.

Making access to our on-line services the way customers choose to interact with us whenever possible will ensure that customers who cannot access services in this way or who have multiple or complex needs can be supported more effectively.

People also contact the council about extremely personal and sometimes sensitive arrangements that are much more than transactional. At such times, when customers really need a conversation with the Council, this exchange should not add to the challenges they are facing but provide relief from them. It is essential that they can speak to someone who understands their circumstances and can organise the right support quickly, but also with genuine care and consideration.

We will dedicate time and resources into these conversations, by improving our systems and delivering training to our staff to make sure everyone gets the service they need and can rightly expect.

We will ensure that wherever feasible services can be accessed online. The Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated that the ability to access and use technology will play a central role in how well we can assist our customers to live safely and well during this crisis and beyond.

To deliver these improvements and to ensure customers can experience seamless consistent services, we will move even more of our customer interactions to our customer service team. This will also free up time for staff in the back-office to focus on tasks that often require a different set of skills.

Wherever possible we will design our systems and business processes to ensure that customers' needs can be resolved during their first contact with the Council. If we are unable to resolve the enquiry at the first point of contact, staff handling the contact will be responsible to ensure the customer case is transferred seamlessly to a council team who can provide the assistance they need. If their needs are better met by another agency the Council will ensure that they are provided with full information and is clear as to how they can resolve their enquiry from an alternative source of support.

We will continue to encourage our customers to share their feedback about their experiences with us and we will actively use their feedback to make real improvements to our services. We want our services to be valued by those who use them. Customers will be at the heart of what we do.

2.1 We want improved processes, buildings and staff that are focused on meeting our customers' expectations on every occasion we are able to. Key to this is the continued development of three key concepts:

- One Front Door
- Customer Experience
- Digital by Design

2.1.1 **One Front Door**

Encompasses all channels that customers choose to access our services. It includes face-to-face, telephone, email/letter, and automated phone, mobile, online, social media and other digital routes.

We will deliver online customer registration, so that we will be able to proactively communicate with customers about any service the Council delivers. This will enable customers to receive tailored information that is relevant and important to them.

We will welcome feedback from our customers and continue to improve how our customers can access and manage what they want online and will expand live chat so we can text talk to people as they are looking at our services online.

We will continue to simplify access to our services such as introducing a Customer App for reporting issues and accessing services.

2.2 Customer Experience

This is the experience a customer has with us when accessing a service. It includes how many contacts they have with us, be it online, over the phone or face-to-face with staff, across all parts of the organisation, and what their experience was along the way. It includes the technology used, the systems, processes and procedures adopted by the Council and the quality of staff that are involved throughout the process.

Our customers are increasingly meeting their non-council needs online, such as banking, utilities, benefits and shopping. Their expectations of customer service are now shaped by their day-to-day experiences to expect simple, intuitive, fast and efficient solutions when accessing council services. The Council recognises the need to meet our customers' expectations by providing easy to use, digitally accessible services at a time and place that is convenient to them using PC, smartphone, or tablet.

The ongoing development of our self-service channels will enable our customers to have greater control of the services they use. This will allow us to focus our most expensive telephone and face-to-face support on those who need it most.

We will ensure that the customer experience is central to our decision making when we look at how our services are designed in the future. This will be led by every senior manager driving the delivery of this strategy as a core function in every service area.

The Assistant Direct for Organisational Resources will work with service areas on the planning, customer journey mapping, transforming and embedding of new and improved processes.

Design and development of customer focussed processes will include efficient service hand off points for when a customer needs to be assisted by more than one service. It will also ensure effective customer feedback and performance monitoring

data are built into the systems used to interact with customers and the data that is generated will be made available to service managers to allow them to manage their service provision in accordance with the agreed Customer Charter standards.

Managers will be responsible for ensuring appropriate learning and training for all their staff which includes understanding and developing core customer service skills. This will help them to recognise customer service is a key skill to all roles in the Council and excellent customer service is a requirement of all job roles in the Council.

Communications will be essential to implementing the changes required by this strategy so that the benefits to our residents, visitors and businesses we aspire to are successfully implemented.

Alongside the changes in process and technology we will deliver an ongoing communications campaign designed to promote the uptake in digital service delivery and to generate effective engagement with customers to help shape the ongoing digital service improvements.

2.3 Digital by Design:

The assist with the delivery of the One Front Door and Customer Experience improvements, a set of principles designed by central government to help change to focus on the needs of the customer will be applied throughout the programme.

