

Council



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13th July 2021

A meeting of the **Council** of North Norfolk District Council will be held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices on **Wednesday, 21 July 2021 at 6.00 pm.**

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

Members of the public who wish to ask a question or speak on an agenda item are requested to notify Democratic Services 24 hours in advance of the meeting and arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of the meeting. It will not be possible to accommodate requests after that time. This is to allow time for the Committee Chair to rearrange the order of items on the agenda for the convenience of members of the public. Further information on the procedure for public speaking can be obtained from Democratic Services, Tel:01263 516010, Email:Emma.Denny@north-norfolk.gov.uk.

The meeting will be live-streamed: [NNDC eDemocracy - YouTube](#)

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

Emma Denny
Democratic Services Manager

To: Mr T Adams, Ms P Bevan Jones, Mr D Birch, Mr H Blathwayt, Mr A Brown, Dr P Bütikofer, Mrs S Bütikofer, Mr C Cushing, Mr N Dixon, Mr P Fisher, Mrs A Fitch-Tillett, Mr T FitzPatrick, Mr V FitzPatrick, Mrs W Fredericks, Ms V Gay, Mrs P Grove-Jones, Mr G Hayman, Mr C Heinink, Mr P Heinrich, Dr V Holliday, Mr N Housden, Mr R Kershaw, Mr N Lloyd, Mr G Mancini-Boyle, Mrs M Millership, Mr N Pearce, Mr S Penfold, Mrs G Perry-Warnes, Mr J Punchard, Mr J Rest, Mr E Seward, Miss L Shires, Mrs E Spagnola, Mrs J Stenton, Dr C Stockton, Mr J Toye, Mr E Vardy, Mr A Varley, Ms L Withington and Mr A Yiasimi



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

Chief Executive: Steve Blatch

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A G E N D A

1. PRESENTATION ON THE CHAIRMAN'S NOMINATED CHARITY

To receive a short presentation from Emyr Gough, Group Manager, Fire & Rescue Service on the work of the Firefighters' Charity.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence, if any.

3. MINUTES

1 - 8

To confirm the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Council held on 26th May 2021

4. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

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

5. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

9 - 10

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

6. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

To receive the Chairman's communications, if any.

7. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive any announcements from the Leader.

8. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS

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

9. PORTFOLIO REPORTS

11 - 44

To receive reports from Cabinet Members on their portfolios.

Members are reminded that they may ask questions of the Cabinet Member on their reports and portfolio areas but should note that it is not a debate.

No member may ask more than one question plus a supplementary question, unless the time taken by members' questions does not exceed 30 minutes in total, in which case, second questions will be taken in the order that they are received (Constitution, Chapter 2,

part 2, section 12.2)

10. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET 07 JUNE AND 05 JULY 2021 45 - 98

CABINET 07 JUNE 2021:

AGENDA ITEM 12: NORTH NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY 2021

RESOLVED

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

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee supported the recommendations at their meeting on 16 June 2021.

CABINET 05 July 2021:

AGENDA ITEM 8: HOUSING STRATEGY 2021-2025

RESOLVED

To recommend that Full Council adopts the Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2025.

AGENDA ITEM 9: COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND (CRF) MATCH FUNDING

To recommend to Full Council the establishment of new capital budgets for the North Walsham and Fakenham schemes of £800k each, with each scheme being funded through the CRF bid (£600k) and the balance (£200k) as match funding from the Council.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting took place after the agenda for Full Council was published. The Chairman will provide an oral update at the meeting.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 16 JUNE 2021 99 - 106

Agenda item 12: OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20 & 2020/21

RESOLVED:

To recommend that Council notes the report, affirms the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and considers the following concerns raised within the report:

- Additional Committee substitutes required to adequately address the number of apologies given.
- Late submission of reports has caused ongoing volatility in the

- Work Programme.
- Better communication on business planning required to maintain Work Programme stability

12. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EMPLOYMENT & APPEALS COMMITTEE 20 OCTOBER 2020 AND 21 APRIL 2021 107 - 114

Summary: This report to Council seeks to conclude the recruitment processes for the Director of Place and Climate Change, and the Director of Communities. The Employment and Appeals Committee (EAC) confirms its recommendation to full council to appoint these two officers.

Options considered: N/A

Conclusions: To support the Authority in delivering its corporate objectives; whilst driving ownership, accountability and change through the authority, the Chief Executive Officer needs to complete the management reorganisation that was approved by Council on 23rd September 2020.

Recommendations: To approve the appointment of the Director of Place & Climate Change and Director of Communities

Reasons for Recommendations: Sound management and leadership of the council.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

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

North Norfolk District Council Constitution

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected N/A
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email: James Claxton, 01263 516352 and james.claxton@north-norfolk.gov.uk

13. **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY 13 APRIL AND 28 JUNE 2021** 115 - 152

CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY 13 APRIL 2021

Agenda item 5: Review of Protocol on Member / Officer Relations

RESOLVED:

To recommend that, following any further amendments by Standards Committee, Council approves the revised Member /Officer Protocol.

(Standards Committee considered this item at their meeting on 27th April 2021 and supported approval subject to some changes which are reflected in the attached version).

Agenda item 8: Dispute Resolution Process – Full Delegation to Chief Officers

RESOLVED:

To recommend to Full Council that the Constitution be updated to include a dispute resolution procedure in the event of any disagreement between a Chief Officer and Elected Member, following consultation about use of delegated powers.

CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY 28 JUNE 2021

Agenda Item 5: Review of Portfolio Holder Reports to Council

RESOLVED:

To recommend to Council:

1. That the Council agenda be amended to include the following two separate standing agenda items:
 - a. Presentation of Portfolio reports
 - b. Questions to Portfolio Holders (limited to 30 minutes)
2. That a review be undertaken in 6 months

Agenda item 6: Contract Standing Orders (Procurement) Exemptions

RESOLVED:

To recommend to Full Council the following;

- a. The updates and amendments to the Exemption Form as contained within Appendix 2 of the report
- b. That the Section 151 Officer is a required signatory on the Contract Procurement Exemption form.
- c. The updates and amendments to the Constitution as contained within Appendix 3 of the report
- d. That the Constitution states that the contract cannot

commence until the exemption form has been satisfactorily completed, with the exception of an emergency situation, when the form must be completed as soon as practical and that this is included in the Constitution

- e. That a standing item for the reporting of contract procurement exemptions is added to the Governance, Risk & Audit Committee agenda
- f. To publish the contract procurement exemptions on the Council's website on a quarterly basis.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM STANDARDS COMMITTEE 27 APRIL 2021 153 - 180

Agenda Item 8: Adoption of New Model Code of Councillor Conduct:

RESOLVED:

To recommend to Full Council that the Model Code of Conduct be adopted

The Constitution Working Party considered this item at their meeting on 4th February 2021 and recommended its approval to Standards Committee.

15. PROGRAMME OF COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEWS - CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOLLOWING STAGE ONE CONSULTATION 181 - 188

Summary: In mid-February 2021, the programme of Community Governance Reviews was started with the Notice of Review being published. This signalled the commencement of the initial stage of consultation with relevant stakeholders regarding the proposed changes to existing parish boundaries.

The deadline for the stage one consultation was on 30th April and received 73 responses across the various separate reviews.

Conclusions: This report now details the Draft recommendations to be considered by Full Council to be approved for further consultation

Recommendations: **To approve the draft recommendations proposed and authorise the second stage consultation which will run to 31st October 2021 when the final recommendations would be prepared for consideration once again by Full Council on 15th December 2021**

Cabinet Member(s) Cllr S Butikofer	Ward(s) affected
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email:
Rob Henry, Senior Elections Officer

Please note the consultation responses can be accessed via the 'Library' on the NNDC website: [Home | Library folder - Full Council \(north-norfolk.gov.uk\)](http://north-norfolk.gov.uk)

16. QUESTIONS RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS

None Received.

17. OPPOSITION BUSINESS

The following item of Opposition Business has been proposed by Cllr C Cushing, seconded by Cllr N Dixon:

'The Council AGM has traditionally been a ceremonial affair. At the AGM held on 26th May 2021 the Leader of the Council broke this convention by choosing to politicise the event by delivering a long mid-term report stating the perceived achievements of the Liberal Democrat Administration since they took over control of the council. As there was no opportunity for the Opposition to respond to this at the meeting, we seek to rebalance that report and set the record straight.

The Conservative Opposition therefore makes the following recommendations:

That Full Council:

1. Resolves that the Annual General Meeting should be limited to ceremonial matters and that no political statements will be allowed.

That the Leader and Cabinet:

2. Demonstrate some dynamism, creative thinking and leadership to tackle North Norfolk's immediate and long term needs.
3. Deliver competent governance with clear deliverables and measurable outcomes.
4. Govern in an open and transparent manner.

We therefore propose that the Leader reports back to the next meeting of Full Council, setting out with clear timescales, how the above matters will be addressed.'

18. NOTICE(S) OF MOTION

The following Notice of Motion has been proposed by Cllr J Toye, seconded by Cllr J Rest:

'North Norfolk District Council believes that planning works best when developers and the local community work together to shape local areas

and deliver necessary new homes; and therefore calls on our local MPs – Duncan Baker and Jerome Mayhew and the Government to protect the right of communities to object to individual planning applications.’

19. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

To pass the following resolution – if necessary:

“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) _ of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act.”

20. PRIVATE BUSINESS

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on Wednesday, 26 May 2021 in the The Chapel - Greshams School, Cromer Road, Holt at 6.00 pm

Members Present:

Mr T Adams	Ms P Bevan Jones
Mr D Birch	Mr H Blathwayt
Mr A Brown	Dr P Bütikofer
Mrs S Bütikofer	Mr C Cushing
Mr T FitzPatrick	Mr P Fisher
Ms V Gay	Mr V FitzPatrick
Mr C Heinink	Mrs P Grove-Jones
Dr V Holliday	Mr P Heinrich
Mr R Kershaw	Mr N Housden
Mr G Mancini-Boyle	Mr N Lloyd
Mr N Pearce	Mrs M Millership
Mrs G Perry-Warnes	Mr S Penfold
Mr J Rest	Mr J Punchard
Miss L Shires	Mr E Seward
Mrs J Stenton	Mrs E Spagnola
Mr J Toye	Dr C Stockton
Mr A Varley	Mr E Vardy
	Ms L Withington

Also in attendance: The Chief Executive, The Monitoring Officer, The Section 151 Officer The Director of Communities, the Democratic Services Manager, the Democratic Services & Governance Officer, PA to the Chief Executive

44 OUTGOING CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman began by welcoming the two newly elected members to the first Annual General Meeting (AGM) for two years. He also welcomed Ginny Seppings (Individual Giving and Community Officer) and Kevin Hart (Interim Joint CEO) representatives from his chosen charity, the Norfolk Wildlife Trust.

The Chairman then spoke about his time as Chairman for the Council. His term had continued for a second year due to the pandemic and this had involved a shift to full council meetings being held remotely and virtual fundraising for his charity. He then gave a presentation to members on the highlights of his time in office.

He said that he was very proud of his work with NWT and the legacy from his fundraising. He had travelled all over Norfolk and worked with 800 children, raising £6000 for charity as well as increasing awareness of the benefits of nature. He invited Kevin Hart, Interim Chief Executive of NWT to speak on behalf of the organisation.

Mr Hart thanked the Chairman for all of his support over the last two years. He spoke to members about the differences that the funding raised would make to NWT's work. He said that the Cley Calling events had been extremely successful and further supported NWT's agenda. He concluded by thanking the Chairman for all his hard work and presented the Council with membership of the Norfolk Wildlife Trust in recognition of the support shown.

45 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

The outgoing Chairman invited nominations for a councillor to hold office as Chairman of North Norfolk District Council for the forthcoming Municipal Year.

Cllr J Rest nominated Cllr J Punchard, this was seconded by Cllr P Butikofer.

There being no further nominations, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that

Cllr J Punchard be elected as Chairman of the Council for the ensuing year.

The outgoing Chairman presented the Chairman's chain of office to the newly elected Chairman.

46 INCOMING CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

The Chairman took the declaration of office and thanked Members for their support. He thanked the outgoing Chairman for his hard work and dedication. He said that he was looking forward to serving the Council for the forthcoming year and announced that he would be supporting two charities during his term of office – the Firefighter's Charity and Norfolk and Waveney MIND.

47 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Cllr S Butikofer, seconded by Cllr E Seward and

RESOLVED that

Cllr P Grove-Jones be elected as Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year.

She thanked Members for their support and Cllr P Butikofer for offering to act as her consort during the year.

48 VOTE OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING CHAIRMAN AND CONSORT AND THE VICE-CHAIRMAN

The Leader said that she was delighted to propose the vote of thanks. She thanked the outgoing Chairman for his hard work and dedication and for stepping up for a second year in the role during the pandemic. She congratulated him on the exceptional fundraising he had undertaken for his nominated charities. She also thanked his wife for her support and as his consort throughout his time in office.

Members unanimously supported the vote of thanks to the outgoing chairman.

49 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs N Dixon, W Fredericks, G Perry-Warnes and A Yiasimi.

50 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th April were approved as a correct record

subject to the following amendment:

Minute 33 – ‘further *informed*’ should read ‘further *information*’.

51 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS FROM MEMBERS

None.

52 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None received.

53 LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader began by saying that when elected, no-one knew that there would be a global pandemic, and how elected members would have to stand up for, and fight for their communities in unprecedented ways.

She said that was proud of the District Council and the communities of North Norfolk, and how everyone rose to meet those challenges. Although it was recognised that North Norfolk was a beautiful part of the country, it was easy to forget the community spirit, the dedication to helping and serving each other and the kindness that regularly occurred in this part of the world.

The Leader then spoke about the impact of the pandemic, saying that no-one had been unaffected by it. She outlined the Council's response to COVID-19 which included a community support programme for local residents who were shielding or self-isolating, administered support for businesses and residents in the area, including business rate relief, business grants, hardship payments and support for rough sleepers.

She said that through local efforts to provide a COVID-safe environment, North Norfolk had experienced some of the lowest infection rates in the country throughout the summer months, despite significantly higher visitor numbers to coastal towns.

The Leader then outlined further, wider achievements for the Council, aside from the COVID response, which ensured that the core aims as outlined in the Corporate Plan continued to be delivered. She concluded by saying that the Council would continue to deliver for the people of North Norfolk.

54 REPORT ON APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS OF THE CABINET

The Leader informed Members that Cllr W Fredericks was replacing Cllr G Hayman on Cabinet.

55 TO ESTABLISH THE POLITICAL BALANCE OF THE COUNCIL AND ALLOCATION OF SEATS TO COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND PANELS

It was proposed by Cllr S Bütikofer, seconded by Cllr J Toye and

RESOLVED

To approve the revised political balance calculation as per section 2.4 of this report

2. To approve the allocation of seats to political groups as shown at Appendix A
3. That delegation is given to the Group Leaders to make any appointments to committees, sub-committees, working parties & panels subsequent to the Annual Meeting of Council.

56 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS AND SUBSTITUTES TO COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING PARTIES AND PANELS

It was proposed by Cllr S Butikofer, seconded by Cllr E Seward and

RESOLVED

1. To appoint Members and substitutes to Committees, sub-committees, working parties and panels for 2021/22 as detailed below:
2. To note the appointment of Members to Executive sub-committees, working parties and Panels

Committee	Liberal Democrats	Conservatives	Independents
Licensing & Appeals (15) Liberal Democrats (10) Conservatives (3) Independents (2)	T Adams D Birch H Blathwayt P Bütikofer P Fisher P Grove-Jones N Lloyd G Perry-Warnes E Spagnola A Yiasimi	C Cushing N Pearce E Vardy	N Housden J Rest
Development Ctee (14) Liberal Democrats (10) Conservatives (3) Independents (1)	A Brown P Fisher R Kershaw N Lloyd P Grove-Jones P Heinrich C Stockton A Varley L Withington A Yiasimi	V Holliday G Mancini-Boyle N Pearce	A Fitch-Tillett
Substitutes	<i>T Adams P Bütikofer S Bütikofer E Spagnola J Toye</i>	<i>T FitzPatrick V FitzPatrick</i>	<i>N Housden J Rest</i>
Overview & Scrutiny (12) Liberal Democrats (8) Conservatives (3) Independents (1)	H Blathwayt A Brown P Fisher P Heinrich S Penfold E Spagnola A Varley L Withington	C Cushing N Dixon V Holliday	N Housden

Substitutes	<i>T Adams P Bütikofer</i>		
Standards Committee (7) Liberal Democrats (5) Conservatives (1) Independents (1)	H Blathwayt A Brown P Bütikofer G Perry-Warnes L Shires	N Dixon	J Rest
Substitutes			
GRAC (6) Liberal Democrats (4) Conservatives (1) Independents (1)	H Blathwayt P Bütikofer P Fisher S Penfold	C Cushing	J Rest
Substitutes	<i>P Heinrich L Withington</i>		
Working Parties			
Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party (12) Liberal Democrats (8) Conservatives (3) Independents (1)	A Brown P Fisher V Gay P Grove-Jones P Heinrich R Kershaw C Stockton J Toye	N Dixon G Mancini-Boyle N Pearce	J Punchard
Constitution Working Party (5) Liberal Democrats (3) Conservatives (2) Independents (0)	V Gay P Grove-Jones A Varley	T FitzPatrick E Vardy	
Substitutes			
Joint Staff Consultative Committee (5) Liberal	S Bütikofer V Gay P Grove-Jones	V FitzPatrick	A Fitch-Tillett

Democrats (3) Conservatives (1) Independents (1)			
Substitutes			
Member Development Group (6) Liberal Democrats (4) Conservatives (1) Independents (1)	L Shires E Spagnola J Toye Liz Withington	C Cushing	J Punchard
NN Sustainable Communities Fund (7) Liberal Democrats (5) Conservatives (1) Independents (1)	P Fisher W Fredericks P Grove-Jones S Penfold E Spagnola	T FitzPatrick	N Housden
Substitutes			
Council Tax Support Working Party (5) Liberal Democrats (4) Conservatives (1) Independents (0)	S Bütikofer R Kershaw E Seward	T FitzPatrick	J Rest

57 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMEN AND VICE-CHAIRMEN TO COMMITTEES

Cllr J Rest informed Council that he did not wish to be nominated for Chairman of the Employment & Appeals Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr J Toye and seconded by Cllr S Butikofer and

RESOLVED

That Cllr E Seward be elected as Chairman of the Employment & Appeals Committee.

It was proposed by Cllr R Kershaw, seconded by Cllr A Brown and

RESOLVED

1. To appoint Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen to Committees for 2021/22 as outlined below
2. To note the appointment of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of executive sub-committees and working parties

Committee	Chairman	Vice-Chairman
Overview & Scrutiny <i>(Chairman must be from the main opposition group)</i>	N Dixon	S Penfold
Development Cttee	P Grove-Jones	P Heinrich
Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party	A Brown	P Grove-Jones
Licensing & Appeals	P Bütikofer	H Blathwayt
GRAC	J Rest	S Penfold
Employment & Appeals Committee	E Seward	
Constitution Working Party	V Gay	Adam Varley
Standards Committee	H Blathwayt	J Rest
Joint Staff Consultative Committee	S Bütikofer	N/A (2021/22 taken by a member from the Staff side)
Member Development Group	Liz Withington	Jon Toye
Sustainable Communities Fund	S Penfold	N Housden
Council Tax Support Working Party	E Seward	S Butikofer

58 APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Leader said that following Cllr Frederick's appointment to Cabinet, she could no longer be a substitute on the Norfolk Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee. This appointment had been recommended by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 19th May. In the absence of the Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, she sought support from the Vice-Chairman to appoint Cllr A Varley as a substitute on NHOSC in place of Cllr Fredericks. He indicated his support.

It was proposed by Cllr P Butikofer, seconded by Cllr H Blathwayt and

RESOLVED

1. To agree the Council appointments to Outside Bodies for 2021/22
2. To note the Executive appointments to Outside Bodies for 2021/22

(As set out in Minutes Appendix A)

59 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

60 PRIVATE BUSINESS

The meeting ended at 7.40 pm.

Chairman

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.

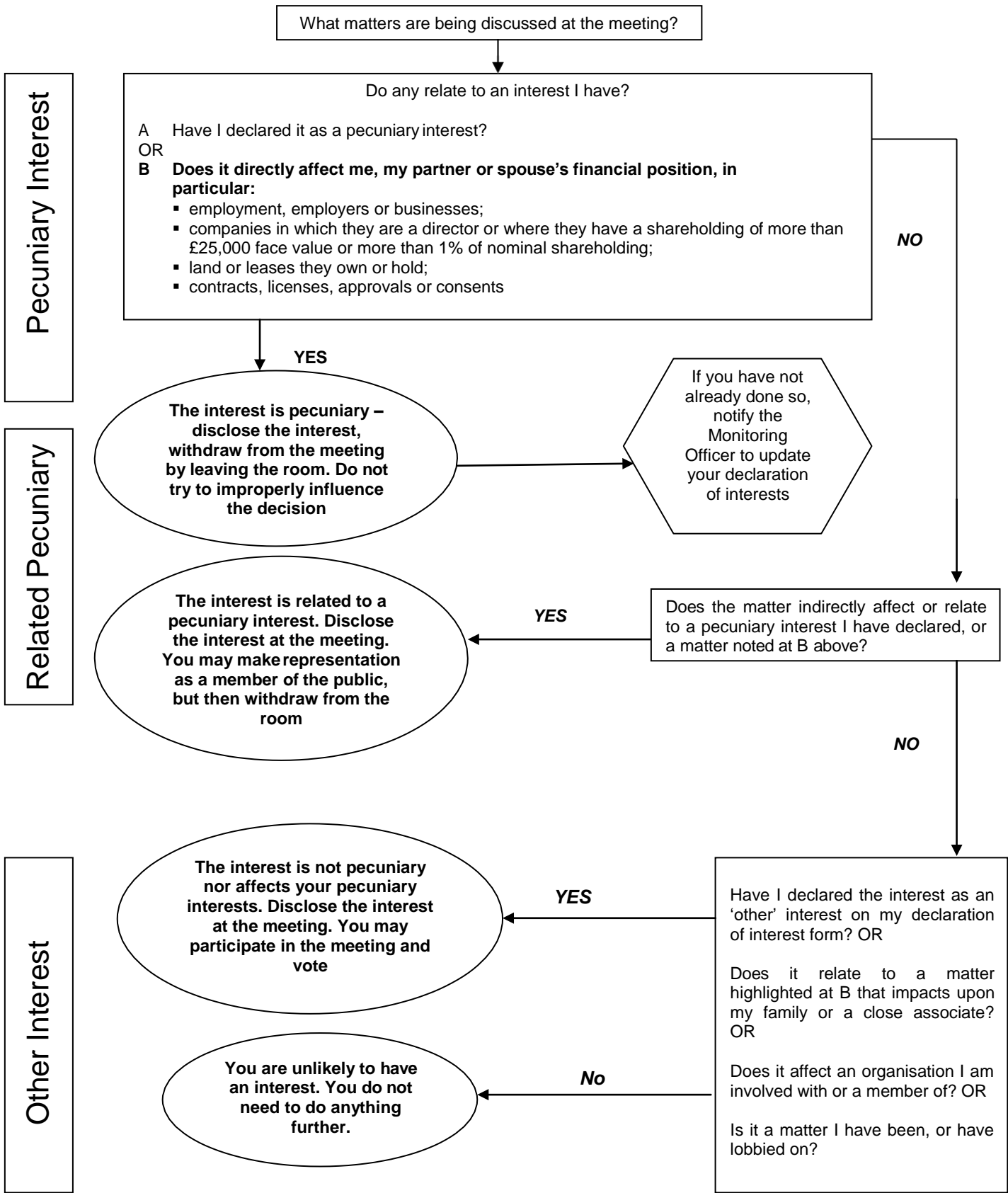
FOR GUIDANCE REFER TO THE FLOWCHART OVERLEAF

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



CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

July 2021

COUNCILLOR ANGIE FITCH-TILLET- CABINET MEMBER FOR COAST

For the period June 2020 to September 2020

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Innovative Resilience Fund - Progress Update

The Coastal Partnership East has submitted the necessary form to the Environment Agency to release funds to support the development of the Outline Business Case for the 'Innovative Resilience Fund' to deliver the Norfolk & Suffolk Coast Transition Programme. This is one of 25 initiatives nationally that will receive a share of a £150M fund, the CPE bid is currently £8.4M. Following approval, the team will develop the OBC for submission in the New Year.

Cromer Phase 2 and Mundesley Coast Protection Scheme – Progress Update

The reassessment of the protection options is underway alongside design and Environmental Assessment for both the Cromer (Phase 2) and Mundesley Coastal Management schemes. Local Liaison Groups have been re-established to maintain key links with the local communities and a NNDC Project Board has been set up.