The 10 principles are;

1. Start with user needs

Service design starts with identifying user needs.

2. Do what's needed

If there is a way of doing something that works, it should be reused and shared instead of reinventing the wheel every time.

3. Design with data

Learn from real world behaviour, look at how existing services are used, to inform decision-making, not hunches or guesswork.

4. Do the hard work to make it simple

It's usually more and harder work to make things simple, but it's the right thing to do. Don't take "It's always been that way" for an answer.

5. Iterate. Then iterate again

The best way to build good services is to start small and iterate wildly.

6. This is for everyone

Everything we build should be as inclusive, legible and readable as possible. We're building for needs, not audiences.

7. Understand context

We're not designing for a screen, we're designing for people.

8. Build digital services, not websites

A service is something that helps people to do something. Our job is to uncover user needs, and build the service that meets those needs. The digital world has to connect to the real world, so we have to think about all aspects of a service, and make sure they add up to something that meets user needs.

9. Be consistent, not uniform

We should use the same language and the same design patterns wherever possible. This helps people get familiar with our services, but when this isn't possible we should make sure our approach is consistent.

10. Make things open: it makes things better

We should share what we're doing whenever we can. The more eyes there are on a service the better it gets.

Through the application of the Digital by Design principles the Council will be able to create the tools to support staff to successfully develop the change in outcomes the Council is aspiring to achieve. New digital technologies and business processes will not only enable the majority of council services to be accessed online, but in a way that provides better outcomes for customers and the Council.

2.4 Summary

We are committed to providing services that are:

Easily accessible

Simple to use

Streamlined
Convenient
Consistent
Cost effective
Reliable

Our aim is to provide customer focus by committing to the principle of the One Front Door for customer access, supported by services designed on delivering the best possible Customer Experience through the application of Digital by Design.

The future of retaining customer focus will be an iterative process of simplifying the way customers access our services, understanding their journey with us, giving them control over the services they use, and listening and responding to their feedback when implementing change.

Services which can be delivered digitally must be, allowing valuable resources to be focused on those services which cannot be delivered digitally and made accessible to our most vulnerable customers.

Both the One Front Door and understanding the Customer Experience will be critical to getting this right.

We recognise that some customers do not have the skills, knowledge or confidence to use online services or access to equipment and the internet to make this possible. We will need to plan how they are supported to build their skills and confidence and will seek to influence better digital connectivity across the district. At the same time we recognise that we will need to provide direct help for other customers via the telephone or face-to-face.

We are confident the work we have started and our plan for the future will enable us to improve customer access and experience to our services, whilst at the same time reducing our costs.

3 Delivering the Vision

We will deliver our customer vision and improve our customers' experience by:

- Ensuring consistency in customer experience through our One Front Door, moving more tasks to our customer services team, so that, wherever possible, their enquiry is resolved at the first point of contact
- Using customer insight data so we understand better what customers want and need
- Ensuring the customer has easy access 24 hours a day 7 days a week (24/7) to services, advice and information at times and in places that are right for them
- Listening and responding to customer feedback on all of our services

- Enabling customers to access services flexibly through digital channels, freeing up resources to directly support those customers who need it most
- Offering support to help people to access online services and working with our partners to improve local access to services

4 Consistency

A 'One Front Door' approach is where we ensure customers receive consistent advice, information and access to services irrespective of which channel they choose to use to contact us. We recognise that currently customers do not always receive consistent service when contacting different services, often resulting in confusion for our customers and a poor customer experience.

We will make it easier for customers to contact us, ensuring they get to the right service the first time. Through the principles of "Digital by Design", customers can have 24/7 access to most of our services where and when it is convenient to them. We will continue to provide access to services via the telephone or face-to-face for customers unable or unwilling to self-serve online and we will provide a consistent standard of service across all contact channels.

Our One Front Door approach streamlines service access, enabling customers to resolve a number of service requests in one place and we will increase this over time. Our staff will need the right skills and competencies to support our vision, so we will develop them to ensure they are equipped to support digital services.

Ensuring the consistency of customer experience through One Front Door requires us to have accurate, up-to-date and relevant advice and information held across all services and accessible to the front line Customer Services team. This will be achieved through an improved Customer Relationship Management system.

This will provide the staff with the knowledge, skills and tools accessible to help all customers through the One Front Door and give a consistent seamless positive experience, enabling them to access 24/7 the right services, through a single point of contact.

Only in the most complicated of cases, where detailed assessments are required to enable the service to be delivered or where it is in the best interest of the customer, will they be passed to a back office colleague.