Shoreline Management Plan Refresh

A request for funding has been submitted to the Environment Agency to support CPE in recruiting a SMP Co-ordinator on behalf of the East Anglian Coastal Group (Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex coastal risk management authorities) to assist with the delivery of key SMP refresh activities.

Sea Defence Revenue Maintenance

- Repairs to groyne 3 (east of pier) at Cromer
- Cromer sea wall maintenance works
- Sand clearance from the seawall at Bacton
- Ongoing day to day repairs

Local Government Association Coastal Special Interest Group

As LGACSIG lead member on adaption I chaired and Karen Thomas (Head of Coastal partnership East and LGACSIG lead on Adaptation) led a national workshop exploring coastal adaptation as part of the Flood and Coast Conference. A key element was to draw out case studies of good and bad practice which can be shared in order to develop knowledge and learning. This is all part of work identified in the LGACSIG Action and Work plan, all supporting the activities of the CPE Local Authorities.

Broadland Futures Initiative

This project is led by the Environment Agency and The Broads Authority. It seeks to develop a long term strategic plan in relation to flood risk for the Broads, Great Yarmouth and the low lying coastal area. A consultation on the initial evidence base

has recently been completed in a virtual setting with 924 visitors. A new Members Forum has been established.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Continued intensive work on:

- Mundesley Coastal Management Scheme
- Cromer Coastal Protection Scheme Phase 2
- Norfolk and Suffolk Coastal Transition programme (IRF)
- Finalisation of Coastal Loss Innovative Funding and Finance project (Phase 1)

3 Meetings attended

All Council Committees appointed to and Northrepps, Overstrand and Trimingham Parish Councils

09.6.21	Coastal Partnership East Board Meeting
11.6.21	Coastal Team Catch-Up
15.6.21	Norfolk Coast Partnership Core Management Group AGM
22.6.21	LGA Coastal SIG Adaptation Working Group
24.6.21	LGA Coastal SIG Meeting
26.6.21	Northrepps RBL Armed Forces Day Parade
29.6.21	LGA Coastal SIG Adaptation Working Group Workshop at "Flood and Coast International Conference"
06.7.21	Norfolk Coastal Forum, CLIFF Steering Group
12.7.21	Norfolk Coast Partnership – Re-Opening the Coast Working Party
15.7.2:	Wash & North Norfolk Marine Partnership Management Group, WNNMP Stakeholder Group.
16.7.21	Coastal Team Catch-Up
21.7.21	Mundesley Coastal Management Scheme Liaison Group, Cromer Coastal Management Scheme Liaison Group.
18.8.21	CPE Board Meeting
TBA:	CLIFF Steering Group
14.9.21	Norfolk Coast Partnership Core Management Group
16.9.21	CPE Board
20-24.9.21	LGA Coastal SIG AGM and Field Trip

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

21st July 2021

COUNCILLOR WENDY FREDERICKS - CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING & BENEFITS

For the period – July 2021 – August 2021

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Benefits

Test & Trace Support Payment

The number of Test & Trace Support Payment applications has now started to increase, although the numbers continue to remain low. The table below shows the number of applications received since January 2021.

Month received	Number of standard applications	Number of discretionary applications
January 2021	62	52
February 2021	12	18
March 2021	8	5
April 2021	1	1
May 2021	2	2
June	7	7

In addition to the DHSC Test & Trace Support Payment we are also operating a local Discretionary Test & Trace Support Payment scheme as part of a county co-hort with Norfolk Councils. The scheme provides local top-up funding of £250,000 per an authority with a £1 million back up fund pending approval, which has been funded by Norfolk County Council.

Where eligibility meets the DHSC scheme, the funding from DHSC would be used first but where the eligibility does not meet this scheme, payment can be considered under the local discretionary scheme. The guidelines for the local scheme have been discussed and agreed by all Norfolk councils.

From 1st July, the local scheme has been extended to include eligibility for those who have tested positive following a lateral flow test, as well income and capital limits under the eligibility criteria being increased, to encourage more people to apply for the payment and self-isolate.

Housing Benefit Award Accuracy Initiative

On 5th July 2021, the Benefits Service will be starting a new initiative through the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) called Housing Benefit (HB) Award

Accuracy. The Housing Delivery Division at the DWP will be working with us to further improve the accuracy of HB awards. Paying the right amount of benefit, at the right time, to the right person, is already a high priority for us but the indicator has been designed to support us in benchmarking and best practice.

Under the initiative we will be expected to identify a set volume of unreported changes in circumstances through targeted activities. To enable us to target our activities the DWP will be sending us a list of our full HB caseload, ranked in order by the HB Award Accuracy risk score. The DWP has worked with a small selection of LAs and this has demonstrated that using these risk scores to target Full Case Reviews (FCRs) provides a high hit rate and will help identify more unreported changes in order to improve our HB Award Accuracy.

The HB Award Accuracy Indicator is calculated by comparing the actual value of weekly reductions processed by us to the expected value of weekly reductions the DWP believe we should be making, based on a range of claim characteristics which estimate the risk of the claim having a change of circumstances. Performance will differ across LAs based on their HB caseload composition and it takes account of variations in regional rent levels and claimants who move to Universal Credit (UC).

The initiative will continue for the next four years.

Housing

Temporary Housing

There are currently 29 households in Temporary Accommodation, this includes the 6 rough sleepers currently accommodated (see below).

Following the Council's successful bid to secure £140,000 from the Government's Next Steps Accommodation Programme (NSAP) to help provide four homes for single rough sleepers or people at a risk of rough sleeping, purchasing these homes is progressing well. We have completed the purchase of the four 1-bed properties and checks and minor works are now being carried out on these with the first tenants moving in shortly.

Cabinet also agreed to the repurposing of £500k Disabled Facilities Grant budget to purchase accessible temporary accommodation units. The first purchase, of an ex-Flagship bungalow, has now completed. Again, minor works are underway to bring the home into use shortly. A further bungalow, capable of being made fully wheelchair accessible is under offer.

The Council has also received £35k from the MHCLG Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme (RSAP) as a contribution to the refurbishment of a one-bed self-contained flat for rough sleeper move-on housing.

New Affordable Homes

We project that housing associations will provide 183 new affordable homes (71 affordable rent and 112 shared ownership) in 2021/22. The 2021/22 figures include Housing 21's Fakenham Extra Care Housing scheme of 66 flats (30 affordable rent and 36 shared ownership) which completed in April 2021. Following works to fit out the interior residents are beginning to move in. Housing 21 hosted two open sessions attended by a number of members last month.

Cabinet in February agreed the use of £900k of section 106 commuted sums to support the delivery of new affordable homes. One of the schemes which the money is intended to support, the Exception Housing scheme in Walcott, recently achieved planning permission.

Housing Strategy

Following workshops held in February and March 2021 with a range of stakeholders a first draft of the new housing strategy was shared with members on 5th May. An updated draft and an associated action plan was supported at Cabinet on Monday 5th July and is due to be considered by Full Council later in July.

Housing Options Team

The team continue to focus on supporting all clients that approach the service.

Your Choice Your Home

As at 06 July 2021 there were 2789 households on the housing list of whom 367 were on the Housing Register (highest priority) broken down as follows:

- 6 x Priority Card.
- 208 x Band 1
- 153 x Band 2

Lets

QTR 1 01 Apr 2021 to 30 June 2021 - 81 Households have secured social housing

Homelessness

There is still a firm focus on Rough sleepers from MHCLG in that we are still reporting monthly stats in relation to rough sleepers within the district. As at 05 July 2021 there were 9 known rough sleepers, of whom we are providing accommodation for 6 and 3 are still sleeping rough.

Following a recent discussion with MHCLG we are still focusing on finding solutions for our single clients to whom the authority is accommodating.

As at 07 June 2021, there were 111 active live cases:

- Final Duties accepted: 12
- Prevention duty accepted: 16
- Relief Duty accepted: 26
- Reviews: 3
- Triage (mixture of new cases, rough sleepers, clients being supported): 44

Integrated Housing Adaptations Team (IHAT)

All contractors were back to full operation in May however we have had a recent incident where one contractor's entire team has had to self-isolate holding up works with a knock on effect for other cases. A further 11 grants were approved in May with a value of £93,023 taking the total approved for the financial year to 15 with a total commitment of £132,499. In addition 8 grants were completed in May taking the total for the financial year to 9 with a total spend of £173,023. There has been a technical hitch with our reporting software associated with the changes to the M drive which has meant that the June figures are not yet available

The Housing Adaptations Service was audited in March/April and the audit has recently been finalised with a reasonable level of assurance and one agreed action to take forward.

3 Meetings attended

Cabinet Meetings
Meeting with Mundesley Parish Council
Your Choice Your Home Partnership Meeting
Cabinet Business Planning
Coastal Forum
Baseline Carbon Audit Session
Overview and Scrutiny
Group Briefings

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

July 2021

COUNCILLOR VIRGINIA GAY - CABINET MEMBER FOR LEISURE, WELLBEING & CULTURE

For the period June 2021- July 2021

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Leisure Centres

All leisure centres are continuing to perform well and visitor numbers returning remain relatively high. Everyone Active will look to fully reopen the facilities on Monday 19th July and will be lifting restrictions on gym numbers but continuing with bookings for swimming as this has proven an effective system for this activity.

Some Covid-19 related processes and procedures will remain in place at all sites, such as availability of sanitiser and screens on reception.

Beaches

We are approaching peak season for beach use and lifeguarding commenced on the 3rd of July at all Blue Flag beaches.

Countryside

All sites remain very busy and popular with visitor numbers remaining high. Volunteer groups re-established at 3 Green Flag sites (Holt Country Park, Pretty Corner and Saddlers Woods). There has been a social media campaign to promote this and encourage more volunteers to take part.

A programme of summer events has now been established and advertised. This is the first proper events programme since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is the teams understanding that Green Flag mystery shops are now taking place. This is later than expected, with unconfirmed rumours of an October announcement.

Pier Pavilion Theatre

The opening night of the Pier Pavilion show is set to be the 19th of July and the show will run until the 2nd of October.

Sports Development

The team continues to provide a mix of virtual and real life classes for those that need it most, including yoga, Pilates, yoga on the Pier, 'Walk and Talk' sessions, walking football and seated exercise. There has been a recent media piece show-casing the benefits of walking football.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

As reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the completion date for The Reef has now been set back to September 17th 2021, owing to a shortage of key materials.

3 Meetings attended

Since my June report, which was emailed to all Members, I have attended the Baseline Carbon Audit Seminar and, by the time you read this I shall have attended meetings of the Norfolk Records Committee and the Norfolk Joint Museums Committee.

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

June / July 2021

**COUNCILLOR VIRGINIA GAY - PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR LEISURE,
WELLBEING & CULTURE**

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Business as usual activity

Grants

Arts & Culture Fund – Financial year 2021 / 2022. As of 30th June two grant applications have been awarded funding totalling £5,718.17. One application was refused as it did not sufficiently meet the aim and outcome of the Fund. Two new applications will be presented to the Panel in July.

Community Transport Fund –Financial year 2021 / 2022. As of 30th June one grant application has been awarded funding of £2,000 awarded. One new application will be presented to the Panel in July.

North Norfolk Sustainable Communities Fund (NNSCF) – Financial year 2021 / 2022. As of 30th June ten applications had been received requesting grants of between £1,000 and £15,000. The Panel recommended that eight projects totalling £48,655 were approved, one was deferred and one refused. Four applications had been received to the Under £1,000 NNSCF. Three were approved and awards of £2,311 made. Grant funding of £50,966 awarded to date to eleven organisations.

Social Prescribing

Between 1st January and 30th June 2021, 363 Social Prescribing referrals have been received. This compares to 292 for the same period last year. People are now able to self-refer to Social Prescribing rather than having to be referred by an organisation. A phone duty line will go live in July to triage requests for support from residents and professionals. General advice and support requests will be dealt with over the phone. A Social Prescribing referral will be made where more complex support is needed.

It is considered that expanding the Social Prescribing service to include self-referrals will enable support to be offered before a situation escalates therefore reducing complex and lengthy input from statutory services including NNDC and avoiding potential legal costs e.g. debt recovery.

The Social Prescribing Service continues to respond to direct requests for support from residents impacted by Covid 19.

Information, Advice & Guidance

Total core budget for IAA is £66,710. A grant of £55,000 has been awarded to Norfolk CA towards for the provision of generic IAA services in North Norfolk for the period 1.4.2021 – 31.03.2022. Subject to Covid restrictions, face to face services will be available in North Walsham, Holt and Fakenham. Ongoing discussions are being held between Norfolk CA and NNDC regarding the use of Fakenham Connect.

In consultation with the portfolio Holder for Culture & Wellbeing the remainder of the allocated budget £11,710 will be awarded to identified VCSE organisations to enhance IAA services to young people in North Norfolk and / or a VCSE organisation that provides specialist IAA support to residents in North Norfolk who may not be able to access or be supported by generic services IAA services.

Covid 19 related activity

The Council continues to work with Norfolk County Council to provide a local Contact Tracing service in North Norfolk. This is for people who have tested positive for Covid 19 but where national or NCC contact tracers have been unable to reach them by phone. A team of Covid Support Workers are available to visit people to request that they register details of people they have been in contact with. Support is also offered to people who have tested positive for Covid 19 to enable them to self-isolate.

NNDC have also recently started to deliver an Enhanced Contact Tracing service. This service is for the contacts of people who have tested positive for Covid 19 and as a result should be self isolating. Daily data reports are received from Public Health. Covid Support officers initially try to contact people by phone to check if they need food, medication or other support to enable them to self-isolate. Face to face visits are carried out if a person cannot be contacted. Requests for emergency food or medication support are fulfilled by NNDC. Referrals for financial or long term support are referred to Social Prescribing or other services including the Norfolk Assistance Scheme as appropriate.

Shielding has now officially ended but NNDC continues to work with NCC and Third Sector organisations to support Clinically Extremely Vulnerable residents and those experiencing financial hardship or requiring other support due to the impact of Covid 19.

Officers attend regular meetings to ensure NNDC is informed, prepared and equipped to deal with all issues relating to Covid including implementation changes to Government guidance, community outbreaks, surge testing, people requiring support whilst on holiday etc.

Norfolk Children and Young People Strategic Alliance

This is a newly formed group bringing together the Children and Young People Strategic Partnership and Children and Young People Alliance Board in an attempt to streamline governance and increase capacity to work together on shared objectives to deliver improved outcomes. This group

oversees the work of a number of other groups including;

- Norfolk Area SEND Multiagency Steering Group
- CYP Mental Health Alliance Executive Management Group
- Early Prevention Board
- Norfolk Learning Board

There is a number of task and finish groups working on the development of the CYP Partnership Plan jointly overseen by the Norfolk Safeguarding Children's Partnership looking at workforce development, data and stakeholder engagement and insight.

The group met for the first time on 20 May.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Domestic Abuse Forum led by Cllr Fredericks has been established

Health funding has been secured to establish a hub in North Norfolk to support people with mental health needs. Cllr Shires Chairs the multi-agency group established to take this work forward. It is anticipated that the Hub will be operational in 2022. Tender process due to start August 2021

3 Meetings attended

6.7.2021

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CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

21 July 2021

COUNCILLOR RICHARD KERSHAW - CABINET MEMBER FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

For the period June to July 2021

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Business as usual activity Engagement with businesses

The usual engagement with businesses has been maintained, albeit that the normal level of site visits have not been conducted. Much of the current resource and activity has been focused on helping businesses to access grants administered by the Council (see below) and helping businesses to obtain funding and other local and national support.

Lockdown Support Grants

Following the national restrictions in November/December, the Government committed to providing further grant funding which would again be delivered by Local Authorities. The subsequent tier changes in December, and the announcement of further national restrictions from January onwards, has resulted in a wide a range of grants being delivered by the Council, detailed at follows.

Grant Scheme	Total Businesses paid	Total Value paid £
Small Business Grant Fund	3,514	35,140,000
Retail, Leisure & Tourist Grant Fund	1,340	18,335,000
Discretionary Grant	221	2,760,000
LRSB (Closed) Addendum Grant for 5/11/20-2/12/20	3,496	4,963,110.00
LRSB (Closed) Tier 2 Grant for 2/12/20-26/12/20.	48	66,018.96
LRSB (Open) Tier 2 Grant for 2/12/20-26/12/20.	2,549	2,658,178.46
LRSB (Closed) Tier 4 Grant for 26/12/20-05/01/20.	3,528	1,788,266.48
Christmas Support Payments (Wet-Led Pubs).	70	70,000.00
LRSB (3rd national lockdown 6 weeks payment) 5/1/20 to 15/02/21.	3,525	7,503,693.00
Closed Business Lockdown (Top up Payment)	3,524	14,999,000.00

New LRSG (4th national lockdown 6 weeks plus 2 days payment) 16/02/21 to 31/03/21.	3,529	7,872,162.00
Restart Grant 1/4/21 onwards	3,536	27,088,147.00
Additional Restrictions Grant	476	3,028,068
Total	29,356	126,271,643.90

All of these schemes have now closed, with the Restart Grant being the last mandatory scheme, with a confirmed final payment date of 31 July 2021.

In addition to the mandatory schemes, the Council also awarded discretionary funding to businesses via the Discretionary Grant in 2020 and the Additional Restrictions Grants (ARG) scheme in 2021. In respect to the ARG, Local Authorities were advised that their allocation needed to be fully defrayed by 30 June (subsequently extended by a month) in order to qualify for the top-up funding that was announced in the spring budget. NNDC has now fully defrayed its ARG allocation and therefore is anticipating a top up allocation of £760,411 by the end of July. Plans are presently in progress to develop a further grant scheme and other business support using this funding.

North Norfolk District Council has been shortlisted in the [2021 Public Finance Awards](#) in the category of *Digital Finance Project of the Year*, recognising an exceptional performance in the issuing of COVID-19 business grants to sectors in the District affected by the pandemic.

North Walsham Town Centre Heritage Action Zone

A number of key activities have commenced/are presently being undertaken including:

- A series of necessary surveys have been conducted on The Cedars to understand its condition and the work required to repair and restore the main building so that it can be let to businesses and/or organisations seeking a base in the town. Detailed design work is now being completed. Procurement will then take place to appoint contractors to carry out the repairs and restoration work required, with an anticipation of the Cedars being brought back into use soon;
- Key stakeholder engagement workshops about the programme were held on 20 April and 27 May;
- A virtual community engagement platform has been established to share news about the programme and elicit feedback. 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;
- On 16/17 June a public interactive exhibition was held in the town centre (this was followed up on the evening of 23rd June for those unable to make the former dates). These provided the opportunity for local people and businesses to engage and share their thoughts on the draft masterplan and initial concept designs for the place making scheme;

- The place-making work stream will now move into the 'developed design' phase which will finalise preferred options informed by stakeholder engagement.

Visitor Economy

The Council has continued to maintain a close relationship with Visit North Norfolk and collaboration on messaging has been central to the response to the pandemic and recovery planning for the local visitor economy. This has helped keep the sector informed and has encouraged greater collaboration and support for collective action. The Council has also liaised closely with NALEP and other Norfolk and Suffolk local authorities and Destination Management Organisations, through collaboration with Visit East of England.

The announcement of the third lockdown created a natural hiatus in the immediate promotion of north Norfolk, in accordance with national restrictions to which people were asked to stay local. However, the marketing campaign has now recommenced and the latest Top Things to do on Holiday in North Norfolk film has now gone live and can be found at www.visitnorthnorfolk.com. The film is being promoted through ads on FB, Instagram and Google Remarketing

Whilst we envisage a strong uplift in 'staycation' visits to the district, we will continue to act in line with all Government advice as Covid-19 restrictions are further eased. This will be supported by the promotion of NNDC's new Stay COVID Safe award scheme

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Key activities:

- Development of grants/package of wider business support (funded through the ARG top up fund)
- Continue to support the North Norfolk Kickstart Gateway programme to help 16-14yrs old into employment
- Continued development of the North Walsham HAZ virtual platform to support community engagement

3 Meetings attended

NW HAZ weekly meetings
 MHCLG briefings
 Recovery Co-ordination weekly meetings
 Development Committee
 Community Renewal Grant meetings

Strategic Stakeholders meetings
Sands Agricultural site meeting
PC Meetings.

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

July 2021

COUNCILLOR N LLOYD - CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT.

For the period June 2021-July 2021

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Commercial and Public Protection.

The Commercial and Public Protection Team have continued to juggle business as usual work with the continuing response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Officers have been involved in the investigation of a significant outbreak of Covid-19 associated with a sports club in Wells and as a result of their investigations have served a Fixed Penalty Notice relating to the offence of a gathering of more than six people. The team have also taken enforcement action against a pub in Fakenham after several attempts to educate and offer guidance where unsuccessful. The team continue to monitor businesses whilst the restrictions remain in place.

The Covid Safe Scheme continues to progress and has received over 40 applications, the team are approaching community centres and village halls directly to encourage them to apply for the award.

An E-shot to accommodation providers has been undertaken. This is to make them and their guests aware of the on self-isolation guidance for visitors over the Summer months.

A Food Standards Agency grant funding application has been made for £3000 to help with the administration of new food businesses applications we have received during the pandemic

The team have been supporting a seafood business in the district with the process of Export health certificates applications received under new Brexit requirements.

Contact tracing figures increasing slightly and a trend of positive cases in younger people sharing accommodation however still low compared to other areas.

Environmental Services

The Environmental Services team continue with the mobilisation and management of the Serco contract and have been tackling some performance issues.

The IT implementation continues and the missed bin web form is now live New road sweepers are now in operation and advertising panels are now present on refuse collection vehicles.

The team have responded to the government consultations on the resources and waste strategy including the deposit return scheme, the extended producer responsibility, consistency in household and business waste collections. This includes individual responses on behalf of NNDC and the collective responses from the Norfolk Waste Partnership.

The team have dealt with significant amount of contact as lockdown restrictions have eased and customers have restarted collections.

Progression of biodiversity/pollinator strategy continues.

Environmental Protection

The Environmental Protection team continue to respond to complaints across the district and provide consultations on planning applications. This has included the investigation of noise arising from several businesses across the district in the past month including a pub, factory and supermarket. Some of these cases have required complex investigations with out of hours working.

The team have issued a House in Multiple Occupation licence to a property in Briston.

The Environmental Protection Team continue to support visitors to the Temporary Stopping Place in Fakenham. However, the Cromer TSP is currently being used as a Covid testing site this arrangement does not seem to have be affecting the provision of service.

Environmental Protection Officers working with partners in the Police and Victory housing have responded to and investigated a Community Trigger application under Anti-social behaviour legislation.

Civil Contingencies

The Civil Contingencies team have recently been involved a Norfolk Resilience Forum and County Public Health table top exercise. The scenario related to surge testing and a predicted 3rd Wave.

The Civil Contingencies team continue to engage with the Norfolk Strategic Flooding Alliance.

The wider team continue to engaged with and support many events planned for the District over the summer months through the Safety Advisory Group process. These have included the Holt Markers Market which has required a significant input from the licensing team regarding the issuing of street trading licences.

Climate Change

GreenBuild will be a virtual event this year. It will comprise of a suite of on-line events and forums to coincide with the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow between 31 October – 12 November 2021

Work has begun on the preparation of NNDC's carbon reduction plan that will scope out the steps needed to achieve net zero carbon by 2030.

Calculation of NNDC's carbon footprint for the year ending March 2021 has commenced. We hope to publish our footprint each year going forward.

There are 51 tree planting projects in the planning stages. 22400 trees are confirmed for this winter's planting season with another 41000 possible. We have been pleased with the level of engagement from the public with this project and are working with a wide range of different stakeholders throughout the District.

NNDC have embraced 'Plastic Free July' with a series of media releases planned through the month. Our aspiration is to become a single use plastic free Council by 2023.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

The team are preparing to return the Goats to Cromer Cliffs during the week commencing the 19th of July. In preparation for this they are conducting fencing checks.

Plans are progressing for a suite of events aligned to national recycling week in September.

3 Meetings attended

Carbon base line meeting with Net Carbon East.

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CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

July 2021

COUNCILLOR E SEWARD - CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE & ASSETS

For the period May 2021 to July 2021

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Finance

Covid Business grant award shortlisting - Following an amazingly successful process which has involved significant cross-departmental work over the last year or so and has seen the provision of in excess of £120m and over 30,000 transactions, I am delighted to inform Members that North Norfolk District Council has been short listed for the 2021 Public Finance Awards, recognising an exceptional performance in the issuing of COVID-19 business grants to sectors in the District affected by the pandemic.