5 Getting it right

We will improve the way we collect, collate and use information on customer contacts and satisfaction to understand our customers and their behaviours better, to help inform the changes we will be making to our services.

Through the delivery of all our services we collect data about our customers, from where they live, what services they use, and how they use them through to which services people use the most or the least.

We will use the information to shape the future delivery of our services, which services we deliver and how they are accessed through our One Front Door.

The information will help us design services and how they are accessed to give priority to the people who use our services over convenient organisational practice. We will develop our systems and processes so that customers do not need to speak to several different teams or officers to have straightforward queries or service requests resolved. We want to improve customers access to services and make it easy for them to track progress on existing requests and get information without having to repeatedly contact us unnecessarily.

6 Customer choice

We will continuously analyse how customers can access our information and services, aiming to develop increased accessibility and functionality for the customer.

Through the development of customer self-service we will ensure we have intuitive systems that are clear, simple and consistent, so the customer is confident of the outcome of their service request.

Research has identified that customers are looking for the following outcomes:

Accessibility / Intuitive – It's easy to access services, complete transactions and find information

Availability – I can deal with the council 24/7 in the way that suits me best

Responsive / Proactive – Services are responsive and I am kept up to date with progress

Personalisation / Needs based – Information is personalised and meets my needs

Right first time / Accountable – I only have to make a request or tell my story once and the job is done

Clear and simple – Explanations are clear and I know what to expect

We will introduce digital services to monitor all contacts on a consistent basis across all contact channels. This will help to enable customers to choose the contact channel that best suits them without disadvantage.

The customer will be encouraged to interact digitally with the Council so that we can then send them information or advice that relates to their ongoing service needs in the future. This means we can be proactive in dealing with the subjects our customers are interested in, ensuring they get timely and relevant information.

7 Improving what we do (Customer and Internal Feedback)

Customer feedback helps us know what customers think we are doing well, identify customers who aren't happy with our services, stop recurring problems and helping us increase our overall customer satisfaction.

We will make it easy for customers to give us feedback on our services and we will listen to what customers say. We will use customer surveys across all contact channels and will make these simple, focused and quick, the results will be used to make improvements.

We will improve the way in which we deal with customer complaints, recognising that failure demand is a real drain on our resources and that complaints often provide us with a chance to improve.

8 Offering flexibility (Digital Channels)

We will use digital channels to enable customers to have 24/7 access to most services at times and places that work for them. More staff time can be given to those who need it most who are unable to access digital services or self-serve online.

When redesigning services, the principles of "Digital by Design" will be applied, so that customer service transactions are consistently delivered whether through self-service or assisted service.

We will seek to ensure that all services delivered online are computer, tablet and smartphone friendly allowing access from all digital devices and providing a consistent customer experience.

To make this as effective as possible for customers, we will make sure that online customer transactions automatically integrate with the back office systems, creating a smooth and seamless service to our customers.

9 Digital by Design - Journey

9.1 Current situation

The council has incrementally increased digital services for customers to self-serve and the restrictions imposed in response to the Covid-19 pandemic has increased this pace, driven by the need to ensure the safety of customers and staff.

We recognise our website is information based and is not a place where customers can consistently transact easily. We want our website to be designed to give priority to the people who use our services over convenient organisational practice or professional bias.

9.2 Overall Desired solution

This is very much a refocusing of a journey that has already begun as we overhaul our services to enable digital end-to-end transactions by our customers, while at the same time recognising the principles of not excluding any customer who may not be able to easily access online services because of poor signal or broadband speed or is unable or does not wish to.

We want to encourage as many customers who are able to use our online services whenever they wish 24/7. In order to achieve this, we will consider how our processes can be streamlined, automated and offered online. The principles of Digital by Design will be utilised which will be an iterative process delivering customer service improvements that reflect the changing expectations of our customers.

The principles of “Digital by Design” require each of our processes to be reviewed in detail and where necessary remodelled to support digital interactions in the future. This work will be programmed focusing on the areas that bring the highest volume of queries to our Customer Services Team such as council tax, benefits, licensing, housing options, waste and electoral services.

Once a service has been remodelled the customer will remain able to contact us by phone or face-to-face. However, the onward journey for their transaction will utilise the new improved processes.

9.3 Technology:

Customers increasingly expect access to services through a wide range of options. We will consider the appropriate application of modern technologies to support their interactions, whether that be through artificial intelligence, intelligent websites, social media, online accounts, webchat, chatbots and apps.

The Customer Service Strategy will need to dovetail with our ICT Strategy so that the tools required can be implemented using the best technologies to simplify our processes to better serve our customers. This will include;

- Implementing and extending new digital engagement /CRM platforms as technology evolves.
- Implement as far as practically possible a single 'My Account' functionality, which allows customers to manage their digital engagement in a single secure way.
- Develop a Customer Mobile App, and integrate it with the CRM to ensure seamless issue handling and resolution.
- Evaluate emerging technologies to identify those that will add value to the Customer Experience.
- Implement service and appointment booking solutions, to allow Customers as much choice as possible when accessing Council Services.
- Implement customer satisfaction surveys across all digital platforms.
- Commission a new customer focused council website supported by clear operational responsibilities throughout the council.

10 Digital Inclusion - Supporting online services for those who need it

The increased use of our online services during the covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated the ability and appetite of customers to access help and support online including those who are isolated and/or vulnerable. Customers are learning the skills and increasing in confidence as they daily use online services to order groceries, prescriptions, book medical appointments, holidays, claim benefits and grants, set up utility accounts, pay bills and manage their bank accounts. Online digital delivery is becoming the way most organisations prefer to deliver their services.

As we develop our digital services those who use them will have greater choice, control and access to our services and the information they would like to receive.

We recognise that not everyone has the skills, access to the online services or equipment to take advantage of this or the knowledge of what the online services can offer. We also understand that some people simply do not wish to access services in this way.

For those customers who are unable or unwilling to make use of self-service digital access our staff will be trained to support them by offering Assisted Digital access our services.

We understand that we need to work with our customers and other agencies so we can increase the confidence of those who are digitally excluded and increase their ability to use online services. Information on what can be done online and the benefits of doing this will be made as widely available as possible raising customers' awareness of what they can do online as and when they want to.

11 Customer Charter and Standards

We are committed to providing good quality customer-focused services to all our customers. The Customer Charter and Standards will provide a foundation for managing customer service, so that we deliver what we say we will to our customers.

North Norfolk District Council Customer Charter

All employees and members of the Council are responsible for putting our customers first, whether they are external or internal customers, and ensuring that their needs are satisfied.

We will:

- make our customers and staff aware of the responsibilities the Customer Charter places on them.
- produce guidelines for staff to ensure they have the support necessary to implement the Customer Charter commitments successfully.
- enable customers to serve themselves, if they choose to, making self-service an easy and efficient option.
- maintain a single point of contact, open at times that reflect customer need and at a cost that is suitable and acceptable to our customers.
- provide a consistent, co-ordinated and proactive service trained to identify if the customer needs extra help or advice, and will help resolve problems and take personal responsibility for them.
- treat our customers with respect, courtesy and friendliness, be receptive to customer feedback received through customer surveys, focus groups, feedback forms, consultations and complaints.
- deal with customers' enquiries at the first point of contact until the enquiry has been completed; if we need to pass an enquiry to back office staff we will confirm who will be dealing with your enquiry and how long it will take to be resolved.
- do what we say we will do.
- we will listen carefully to fully understand your circumstances and use Plain English when we speak or write to you.
- ensure all our staff are skilled and able to provide high-quality customer care.
- work with other council departments and organisations to achieve a joined-up and seamless approach to service provision.
- record and monitor the standards to ensure they are achieved and will then actively manage them, and improve if required.
- say sorry and put it right if we make a mistake.
- tell you what to do next if you're not satisfied with how you've been treated.

Customer service standards

The Council is committed to providing good-quality, customer-focused services to its customers.

We aim to:

- a. Deliver services in an inclusive and fair manner, without discrimination, prejudice or bias.
- b. Deliver the following standards whenever and however we are contacted.
- c. Request that partners and other agencies also deliver services to a similar standard.

We will:

- Respect your right to privacy and confidentiality.

If you telephone us:

- We will aim to answer 90% of calls within 20 seconds.
- Your call will be answered by a member of staff, who gives their name and will take responsibility to ensure that your call is dealt with efficiently.
- The staff member who answers your call will aim to answer your enquiry there and then. If we cannot answer your enquiry or transfer you to the right person straight away, we will take your details and ask someone to contact you.
- We will phone you back by the end of the next working day if you leave a message.
- When returning your call, the call will be clearly identifiable as coming from the Council and staff will clearly state their first name, their section and their reason for calling.
- When the offices are closed we will tell you about our emergency out-of-hours service and when the offices will next be open.
- If we have to pass on your call, we will explain your call before we pass it on

If you email or write to us:

- We aim to respond to letters and emails within 7 working days.
- If this is not possible we will acknowledge your correspondence telling you why and we will give you a response date.
- We will respond to you in plain language.
- We will respond in large print or Braille if requested.
- If you receive an 'out of office' notification to your email advising that the staff member is unavailable. The notification will include contact details for urgent enquiries and a date when the staff member will be available to reply.