The Public Finance Awards, in association with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy, praises schemes and recognises the work of public bodies, such as Councils, in projects that have displayed excellence or originality.

NNDC has been shortlisted for the *Digital Finance Project of the Year*, for the COVID-19 response in processing grant payments to local businesses.

NNDC was one of the top performing Councils in England in the distribution of grants to businesses throughout the pandemic.

We have also received many messages of thanks from local businesses who have benefited from the financial support.

The Council's COVID-19 Business Grants team administered grants for small business relief and retail discounts to over 5,000 local businesses, delivering £50m between April and May 2020 alone.

This represents a monumental effort by a small team of key staff who have designed, programmed and implemented the online system within current resources enabling fast payments to deliver support when it was needed.

The efficient framework of the Business Grants team has meant that over the course of the pandemic to date, over £120m has been administered expediently in 30,000 transactions to businesses in North Norfolk.

I would like to take this opportunity once again to thank all the staff and Members involved in this project and fingers crossed for the final announcement in September!

View COVID-19 Business Support and Advice and the full press release which can be accessed [here](#).

2020/21 Final Accounts – the finance team are currently working on the draft 2020/21 final accounts. As you can imagine, due to the impact of the Covid pandemic over the last year, this year's final accounts and closedown process has been a complicated one for a number of reasons which has impacted on the production of the statements.

The draft statements are however due to be considered by the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee (GRAC) in September.

The 2020/21 outturn report has been similarly impacted and this will be presented to Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny and Full Council in September in line with last year's timetable.

Property Services

Melbourne slope (former public convenience) – the marketing process for this former set of public conveniences has now been completed.

There was a good level of interest, with approximately 12 viewings taking place followed up by a number of good quality proposals which have now been assessed.

A report was presented to Cabinet in July covering a summary of the interest and recommendations for consideration. Cabinet made a resolution to allow the Estates team to continue discussions with the preferred party and to finalise terms and to execute the letting.

Premises in North Lodge Park to let – following on from the opportunity outlined above at the Melbourne slope the Council is now promoting and marketing an exciting opportunity at North Lodge Park in Cromer.

We have a piece of land to let in North Lodge Park, formerly the tennis courts. The land also includes a small building and 1950s traditional style bandstand, with opportunity for investment.

The property consists of the former tennis court area measuring approximately 0.35 acres (0.14Ha) and the building is about 28 m sq in floor area (300 sq. ft) and was used recently for storage.

As Members will be aware the site is ideally located with easy access on foot from both the town centre and promenade, and has great views of the beach.

The Council is accepting expressions of interest, which should be received by **Monday, 12 July 2021**. Further information can be found on the Council's website [here](#).

Public convenience works – the contract for the public convenience improvement works at both Fakenham and Wells have now been awarded to Aspect Group Services Ltd and works are scheduled to be completed by the end of the financial year.

Chalet works – the contract for the chalet refurbishment works has also now been let and awarded to Charter Property Repairs Ltd. The works are scheduled for completion in the autumn/winter period after the busy summer period has passed.

The works cover all chalets at both Sheringham and Cromer.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Upcoming Reports – a number of finance reports are due to be considered by Members over the following months;

- 2020/21 Outturn report – this report will cover the Council's financial performance for the previous financial year (including the impact of Covid-19) and forms part of the closedown of the 2020/21 accounts (as mentioned above)
- Treasury management annual report – this report provides Members with an update on the treasury performance for the previous year
- Debt management annual report – this report provides Members with an update regarding the Council's debt management performance for the previous financial year

3 Meetings attended

Nothing further to report.

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CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

21 July 2021

COUNCILLOR L SHIRES - CABINET MEMBER FOR CUSTOMER SERVICES

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Reprographics:

The Print room is working with a number of departments in providing material to support the Council in its preparations for the easing of restrictions across the District. Key material has been provided for the Covid Support Officers and the 'Stay Covid Safe' scheme. Additionally we have helped with printing requirements for the North Walsham High street heritage action zone project.

Digital Mail Room:

The Digital Mailroom continues to support the organisation in providing increased levels of assistance through the changes brought about from the new ways of working. This support includes scanning, print to post, PPE and the supply of stationery. Additionally, some members of the team are providing assistance with Lateral Flow testing.

Staffing levels are currently being reviewed against the demands of existing and new work created from the new ways of working.

North Norfolk Visitor Centre

We continue to operate in line with Covid guidelines for lockdown whilst supporting the deep history coast project. We are looking forward to the easing of restrictions and welcoming increased numbers of visitors during the coming season.

The new NNVC webpage will be further developed over the summer period to encourage further customer engagement and utilize the mail chimp facility so that we can promote attractions and encourage customer to return to the area.

Additionally, further review will take place of our leaflets as more attractions and festivals open up.

Customer Services:

With the date for the removal of Covid restrictions delayed to the 19th July and the new ways of working policy being rolled out, Customer Services are putting together plans to transition into new ways of working. These plans will phase the returning of advisors into the offices alongside increasing face to face appointment availability for our customers.

Successful recruitment has been carried out to replace 2 FTE vacancies. 3 new starters have joined Customer Services. Plans are in place to ensure training can be delivered alongside Covid safety measures.

The increase in customer demand due the seasonal peak has now reduced. This will provide us with the opportunity to focus on the above and the many work streams that will support the Customer Focus agenda.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.
3 Meetings attended

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

21 July 2021

COUNCILLOR – LUCY SHIRES

CABINET MEMBER FOR: PROPERTY, CUSTOMER SERVICES AND IT

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Customer Services:

Stuart Harber has been appointed as the Customer Services Manager to replace David Williams who recently retired after a long career in Public Service. His previous post as team leader will now be recruited.

With the date for the removal of Covid restrictions delayed by 4 weeks and the new ways of working policy being rolled out, Customer Services are putting together plans to transition into new ways of working. These plans will phase the returning of advisors into the offices alongside increasing face to face appointment availability for our customers.

Successful recruitment has been carried out to replace 2 FTE vacancies. 3 new starters (some job share/part time) will be joining the team in July and plans are being put in place to ensure training can be delivered alongside Covid safety measures.

A comparison from May 2020 to May 2021 show that the dedicated Covid line and email inbox have seen a drop of approximately 90% in incoming calls and emails.

The team continue to offer overtime to assist the NHS by contacting patients and booking appointments for them to receive their Covid-19 vaccination.

The Council's website has been modified to indicate the Council's support for the national "Safe Spaces" campaign to support victims of domestic abuse.

Property Services:

Wells & Fakenham Public Conveniences: Pre start meeting has taken place. Construction of modular buildings works will now commence. On site works after October half term.

Beach huts & chalet repair works: Pre start meeting has taken place. Works commence after October half term.

Council Offices Catering contractor, "About With Friends", started as planned on Tuesday 22nd June. There have been some very positive comments regarding the quality of food and the service offered.

Replacement Council Offices Cleaning contractor starts 16th July.

Sheringham Little Theatre: Works are progressing

Sheringham promenade works: Works are progressing

Weybourne Eco Public Convenience is going live by end of July.

EVCP North Walsham: UKPN have visited and will carry out their works by end of July. The remaining works to commission the charge points are planned to be completed by the end of August.

Work has started to review the Public Convenience strategy.

Marrams Bowls Club: Works have started and are progressing.

Fakenham Community Centre: Contract in place. Start date to be confirmed with tenant.

Pier structural works: Final stage of current works programme started on 21st June Work is under way to finalise tender details for next phase of required works.

Procurement for replacement contractor for Property Services Measured Term Contract has been completed.

Information Technology:

Migration of the Councils telephony and contact system to Microsoft Teams is now complete. This is a major milestone in the modernization and upgrade of the Councils IT infrastructure.

The next significant stage will occur in September when the councils email system will be moved into the Cloud. This will significantly increase the mailbox capacity for all users.

The upgrade work for the Planning system is now complete. Work will now commence on the addition of further modules to support S106 management and a mobile Building Control App.

The Iken legal case management system has been migrated to new servers and upgraded

The Concerto Asset Management system has been migrated to replacement

servers and upgraded.

As a component of the migration to Microsoft M365 cloud based systems data storage has been restructured using “Libraries” & “Onedrive” – Legacy system “Nasdell” being retired as part of programme of work to replace all obsolete servers.

Training plan for all Council Users and Technical staff on new Microsoft products being developed and implemented.

The internal Audit on remote access provision has been completed with a rating of Reasonable Assurance.

The Council Chamber has been installed with infrastructure to allow “Hybrid” meetings to take place with a mixture of in the room and remote participants.

NNDC is currently 27th in the national public sector list for website accessibility (for www.north-norfolk.gov.uk) and the top council in the county as judged by Socitim. This is the result of ongoing work by the team and demonstrates our commitment to a high quality online presence which should be accessible to all. This is now a requirement for all new public sector websites ([Understanding accessibility requirements for public sector bodies - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk))

North Walsham West consultation site has successfully completed. The platform was built by in the Web Development team and content created and entered by officers in Planning at no financial cost to the council beyond officer time. The site provided information about the development and received several hundred items of feedback.

Further webforms to accompany the Missed Bins webform are now available to the public, integrated directly with our waste contractor’s systems.

The online bookings system for weekly Beach Huts and Countryside events has been updated.

A new web presence for the North Norfolk Visitors Centre has gone live and will form the basis for further enhancements to provide a comprehensive “virtual” visitor centre in the future.

The Councils website homepage has been updated to reflect the transition to the recovery phase of the Pandemic response.

To ensure the public safety messaging about the pandemic is maintained “Stay Covid Safe” content has been added to the website.

Data integration works have been delivered which allow a real-time picture of commercial premises information has been developed to support the ‘Economic Growth team. This information is now being presented using the

Council wide reporting tool “InPhase”

A significant upgrade to a component of the Councils finance: “PT-X Drive” has been completed. This allows electronic funds transfers to take place more efficiently. This will help to ensure faster payments to customers and businesses to be undertaken and better supports remote working.

GDPR compliance checks now underway following management restructure. Likely investment in online training materials for staff and members.

Use of temp data entry resource for the 2nd time. Possible use across whole council for discrete areas of work with no ongoing financial commitment.

Of the many Covid grants awarded, only 2 now active (Lockdown 3 and Restart) significant reduction in administrative burden. However, data requests from Central government now becoming more prevalent and involved.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Fakenham Connect listed “crinkle crinkle” wall: Tender to be issued in June

Cornish Way industrial units re-roofing: Tender to be issued in July.

FONLP café: New joinery sections being drawn for approval and costing.

The Council will receive its Public Sector network accreditation validating the security of the IT network. This is a stringent examination carried out by an independent third party. The successful completion is the culmination of significant effort by the Council’s IT team.

Password improvements will be implemented to ensure the security of the new Microsoft M365 infrastructure and applications.

A Pilot of the Cyber Threat Intelligence (CTI) Adaptor with National Cyber Security Centre will be undertaken. This system will provide a dynamic “threat feed” and automatically search our system to identify if any of these threats can be detected

A new Mobile Device Management platform “InTune” will be deployed which better integrates with the new M365 based infrastructure

There will be significant support needed from both IT and property to undertake office moves arising from the restructure and the implementation of the New Ways Of Working.

The development of the Bulky waste collections, Dog Fouling, Litter Reporting and Commercial waste sacks web forms will be completed in the coming period

The Garden waste management service will be integrated with Serco IT systems to give an improvement in customer experience in this area.

The newly developed web pages to focus on the Environment and the Councils activities in this area will go live in Late July/Early August

Evaluation of requirement for new surface at Mundesley Road car park, North Walsham.

The hybrid meeting system from the Council Chamber will be replicated in the Committee Room

The online bookings system will be enhanced to include sports development courses.

3 Meetings attended

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

21 July 2021

COUNCILLOR JOHN TOYE - CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT

For the period June 2021 to July 2021

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

General Situation

Whilst I encourage members to look through inphase and uniform to find the data they are after. I understand that member access has been difficult to the inphase system. I will continue to add some highlights in these reports and encourage the use of uniforms advance search facility on the public portal. If any Member has specific information they require I would of course be happy to endeavour to find this data. As stated last month the inphase figures and performance are monitored through committees.

This month I have highlighted some comparisons on previous years:

Applications Received in May

2021 = 299, 2020=154, 2019=255

Applications Received in June

2021= 272, 2020=254, 2019=226

The number of applications determined in May 2021=162 June 2021=205.

Planning officers still have high caseloads with some individual officers exceeding 50 live cases in hand.

The planned upgrades to uniform are completed. Training is being provided to enable officers to get the best from the system. Enforcement this week mapping training later in the month.