If you contact us by Social Media:

- We aim to acknowledge your service request posts within four working hours within office hours.
- If you make a service request or enquiry via social media you will be given a link to enable self-service or your enquiry will be directed to the appropriate service team to respond
- Where appropriate to do so the council will respect privacy and will use private messaging to correspond and reply.

If you visit us:

- We will aim to deal with your initial enquiry within 10 minutes of your arrival, or let you know if you have to wait longer and give you the option of an appointment on an alternative day and time
- We will keep our reception areas clean and tidy and provide toys for children
- If you have made an appointment, we will ensure that you are seen on time or kept informed of the reason for any delay and confirm when you will be seen
- We will offer you a private interview room, if you ask for it (this may need to be booked in advance)
- We will provide public access terminals to allow you to access our services online

If we visit you:

- We will normally arrange a time with you in advance, and if not we will usually be happy to return at another time if our visit is not convenient. However, this may not always be possible if the visit is to deal with a regulatory service enforcement matter. If necessary, we will let you know as early as possible if we are delayed or have to cancel a visit
- We will tell you who we are, where we come from and why we are calling. We will show you our identity card and give you the opportunity to make a phone call to check our identity before you let us in

What we expect from you is:

- Openness and honesty, giving us as much information as possible to assist us in dealing with your enquiry, letting us know if you have any special needs.
- Full co-operation and for you to be respectful when dealing with the Council

- Abuse, threats or harassment, made towards elected members, staff or our agents on or off Council premises will not be tolerated. Such behaviours will be challenged and a range of actions may be taken including reporting to the Police

Your feedback

The Council welcomes feedback on its services whether in the form of comments, compliments or complaints. This enables us to learn, improve and adapt our services.

We want to know if you are happy or unhappy with any of our services and any suggestions you have for improvement. You can give us feedback via our website form, email, writing to us or calling us. Our Feedback Policy can be accessed via our website.

Strategy Statement

This strategy will take effect from September 2021.

It will be reviewed in April 2024 or earlier as required.

The master copy of this document, a record of review and decision making processes will be held by maintained by the Council and will be made available for public viewing. All documentation will be available for audit as necessary.

This policy will be available to all staff and Members on the corporate document register on the intranet.

Equality Impact Analysis

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Review Process

Customer outcomes across all contact channels will be regularly monitored and will be reviewed annually.

We will know we have been successful in placing the customer at the heart of our service delivery when the customer:

- They find it easy to access our services and information?
- They get the service resolved first time?
- Satisfaction with the service/information they received
- Satisfaction with the attitude, skills, knowledge and professionalism of our staff
- They are offered complementary services by us without them having to work it out or themselves

Appendices

APPENDIX 1: Corporate Customer Contact Standards

We will aim to:

- Resolve 90% of customers' enquiries at the first point of contact
- Answer 90% of telephone calls within 20 seconds.
- Resolve 80% of telephone calls at the first point of contact.
- Phone you back by the end of the next working day, if you leave a message.
- Reply to letters and emails within 7 working days
- See you within a maximum of ten minutes of your appointment time
- See you within 30 minutes of your arrival at our offices without an appointment.
- Acknowledge receipt of any complaint within 4 working hours.
- Investigate and respond to any complaints as quickly as possible but within 15 working days in any case.

Customer Satisfaction

We will aim to achieve a rating of satisfied or very satisfied from 95% our customers when we ask how they feel about our management of their enquiry across a range of service metrics including:

- The ease of access to our services and information?
- Did they get the service resolved first time?
- Satisfaction with the service/information they received
- Satisfaction with the attitude, skills, knowledge and professionalism of our staff
- The range of services available

We will also seek the opinion of our customers on;

- The digital channel they used to contact the council
- Their preferences for the service channels offered by the Council.