Enforcement continues to have a large number of cases, 315 this month. There are 4 cases that may yet result in criminal proceedings however, there has been progress on these and it is hopeful that resolutions can be found.

We have had the result of the High Kelling Archery and Air Rifle appeal decision. The inspector quashed the enforcement and has effectively granted permission for their current use. There are some conditions applied which we will work pro actively to assist the owners in complying with these conditions.

Building control Along with the high number of applications is a high number of applications to building control. There is a backlog of applications taking 10 to 12 days rather than the normal 2-3 but the department is back to full strength and this backlog it is hoped will be cleared in 6-8 weeks.

Major Applications

I am pleased to see that we have an application in to redevelop the old Magic kingdom Site at North Walsham. PF/21/1613. This is an important site on the entrance to North Walsham from Cromer.

I have a short summary of developments that are likely to produce affordable housing. They are at various stages some just active and some that will be at development committee the week after full council.

These are of course not decided but hopefully an indication of affordable homes delivery in the pipeline.

In no particular order.

PF/21/1749 Catfield	18
PF/20/1345 Hindringham	8
PF/20/1470 Happisburgh	9
PF/21/1781 Northrepps	10
PO/20/1251 Paston Collage	24
PO/19/0281 Cromer	9
PF/21/1532 Stalham	62 (extra care)
PO/18/2169 Cromer	120 (potentially if policy compliant)

Total 260

This is not the full picture as there are those that are decided but awaiting S106 agreements etc for example but an indication.

Conservation Design and Landscape.

Extra applications mean extra consultations so the team's workload remains high but work will continue to try and increase capacity. The team continue to work with our consultants Purcell to bring forward the programme of reviews for conservation area appraisals.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Enforcement work continues to produce a new webpage for reporting enforcement requests. The expectation is for the final draft to be ready mid to late August. We are working with customer services to agree a draft e form.

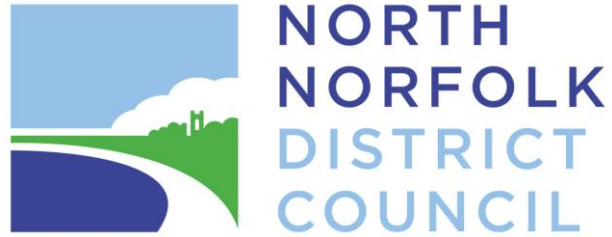
Section 106 Enquiries. We are continuing towards a much improved Section 106 recording and maintenance as an addition to the uniform system. In the interim if there are any Section 106 enquires please use the email s106@north-norfolk.gov.uk.

3 Meetings attended

Internal Cabinet, Business planning, Planning policy and built heritage working party, planning team and case meetings, parish council meetings, Baseline Carbon Audit.

External Innovative approaches to low energy housing and retrofitting, Bio diversity net gain in planning, First Homes Webinar, Rural housing Seminar, Norfolk Strategic planning forum.

Armed Forces day event at Northrepps



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy 2021

Introduction

1. **North Norfolk District Council** is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for the people and communities of North Norfolk. We respect and value difference in our communities and across our workforce. We want everyone to feel included and able to play their part in making North Norfolk the best place to live, learn, work and visit.
2. This policy is the minimum standard to which the North Norfolk District Council aspires to. We do not and will not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation in service delivery or employment on the grounds of any protected characteristic, or other characteristic which disadvantage or reduces access to services, by reason of their circumstances.

This includes and not exclusive of:

- Age
- Mental Health
- Religion and belief
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Disability
- Race
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity.

We will not treat anyone less favourably than any other, on the grounds of any protected characteristic, except when such treatment is within the law and determined by lawful requirements.

3. This means that we will:

- Promote equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristicⁱ and people who do not share it.
- Take steps to remove barriers or inequalities that may already exist for people with protected characteristics or people who are recognised by law to experience disadvantageⁱⁱ.
- Never treat anyone less favourably than any other, except when such treatment is within the law and determined by lawful requirements.
- Never tolerate prejudice or unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying on any grounds, and take action to eradicate it if ever it occurs in service delivery, employment or the community as a whole.
- Promote understanding tackle prejudice and foster positive relations between different communities.
- Engage with our different local communities fairly and proportionately.

- Promote a workforce culture that values and respects difference and fosters inclusivity.
- Encourage people who share a protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation is disproportionately low.

Accessibility and inclusive design

2. We are committed to providing public services and a workforce environment that can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their ability or disability.
3. When reviewing or redesigning our public services or workforce environment (or any building, product or service in that environment, such as premises, technology, information, communication and culture) we will be guided by the following:
 - (a) Provide the same means of use to enable access for all users: identical whenever possible; equivalent when not
 - (b) Avoid segregating or stigmatising any users
 - (c) Provisions for privacy, security and safety shall be equally available to all users
 - (d) Ensure dignity in use for all users.

Reasonable adjustments for disabled people

4. Where something the Council does places a disabled personⁱⁱⁱ at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person, we will take all reasonable steps to try to avoid that disadvantage or make reasonable adjustments wherever appropriate. This may mean changing the way we work, providing extra equipment or removing physical or other barriers to opportunities.

Discharging our responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty

5. When exercising our public functions, we will have due regard to the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#)^{iv} and we will comply with the specific duties, by:
 - Publishing information each year by the 31st January to demonstrate our compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty
 - Publishing relevant and proportionate equality objectives at least every four years, to deliver the aims of this policy.

Elected Member and staff learning and development

6. North Norfolk District Council provides induction training for all new elected members and staff, which includes an introduction to equality, diversity and inclusion. Continuing professional development is also available – for more information see [Sign In \(north-norfolk.gov.uk\)](http://north-norfolk.gov.uk)

This policy affects:

7. Elected members and all workers (including employees, consultants, temporary workers, agency staff and other third parties working on behalf of North Norfolk District Council) are required to comply with this policy.
8. Suppliers, sub-contractors and agencies in our supply chain are also required to comply.
9. We expect all elected members and staff to take responsibility for familiarising themselves with this policy and conducting themselves in an appropriate manner.

This policy applies to the following public functions:

10. The policy applies to (but is not limited to) the planning, design, operation, construction and delivery of services, the provision of goods, facilities and services, exercising of public functions, recruitment and selection, conditions of service, benefits, facilities and pay, training and development, opportunities for promotion, conduct at work, employment policy, procedures and guidance, and termination of employment.

Relevant legislation

11. In implementing this policy we will have regard to our legal obligations under relevant legislation, including the [Equality Act 2010](#), the Public Sector Equality Duty and the [Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) \(No. 2\) Accessibility Regulations 2018](#).

Communication

12. This policy will be made available via North Norfolk District Council's website and intranet.

Review

13. We will keep this policy and any associated codes of practice under annual review.

Complaints

14. We regard any breach of this policy as a serious matter to be dealt with through agreed procedures and this may result in disciplinary action. We encourage anyone who has a complaint concerning a breach of this policy to bring this to our attention immediately: [Complaints Procedure](#).

Further Information

For further information, please contact:

James Claxton, HR Manager, james.claxton@north-norfolk.gov.uk, 01263 516352 or Karen Hill, Assistant Director People Services, karen.hill@north-norfolk.gov.uk, 01263 516183

Related North Norfolk District Council policies:

The following documents should be considered in conjunction to this policy:

- Family Friendly Policy
- Transgender Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Absence and Attendance Policy
- Bullying, Harassment and Grievance Policies
- Recruitment Policy

In addition to other key employment policies and the Staff Handbook.

ⁱ The protected characteristics are set out in the Equality Act 2010:

Characteristic	Who and what this covers
Age	Adults and children, or specific/different age groups
Disability	<p>A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.</p> <p>This may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with mobility issues (e.g. wheelchair or cane users; people of short stature; people who do not have mobility in a limb etc) • Blind and partially sighted people • People who are D/deaf or hearing impaired • People with learning disabilities • People who have mental health issues • People who identify as neurodiverse (this refers to neurological differences including, for example, dyspraxia, dyslexia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, the autistic spectrum and others). • People with some long-term health conditions which meet the criteria of a disability.
Gender reassignment	<p>People who identify as transgender (defined as someone who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process or part of a process to reassign their sex. It is not necessary for the person to be under medical supervision or undergoing surgery).</p> <p>You should also consider the needs of people who identify as non-binary (a spectrum of gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine).</p>
Marriage/civil partnerships	People who are married or in a civil partnership. They may be of the opposite or same sex.
Pregnancy & Maternity	Maternity refers to the period after birth and is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, and this includes treating a woman unfavourably because she is breastfeeding.
Race	<p>Race refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, or nationality (including citizenship) ethnic or national origins.</p> <p>A racial group can be made up of two or more distinct racial groups, for example a person may identify as Black British, British Asian, British Sikh, British Jew, Romany Gypsy or Irish Traveller.</p>

Religion/belief	Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or no belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour. Denominations or sects within a religion can be considered a protected religion or religious belief.
Sex	This covers men and women. You should also consider the needs of people who identify as intersex (people who have variations in sex characteristics) and people who identify as non-binary (a spectrum of gender identities that are not exclusively masculine or feminine).
Sexual orientation	People who identify as straight/heterosexual/lesbian, gay or bisexual.

ii Other characteristics

In addition to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, UK law recognises that people with other characteristics may also experience disadvantage or reduced access to services, by reason of their circumstances, such as members of the armed forces community.

In 2019 the Council passed a motion that accepted the request from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government to adopt the following non legally binding working definition of anti-Semitism:’

‘Anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities’.

iii The definition of disability

The definition of disability is set out in the Equality Act 2010, Part 6: ‘A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities’. A person must meet all elements of this definition in order to satisfy the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and trigger the duty to make reasonable adjustments.

iv The Public Sector Equality Duty

Under the Equality Act 2010, public bodies like North Norfolk District Council must in the exercise of their public functions have due regard to:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment, victimisation
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a ‘protected characteristic’ and people who do not share it;
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

This is called the '**public sector equality duty**'. In essence, the duty simply requires North Norfolk District Council to thoroughly consider the equality issues of every proposal, action or decision before going ahead with it.

A 'proposal', 'action' or 'decision' means anything that is a public function – in other words, something that impacts on people who live, work, learn in or visit North Norfolk – such as planning, changing or commissioning services; policies, strategies and procedures; buying equipment; projects; recruitment/workforce management and budget decisions.

North Norfolk District Council has discretion about how it implements the duty. However, it must be able to provide evidence that due regard was genuinely given to equality prior to decisions being made.

Many public bodies summarise their efforts to give 'due regard to equality' in a document called an '**equality impact assessment**' (**EqlA**) – because this is an easy way to analyse and evidence the different ways a proposal, action or decision might impact on people with protected characteristics.

However, an EqlA is not the only way of giving due regard to equality. For example, the minutes of a meeting could demonstrate that full consideration has been given to equality issues.

Who is responsible for giving due regard to equality – or undertaking equality impact assessments?

The officer responsible for the proposal, action or decision should ensure that the duty is implemented and is brought to the attention of the relevant decision-maker/s (whether elected members or officers with delegated responsibility).

Elected members must give due regard to equality on every decision they make. If the duty is not properly discharged, the decision may be subject to legal challenge or judicial review.

Elected Members can and should challenge officers if they believe that adequate information has not been provided about the potential equality issues of a proposal or recommendation.

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New Housing Strategy – 2021 – 2025

Summary:	This report sets out: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 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): Cllr. Wendy Fredericks	Ward(s) affected: District-wide
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Contact Officer:
Nicky Debbage, Housing Strategy & Delivery Manager, Tel: 01263 516027, email nicky.debbage@north-norfolk.gov.uk
Graham Connolly, Housing Strategy & Delivery Manager, Tel: 01263 516282, email graham.connolly@north-norfolk.gov.uk

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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UK COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND (CRF) MATCH FUNDING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Recommendations: That Cabinet resolve the following;

- 1. To release match funding of £200k for the Fakenham CRF bid and £200k for the North Walsham bid subject to the bids being approved by central government.**
- 2. The match funding element to be released from the Delivery Plan Reserve.**
- 3. To recommend to Full Council the establishment of new capital budgets for the North Walsham and Fakenham schemes of £800k each, with each scheme being funded through the CRF bid (£600k) and the balance (£200k) as match funding from the Council**

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

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

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

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

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

1. Introduction

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

- To note the opportunities presented to North Norfolk by the new UK Community Renewal and Levelling Up programmes;
- To endorse the proposals made that a programme of complementary projects be developed in respect of the future planned growth of North Walsham and Fakenham as sustainable locations for future housing and business development at scale supported by provision of key transport, health, education community and green infrastructure and

submitted to the County Council as lead body for endorsement and onward submission to the Government; and

- To agree that in developing any proposals the Council establishes a Strategic Stakeholder Board and Steering Groups for North Walsham and Fakenham to support project development and oversee programme delivery.