APPENDIX 2:

Objectives and Actions required

How	Action Required
Promote Online Self-Serve	Review current face to face services and identify where they are necessary or add real value
	Provide secure automated payment methods for telephone and online services
	Introduce auto renewal for periodic services such as car park permits and beach huts
	Consider restricting non statutory, non-essential services to online only
Improve and Expand Online Self-Serve	Identify high demand low complexity services for automation and give them priority
	Build and learn from process changes made during lockdown
	Promote online services
Improve Telephony services	Build and learn from process changes made during lockdown
	Offer outreach and welfare contact/support to vulnerable clients
	Offer SMS text reminders for renewals, bills, appointments
	Offer SMS text updates on customers identified service preferences

	Promote online self-serve through telephone assistance in setting up an account or service initially

Distribution and Amendment

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Document Information and Version Control

Document Name	CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY
Document Description	
Document Status	DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION
Lead Officer	TBA, CUSTOMER SERVICES MANAGER
Sponsor	CLLR LUCY SHIRES
Produced by (service name)	CUSTOMER SERVICES
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Equality Impact Assessment details	REQUIRED
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Version	Originator	Description including reason for changes	Date
0.01			

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North Norfolk District Council
Cabinet Work Programme
For the Period 01 August to 30 September 2021


Decision Maker(s)	Meeting Date	Subject & Summary	Cabinet Member(s) Lead Officer	Corporate Plan Theme	Status / additional comments
September 2021					
Cabinet	06 Sep 2021	Property Transactions	Eric Seward Nicky Debbage Renata Garfoot	Financial Sustainability Local Homes for Local Need	 Possible Exempt information
Cabinet	06 Sep 2021	Decisions taken under delegated authority	All Emma Denny DS Manager		
Cabinet Scrutiny Council	06 Sep 2021 15 Sep 2021 22 Sep 2021	Managing Performance Q4	Sarah Butikofer Helen Thomas Policy & Performance Mgt Officer		
Cabinet	06 Sep 2021 15 Sep 2021 22 Sep 2021	Treasury Management Annual Report 2021/21	Eric Seward Lucy Hume Chief Technical Accountant	Financial Sustainability	
Cabinet	06 Sep 2021 15 Sep 2021 22 Sep 2021	Out-turn report 2020/21	Eric Seward Duncan Ellis Head of Finance & Assets	Financial Sustainability	



Key Decision – a decision which is likely to incur expenditure or savings of £100,000 or more, or affect two or more wards. (NNDC Constitution, p9 s12.2b)

* Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (As amended by the Local Authorities (Access to Information) (Exempt Information) (England) Order 2006)

North Norfolk District Council
Cabinet Work Programme
 For the Period 01 August to 30 September 2021

Decision Maker(s)	Meeting Date	Subject & Summary	Cabinet Member(s) Lead Officer	Corporate Plan Theme	Status / additional comments
Cabinet	06 Sep 2021	Debt Management Annual Report 2020/21	Eric Seward <i>Sean Knight</i> <i>Revenues Manager</i>	<i>Financial Sustainability</i>	
Scrutiny	15 Sep 2021				
Council	22 Sep 2021				
Cabinet	06 Sep 2021	Customer Services Strategy	Sarah Butikofer Duncan Ellis Director of Organisational resources		
	15 Sep 2021				
	22 Sep 2021				



Key Decision – a decision which is likely to incur expenditure or savings of £100,000 or more, or affect two or more wards. (NNDC Constitution, p9 s12.2b)

* Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (As amended by the Local Authorities (Access to Information) (Exempt Information) (England) Order 2006)

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

Meeting	Topic	Officer / Member	Objectives & desired outcomes	Time cycle
May 2021				
Scrutiny	Safer Norfolk Strategy 2021 – 25 Briefing		To receive a briefing on the new Safer Norfolk Strategy	
Cabinet Scrutiny	Officer Delegated Decisions (March – April 2021)	Emma Denny Sarah Butikofer	To review the officer delegated decisions	
Scrutiny	Sheringham Leisure Centre Project Update	Rob Young Virginia Gay	To update Members on the status of the Sheringham Leisure Centre Project	Monthly
Scrutiny	O&S Draft 2021/22 Work Programme	Matt Stembrowicz Nigel Dixon	To review and approve the draft 2021/22 Work Programme	Annual
Scrutiny Cabinet	Enforcement Board Update	Phillip Rowson Nigel Lloyd/John Toye	To receive an update on the work of the Enforcement Board	Six-monthly
June				
Scrutiny Cabinet Council	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy	Karen Hill Sarah Butikofer	To review the updated Policy in advance of seeking Council approval	
Scrutiny	Sheringham Leisure Centre Project Update	Rob Young Virginia Gay	To update Members on the status of the Sheringham Leisure Centre Project	Monthly
Cabinet Scrutiny	Performance Monitoring Q4	Sarah Bütikofer Helen Thomas	To monitor the Council's performance and consider any recommendations to Cabinet	Quarterly
Scrutiny Council	Overview & Scrutiny Committee Annual Report	Matt Stembrowicz	To approve annual summary of Committee work for 2019-20 & 2020-2021	Annual
July				
Scrutiny	Sheringham Leisure Centre Project Update	Rob Young Virginia Gay	To update Members on the status of the Sheringham Leisure Centre Project	Monthly
Scrutiny Cabinet	Housing Strategy	N Debbage/G Connolly	To review the Council's new Housing Strategy	
Scrutiny	North Walsham Heritage Action Zone Project Monitoring	Rob Young Richard Kershaw	To monitor progress of the NWHAZ project	Committee Request
Scrutiny	Coastal Ambulance Response Times Update	Victoria Holliday	To receive an update on the status of ambulance response times in coastal areas of the District	Committee Request
Scrutiny Cabinet Council	Pre-Scrutiny: Customer Services Strategy	Sean Kelly Lucy Shires	To review the new Customer Services strategy	

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

Meeting	Topic	Officer / Member	Objectives & desired outcomes	Time cycle
September				
Cabinet Scrutiny	Budget Monitoring P4	Eric Seward Duncan Ellis	To review the budget monitoring position	Periodical
Cabinet Scrutiny Council	Debt Management Annual Report	Eric Seward Sean Knight	To review the Report and make any necessary recommendations to Council	Annual
Cabinet Scrutiny Council	Out-turn report	Eric Seward Duncan Ellis	To make any recommendations to Council – To include an update on savings proposals	Annual
Cabinet Scrutiny Council	Treasury Management Annual Report	Eric Seward Duncan Ellis	To make recommendations to Council	Annual
Cabinet Scrutiny	Performance Monitoring Q1	Helen Thomas Sarah Butikofer	To monitor the Council's performance and consider any recommendations to Cabinet	Quarterly
October				
Cabinet Scrutiny Council	Council Tax Discount Determinations	Lucy Hume/Eric Seward	To determine the Council Tax discounts for 2020/21	Annual
Scrutiny	Waste Contract Monitoring	Steve Hems Nigel Lloyd	To monitor performance of Council waste contractor (w/ update on costs of food waste collection)	Annual
Scrutiny	Planning Performance Review	John Toye Phillip Rowson	Review over five year period against national performance framework (To include a review of affordable housing delivery/section 106 agreements)	Committee Request
Scrutiny	Beach Huts & Chalets Monitoring	Renata Garfoot Eric Seward	To monitor the occupancy, condition and revenue of the beach huts and chalets.	Annual
November				
Cabinet Scrutiny	Budget Monitoring P6	Eric Seward Duncan Ellis	To review the budget monitoring position	Periodical
Cabinet Scrutiny	Enforcement Board Update	Phillip Rowson Nigel Lloyd/John Toye	To receive an update on the work of the Enforcement Board	Six-Monthly
Scrutiny	Crime and Disorder Briefing	Nigel Dixon Matt Stembrowicz	PCC and district Superintendent to provide a briefing on TBC	Annual

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

Meeting	Topic	Officer / Member	Objectives & Desired Outcomes	Time cycle
December				
Cabinet Scrutiny Council	Treasury Management Half-Yearly Report	Eric Seward Duncan Ellis	To consider the treasury management activities	Six Monthly
Cabinet Scrutiny	Performance Monitoring Q2	Helen Thomas Sarah Butikofer	To monitor the Council's performance and consider any recommendations to Cabinet	Quarterly
Cabinet Scrutiny Council	Fees & Charges	Eric Seward Duncan Ellis	To undertake an annual review of the Council's fees and charges	Annual
Cabinet Scrutiny Council	Medium Term Financial Strategy	Eric Seward Duncan Ellis	To review the Medium Term Financial Strategy	Annual Pre-2022/23 Budget
January 2022				
Cabinet Scrutiny Council	2020/21 Base Budget and Projections for 2021/22 to 2022/23	Eric Seward Duncan Ellis	To review the proposed budget and projections	Annual
February				
Cabinet Scrutiny Council	Treasury Strategy 2019/20	Eric Seward Lucy Hume	To review the treasury management activities and strategy for the investment of surplus funds	Annual
Cabinet Scrutiny Council	Capital Strategy	Eric Seward Lucy Hume	To review the deployment of capital resources to meet Council objectives & framework for management of the capital programme	Annual
Cabinet Scrutiny Council	Investment Strategy	Eric Seward Lucy Hume	To review the Council's Investment Strategy for the year 2020-21	Annual
Scrutiny				