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

- £220 million programme in 2021, aiming to support community renewal, including skills development, economic renewal, infrastructure deficits etc
- 100 priority areas (including North Norfolk, Norwich, Great Yarmouth and Kings Lynn and West Norfolk)
- Projects with a value of up to £3million could be supported per area, with 90% of the funding for revenue spend
- Locally in Norfolk, the programme will be led by the County Council, endorsed by local Members of Parliament
- Bids for project funding to be submitted by lead authorities by 18th June 2021

1.3 The fund focusses on 4 key project themes covering the following broad areas;

- Investment in skills
- Investment for local businesses
- Investment in communities and place
- Supporting people into employments

1.4 The bids submitted focus on the third of these themes, namely 'Investment in communities and place'. There was also a strong focus within the CRF prospectus around supporting central government's aspirations in relation to achieving 'Net Zero', innovation and delivery by March 2022.

1.5 The priority focus within Investment in communities and place theme covers the following areas;

- Feasibility studies for delivering net-zero and local energy projects
- Exploring opportunity for promoting culture-led regeneration and community development
- Improving green spaces and preserving important local assets
- Promoting rural connectivity

1.6 This report seeks to update Members regarding the progress made with the bids since the last report and includes a request for an element of match funding for both projects to further strengthen and support the bid submissions.

2. Update on progress

2.1 Following the initial report in April 2021 the recommendations detailed within section 1.1 of this report have all been delivered. Bids have been submitted in line with government requirements for both Fakenham and North Walsham

and the Strategic Board has been established along with Steering Groups for both Fakenham and North Walsham, resented by a wide range of stakeholders.

2.2 The timelines for drafting the bids were incredibly tight, in line with the following timetable;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TO DELIVER A FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE GROWTH THROUGH;

1. The creation of a '**Fakenham Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan**' (including delivery of some elements) promoting low-to-no, carbon commuting, greater access to greenspace, healthier lifestyle options and overall enhanced connectivity within the local area. The plan will specifically address;
 - Opportunities to promote active travel schemes between the urban extension and town centre.
 - The feasibility of developing a network of cycling and walking routes which connect the town centre to local tourism and green infrastructure assets ie Pensthorpe, the Racecourse and the Hawk and Owl Trust.
 - 'Accessibility for All' walking infrastructure along the existing network around the River Wensum opening up opportunities for residents and visitors to explore nature.
 2. Working alongside Fakenham Town Council, develop an action plan to implement and promote a '**Healthy Fakenham**' scheme which aims to improve healthy eating, active lifestyles; including holding a variety of events that support local businesses and promote sustainable lifestyle choices.
 3. The creation of **Feasibility Studies** covering;
 - a) the creation and extension of the existing sports facilities in order to extend participation in underrepresented groups;
 - b) the provision of Lido or other swimming pool facility in Fakenham and;
 - c) design proposals for flood management for Sculthorpe Moor to alleviate winter inundation of the upper reaches of the Wensum and to provide an attractive visitor environment linked to the wider footpath and cycle way network.
 4. The creation of a '**Climate Change Action Plan**' for Fakenham which will;
 - assess opportunities for climate change adaption and mitigation within the town centre;
 - understand how residents, community groups and businesses can be supported to decarbonise their own activities and improve carbon literacy and;
 - feed into NNDC's Environmental Charter which will help communities to address the climate change crisis at a local level whilst contributing towards central governments net-zero carbon emission 2050 target.
- 3.6 These projects link directly with the CFR prospectus and in particular support 3.4 Communities and Place priority area.
4. **North Walsham CRF bid – Seeding Sustainable Growth in North Walsham**

- 4.1 The North Walsham bid also requested CRF funds totalling £600k with a proposed match funding element to be provided by NNDC of £200k giving a total overall project budget of £800k.
- 4.2 This project is based on the growing market town of North Walsham and nearby significant employment sites. It aims to enable development of a practical plan to deliver community renewal and growth in a manner that is consistent with the principles set out in the March 2021 *Build Back Better* Treasury policy statement. It will do so by helping to identify ways to attract growth, skills and investment into the region that will overcome significant existing infrastructure constraints and also support timely delivery of Net Zero.
- 4.3 It will be delivered by a lead consultant with experience and expertise in land-use planning, development and sustainability as well as project management. Specialist studies will be procured from subcontractors as part of the overall contract.
- 4.4 This initiative will set the growth trajectory for North Norfolk's largest, and potentially most sustainable market town, North Walsham. It will pave the way for securing significant housing and employment development, with community engagement and sustainability as guiding principles. The consultant will be expected to:
- Evaluate the opportunities for delivering large-scale (net-zero) housing and employment development, in a sustainable manner;
 - Quantify known energy and transport infrastructure constraints on future expansion, and demonstrate how to sustainably overcome such challenges;
 - Show how renewed (post-pandemic) investment interest in the town centre and the changed patterns of work and commuting can benefit market towns;
 - Identify opportunities to extend services and community infrastructure to meet the needs of an expanded population;
 - Show how new development can effectively integrate with the town's existing built form;
 - Provide a methodology for 'nature based solutions' to environmental constraints and the provision of green infrastructure which will benefit new development and facilitate biodiversity net gain;
 - Identify the means by which the existing and new residential areas of the town might be better integrated by sustainable modes of transport (including active travel);
 - Link the investment potential and new renewable energy development opportunities of the nearby Bacton Energy Hub, major offshore wind energy schemes and Scottow Enterprise Park to facilitate North Walsham's sustainable expansion and growth;
 - Showcase a new approach to urban expansion in a rural context and illustrate the practical sustainable development principles that can reconcile the conflict between development and conservation and improvement of the natural environment, which could be replicated locally and nationally;
 - Evaluate the outcomes against the baseline position.
- 4.5 This will be achieved through undertaking feasibility studies, based on technical analysis and widespread stakeholder engagement, thereby developing an outline business case for sustainable growth. We intend to

demonstrate a sustainable method by which the existing and future needs of the area can be met.

- 4.6 The project will involve the preparation of feasibility studies and modelling options that will become an innovative methodological framework for North Walsham's sustainable growth; reconciling development and conservation objectives. It will sow the seeds for the establishment of green infrastructure, sustainable water management, renewable energy supply, social infrastructure, active travel and low carbon transportation. The project will build in monitoring and evaluation that will yield valuable lessons for application locally and nationally.

5. Corporate Plan Objectives

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

6. Medium Term Financial Strategy

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

7. Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 As outlined above the total funding being requested for the Fakenham bid is £800k, with £600k being requested from the CFR and £200k (25%) being sought from the Council's own resources, giving a total budget allocation of £800k.
- 7.2 As with Fakenham, the total funding being requested for the North Walsham bid is also £800k, with £600k being requested from the CFR and £200k (25%) being sought from the Council's own resources, giving a total budget allocation of £800k.
- 7.3 This means that the combined match funding requirement from NNDC is £400k, with funding requests from the CRF totalling £1.2m, which combined would see an overall funding package of £1.6m.
- 7.4 It should be noted that the focus of the CRF is very much around revenue spend with an expectation that 90% of funding requests will be revenue, with a maximum of 10% to be allocated towards capital spend.

- 7.5 It is anticipated that a number of these work streams will be undertaken by consultants due to the nature of the feasibility work being undertaken. This work will however be supported by a range of staff internally including but not limited to Planning Policy, Sustainable/Economic Growth team, Finance, Legal, CDU, Climate Change and Environment Team, Procurement, admin support etc. There are also elements of the bids which request additional funding support for project lead roles and further procurement support due to the high level of procurement required.
- 7.6 It is recommended that the match funding requirements are met from the Council's Delivery Plan Reserve.

8. Legal Implications

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

9. Risks

- 9.1 Each of the bid submissions contains a detailed summary of the perceived risks of the project over the following core areas;
- **Contractors/consultants** – failure to deliver on time/to desired quality, failure to secure suitably qualified/experienced consultants, feasibility not delivered
 - **Financial** – risk of cost overruns/monitoring of spend
 - **Procurement** – inability to produce tender documentation/specifications in a timely fashion
 - **Operational/technical** – COVID lockdowns/further illness occurs, capacity and capability to deliver
 - **Strategic** - projects don't achieve desired outcomes/outputs
 - **Partnership governance** – Steering Group can't agree priorities, failure to manage expectations of partners/public, reputational damage from failure to deliver, changes in circumstances, loss of key personnel/providers, competing priorities
- 9.2 As part of the bid process roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and identified and while the various Boards and teams will have an overarching responsibility to consider and manage risk there will be a dedicated officer identified as part of the project team with specific responsibility for monitoring and updating the project risk register.
- 9.3 The Council has strong project management/reporting systems in place at officer/Member level, with oversight provided by the Corporate Delivery Unit (CDU) covering project management, performance and governance. The Project Group will include finance representatives who will review/mitigate

and cover risk on a monthly basis as a standing item on each meeting agenda. The CDU will provide additional risk analysis.

- 9.4 Risks will be identified through frequent communication with the Board, Project Team, larger Steering Group and key partners/providers. Key risks will be escalated to the Board as appropriate based on any risks scoring 15 or more. The register will be continually monitored and updated as risks are removed, changed and new risks identified as the project progresses.
- 9.5 Individual risk registers will be developed for each of the work strands along with an overarching risk register for the projects as a whole. The Council's performance management system (InPhase) has a risk module contained within it which will enable the close monitoring and reporting of risk to the Project Team/Board.
- 9.6 These projects will be managed in line with the Risk Management Framework and Policy, adhering to the same internal processes currently used throughout the organisation to monitor and mitigate risk.

10. Sustainability

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

11. Climate / Carbon impact

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

12. Equality and Diversity

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

13. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

- 13.1 None as a direct result of this report.

14. Conclusion and Recommendations

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

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

14.3 Cabinet is therefore asked to resolve the following;

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

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

Summary: This report aims to provide the Council with an outline of the role of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, and a summary of the work undertaken throughout both the 2019-20 and 2020-21 municipal years, as a result of reporting delays caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Options considered: N/a.

Conclusions: Throughout 2019/20 and 2020/21, the Committee fulfilled its obligation to provide oversight of Council business and hold Cabinet to account. Whilst Covid-19 had a significant impact on the Committee's 2020-21 Work Programme, the Committee adapted quickly to remote working and continued to deliver effective scrutiny.

Recommendations:

- 1. It is recommended that Council notes the report, affirms the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, and considers the following concerns raised within the report:**
 - Additional Committee substitutes required to adequately address the number of apologies given.**
 - Late submission of reports has caused ongoing volatility in the Work Programme.**
 - Better communication on business planning required to maintain Work Programme stability.**

Reasons for Recommendations: To inform Council of the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in 2019/20 and 2020/21 and address the concerns raised.

Cabinet Member(s): Ward(s) affected:
N/a All

Contact Officer, telephone number and email:
Matthew Stembrowicz
Democratic Services & Governance Officer (Scrutiny)
Email: Matthew.Stembrowicz@north-norfolk.gov.uk Tel: 01263 516047

1. Introduction – Role of the Committee

1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the Council's primary oversight Committee, that seeks to ensure that Cabinet is held to account and that

reliable services are provided, whilst best value for money is achieved. Introduced by the Local Government Act 2000, Scrutiny Committees are able to monitor internal Council affairs, and also review the work of external bodies such as the Police, health providers, utility companies and the voluntary sector.

1.2 As outlined in the Constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference are as follows:

- To scrutinise and review decisions or other actions taken with respect to non-executive functions.
- To make reports or recommendations to the Full Council or to the Cabinet about one or more particular issue(s), service(s) or matter(s), which affects North Norfolk and its residents. Reports or recommendations may be carried out on whatever issue, service or matter the Scrutiny Committee thinks fit and may be carried out on any subject if the Full Council or the Cabinet requests it to do so.
- To carry out best value reviews.
- To act as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee.
- To produce an annual report to Council on the work of the Committee over the year.
- To ensure effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies.