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

Meeting	Topic	Officer / Member	Objectives & Desired Outcomes	Time cycle
March				
Cabinet Scrutiny	Budget Monitoring P10	Eric Seward Duncan Ellis	To review the budget monitoring position	
Scrutiny Cabinet	Performance Monitoring Q3	Helen Thomas Sarah Butikofer	To monitor the Council's performance and consider any recommendations to Cabinet	Quarterly
April				
Scrutiny	Market Towns Initiative Monitoring/Process Review	Matt Stembrowicz Richard Kershaw	To monitor the implementation of successful MTI applicants and review the funding process (Once complete)	Committee Request
Scrutiny	Car Park Usage Monitoring	Eric Seward	To undertake an annual review of the usage and revenue from the Council's public car parks	Annual

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2021/22

Meeting	Topic	Officer / Member	Objectives & Desired Outcomes	Time cycle
Outstanding/ TBC				
Scrutiny	Monitor resource implications for Homelessness Strategy		Scoping Required	Potential Panel Item
Scrutiny	Website design/functionality		Scoping Required - Review the functionality of the Council's website	Committee Request
Scrutiny	Council Asset Maintenance (Preventative) Maintenance Strategy		To review the Council's Asset Maintenance schedule	Committee Request
Scrutiny	Economic Development Strategy		Scoping Required	Potential Panel Item
Scrutiny	Rural Services (Access)		Scoping Required - Review service gaps and lack of access	Committee Request

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Overview & Scrutiny June 2021 Outcomes & Action List

	ACTION BY	PROGRESS/COMPLETION
<p><u>10. MANAGING PERFORMANCE QUARTER 4 2020/2021</u></p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note this report and endorse the actions being taken by Corporate Leadership Team detailed in Appendix A – Managing Performance. 2. To request that a note on the progress of Coastal Partnership East be shared, and recommend that consideration be given to improving the visibility of performance reporting on coastal management. 3. To request that details of the LG Inform benchmarking tool be shared with Members for comparative performance analysis. 4. To request that a briefing be provided to inform Members of the process and timeline of the Council’s Zero-based budgeting exercise. 5. To recommend that consideration be given to improve the supporting information on amber and red performance indicators, with clear reasons given for designation and the steps required for improvement. 6. To recommend that consideration be given to improve the supporting information on affordable housing objectives. 7. To recommend that a performance indicator be provided on the implementation of the Uniform Planning System within the Customer Focus or Planning priority. 	<p>Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>CLT</p> <p>CLT</p> <p>Chief Technical Accountant</p> <p>CLT</p> <p>CLT</p> <p>CLT</p>	<p>June 2021</p> <p>July 2021</p> <p>July 2021</p> <p>September 2021</p> <p>July 2021</p> <p>July 2021</p> <p>July 2021</p>
<p><u>11. NORTH NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY 2021</u></p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To recommend to Full Council the formal adoption of its Equality Objectives and subject to amendment, the approval the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2021. 	<p>Full Council</p>	<p>July 2021</p>

<p><u>12. SHERINGHAM LEISURE CENTRE PROJECT UPDATE: JUNE 2021</u></p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>1. To receive and note the update</p> <p>ACTIONS</p> <p>1. To place the update as the first substantive item on future agendas.</p>	<p>Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Scrutiny Officer</p>	<p>June 2021</p> <p>July 2021</p>
<p><u>13. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20 & 2020/21</u></p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>1. To recommend that Council notes the report, affirms the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and considers any concerns raised.</p>	<p>Full Council</p>	<p>July 2021</p>
<p><u>15. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND UPDATE</u></p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>1. To note the Work Programme</p> <p>2. To request that Cllr V Holliday provides an update on coastal ambulance response times monitoring at the July Committee meeting.</p> <p>ACTIONS</p> <p>1. Chief Executive and Democratic Services Manager to seek further legal advice on whether non-committee members may attend meetings remotely.</p>	<p>Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Cllr V Holliday/Scrutiny Officer</p> <p>Chief Executive/Democratic Services Manager</p>	<p>June 2021</p> <p>July 2021</p> <p>July 2021</p>