1.3 The remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee also includes undertaking policy review and development, monitoring performance management, promoting community well-being and improving the quality of life in the District. Scrutiny is Member-led and independent of party political arrangements. At North Norfolk District Council, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is chaired by a member of the opposition. Scrutiny should always be viewed as a function which belongs to and benefits the whole council.

2. Committee Background

2.1 Subsequent to minor changes following appointments made in May 2019, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee was comprised of the following Members at the end of the 2020/21 municipal year:

Chairman - Cllr N Dixon	Vice Chair - Cllr E Withington
Cllr H Blathwayt	Cllr W Fredericks
Cllr P Heinrich	Cllr N Housden
Cllr G Mancini-Boyle	Cllr E Spagnola
Cllr A Varley	Cllr C Cushing
Cllr A Brown	Cllr P Fisher

2.2 Who participates in Scrutiny:

- The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee take a pro-active role throughout the process, attending pre-agenda meetings and steering and scoping the direction of questioning and investigation.
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members – Scrutiny is different from other committees in that it calls for Members with investigative and creative minds who are prepared to “do their homework” out of the

Council Chamber and think outside of the usual committee framework, tailoring the method of review to suit the topic.

- Cabinet Portfolio Members are invited to attend meetings of the Committee to present and answer questions on Reports relevant to their portfolio. The aim is that the Portfolio Member should have an opportunity to contribute to any issues relating to their portfolio.
- All non-Executive Members of the Council are routinely invited to attend Committee Meetings and offered the opportunity to ask questions on issues that matter to the residents they represent.
- Officers are involved in a number of ways – those directly involved in supporting the scrutiny process and those who are called to compile Reports for the Committee.
- Invitees and Witnesses can be called not just from within the Council, but from partners and service providers.
- The public are welcome to attend meetings of the Committee with a provision to submit questions up to 24 hours in advance, in order to raise issues of concern that they would like the Committee to consider.

3. Committee Role and Responsibilities

3.1 Scrutiny of decisions made by Cabinet - The Overview and Scrutiny Committee routinely reviews decisions made by Cabinet to ensure they are appropriate and provide best value for money.

3.2 Pre-Scrutiny - This enables greater co-ordination between the Cabinet and Scrutiny work programmes, whereby the Committee can provide input into policy and decisions prior to their approval. This process ensures that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and wider Members can provide meaningful input into key issues, reducing the likelihood of call-ins. Some examples include:

- Commenting and providing input into corporate projects.
- Providing input during the Policy development process.
- Considering key strategies prior to approval by Cabinet.

3.3 Call-ins - All decisions made by Cabinet that have not been pre-scrutinised are subject to a five day 'call-in' period, prior to implementation. This enables the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider whether any contentious decisions are appropriate, and provides the opportunity to recommend to Cabinet that the decision be reconsidered, if necessary.

3.4 Financial Scrutiny – This allows the Committee and wider Members the opportunity to review and comment on draft budget proposals, budget monitoring reports, the Medium Term Financial Strategy, and other financial strategies. Consideration of financial reports is a statutory requirement for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's work programme.

3.5 Performance Monitoring - This is a quarterly item for the Committee that provides an opportunity to ensure that service areas are meeting performance targets, or highlighting issues where further investigation may be required. It is also important for holding the Cabinet to account, by considering whether the administration are meeting the objectives set within their Corporate Plan and subsequent Delivery Plans.

- 3.6 External Organisations - The Committee may request briefings on matters of concern from external organisations. These are usually followed by a Q&A session to gain further insight into the chosen subject. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a statutory obligation to oversee crime and disorder in the District, and this is usually achieved by a briefing from the Police and Crime Commissioner, accompanied by senior Police Officers.
- 3.7 Focused/Rapid Reviews - The Committee may choose to look at a topic in depth over a specific period of time to consider whether it is achieving the necessary outcomes. This could be undertaken by the whole Committee as a rapid review in a single day, or as a smaller review by a Task and Finish Group, usually lasting six months.
- 3.8 Petitions - The Committee has an obligation to consider petitions received from members of the public, which can be submitted electronically or by hard copy. There is a threshold of 750 signatures required from within the District in order for the petition to subject of a full debate by the Committee.

4. Work of the Committee 2019/20

4.1 2019/20 was a fresh start for many on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee following the May 2019 elections, which saw a very limited number of returning Members appointed to the Committee. A new Chairman and Vice Chair were appointed that have sought to push the Committee in a more outcome focused direction, making greater use pre-scrutiny opportunities and working more closely with Cabinet on policy development. Nine formal Committee meetings were held in total, with one meeting missed during the induction period, and one cancelled as a result of the initial outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Highlights from the 2019/20 Work Programme are listed below:

- The Executive-Scrutiny Protocol: Following best practise, an Executive-Scrutiny Protocol was developed and agreed by both the Committee and Cabinet to clearly outline the relationship and expectations for cooperative working. The Protocol itself fostered a new way of working for both the Committee and Cabinet, to encourage greater participation in the development of policy and service delivery from wider Members. The benefits of the Protocol continue to deliver as the Committee remains actively involved in pre-scrutiny and policy development.
- Pre-scrutiny of the Corporate and Delivery Plans: As a result of developing a more cooperative relationship with the Executive, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were given the opportunity to pre-scrutinise the Corporate Plan. This work resulted in a range of well received recommendations and an increased awareness of the priorities of the new administration.
- Sheringham Leisure Centre Project Monitoring: From the outset of the Sheringham Leisure Centre project, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee played an important role in receiving regular monitoring reports to observe progress of the project and maintain oversight of the project budget.

- **Market Town Initiative Working Group:** The MTI Working Group met twice in 2019 to continue to monitor first and second round applications, alongside making funding recommendations on the third and final round of applications. The Scrutiny Officer provided an overarching update for the Committee in July 2019, and will continue to monitor projects until completion, at which point a process review will be undertaken for consideration by the Committee.
- **Crime and Disorder:** The Committee received a briefing on the challenges of tackling rural crime throughout the District from the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk, with assistance from the District Superintendent.
- **Budget Scrutiny/Monitoring & Financial Strategies:** Throughout 2019/20, the Committee reviewed Budget Monitoring, Treasury Management Strategy, Capital Strategy, Investment Strategy, and Medium Term Financial Strategy Reports in line with its statutory responsibility to provide financial oversight of the Council. In addition to finance training provided as part of the induction for new Members, budget training was also arranged in advance of scrutinising the draft budget.
- **Consideration of Ambulance Response Times:** A motion from Full Council requested that the Committee undertake a review of ambulance response times in rural parts of the District. This review resulted in the Committee making recommendations to the NCC NHOSC who continue to monitor the issue as an ongoing concern. Whilst a briefing from the NCCG and EEAST was scheduled to take place in late 2019/20, the outbreak of the Pandemic caused this to be cancelled.
- **Combined Waste Contract Procurement Briefing:** Prior to approval, the Committee received a full briefing on the anticipated joint waste contract that would see a shared services arrangement with two neighbouring authorities. The briefing also addressed the substantial changes expected, which sought to make the collection services more environmentally friendly, by reducing carbon emissions and encouraging great re-use of large waste items.

4.2 In summary, the Committee reviewed approximately forty topics, though this number includes recurring items such as performance and budget monitoring. Six of these topics could be defined as pre-scrutiny, in that they were reviewed by the Committee in advance of approval by Cabinet or Council. In total, the Committee made over thirty recommendations to Cabinet and Council, the vast majority of which were accepted and implemented, with several more made to senior officers to request further information or additional reports. No new Task and Finish or Working Groups were formed, as the newly appointed Committee focused on finding its feet in its first year following the election. Overall, given its new membership, the Committee adapted quickly to deliver a more outcome focused and considered approach to providing the overview and scrutiny function of the Council.

5. Work of the Committee 2020/21

5.1 2020/21 was an unusual year for the Committee, as the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic placed significant restrictions on available resources, staffing

availability, physical meetings and the range of topics on the Committee's Work Programme. Despite these issues, the Committee soon adapted to working remotely to consider important matters relating to the impact of, and response to the Pandemic, until time became available for more routine business to return to the Work Programme in the second half of the year. Eleven formal Committee meetings were held in total, though several of these meetings took place later than expected, as a result of the ongoing impact of the Pandemic. In a first for the Committee most of these meetings also took place remotely, and were live streamed for public viewing. Highlights from the 2020/21 Work Programme are listed below:

- **Coronavirus related reports:** Once remote meetings were established to allow Committee's to meet in compliance with Covid restrictions, regular reports were received on both the ongoing impact of the Pandemic, and the Council's ongoing response and mitigation efforts. As relief efforts continued, the Committee also monitored the implementation of Covid relief grants, and decisions taken under delegated authority which had been taken to facilitate the ongoing Covid-19 response.
- **Budget Scrutiny/Monitoring & Financial Strategies:** The effects of Covid-19 made scrutiny of the budget, the MTFs and budget monitoring especially important in 2020/21, due to the significant impact placed on Council revenue streams. Fortunately, Covid support grants were made available to mitigate substantial losses, though the fragility of Local Government funding was made abundantly clear.
- **Pre-scrutiny of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy:** Following a Full Council motion to adopt the HRA definition of anti-Semitism, it was determined that a full overhaul of the existing Equality and Diversity Policy was required with the Committee asked to review its replacement. Whilst the impact of Covid-19 and the management restructure caused significant delays to the development of this Policy, the Committee continued to monitor its development and provide feedback via the pre-scrutiny process. It is anticipated that subject to final review, the Policy will be approved in the 2021/22 municipal year.
- **Crime and Disorder:** The Committee requested a briefing on policing during the Covid-19 Pandemic and tackling the relative increases in domestic abuse. Whilst the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk and District Superintendent were unable to attend, a remote briefing was provided by the Chief Inspector and local Police Sergeant.
- **Sheringham Leisure Centre Project Monitoring:** Starting in 2019, the Committee continued its regular monitoring of the Sheringham Leisure Centre project. Whilst the project remains mostly on-track despite the impact of Covid-19, continual restrictions placed on public venues led the Committee to request a consideration of an early demolition of the existing facility.
- **Digital by Design Briefing:** Following an initial briefing on proposed changes to the way residents interact with the Council, concerns were raised by the Committee that led to an all-Member briefing on the proposals. This subsequent briefing provided an opportunity for a full

explanation of the proposals and provided Members with an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on the project.

- Pre-Scrutiny of the Communications Strategy: The arrival of a new Communications Manager signalled a change in the direction and strategy for communications of NNDC. As a result, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were given the opportunity to pre-scrutinise the draft Strategy document prior to its approval and suggest that consideration be given to the way in which the Council interacts with the public and whether advertising revenue could be generated to support discretionary services.
- Pre-Scrutiny of the Environmental Charter: Following the May 2019 local elections, the new administration made its environmental ambitions clear, which it sought to outline in its Environmental Charter. Pre-scrutiny of the charter allowed the Committee to make recommendations on improving the educational and public engagement aspects of the Charter, and developing a marking system to encourage and promote better environmental practices throughout the District.
- Review of NNDC Public Car Park Usage: Following the fluctuating impacts of Covid-19 on the Council's public car parks and reductions in visitor numbers to the Districts high streets, a review of car usage was undertaken. The review considered capacity and revenue throughout 2020/21 year, with a view to gain insights from this information. The scrutiny review resulted in several recommendations including a request for greater promotion of parking permits, consideration of creating new parking facilities in high tourism areas, and maintaining an annual review.

5.2 In summary, the Committee reviewed approximately forty seven topics, though this includes several recurring items such as the Sheringham Leisure Centre project updates, quarterly performance and budget monitoring reports. Whilst a substantial portion of the Work Programme was devoted to Covid-19 related reports, this resulted in only five items of pre-scrutiny. In total, the Committee made over forty recommendations to Cabinet and Council, with almost all accepted and implemented, whilst further recommendations were made to senior officers to request further information, reports or briefings. As a result of the significant impact of Covid-19 on working practices, no new Task and Finish or Working Groups were formed, though draft terms of reference were agreed for Scrutiny Panels that will mirror the Council's corporate priorities in the year ahead. Overall, despite the impact on working practices, the Committee remained effective in monitoring the Council's Covid-19 response and continuing to hold the administration to account.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Both 2019/20 and 2020/21 were exciting and productive years for the Committee. Whilst Covid-19 unquestionably had a significant impact on all Council business, it also allowed the Council to take stock of a number of issues that might otherwise have been ignored. Most importantly, despite the challenges faced, the Committee continued to provide valuable and effective oversight for the Council, whilst providing input into policy development and service delivery, without need for 'call-in'.

- 6.2 The agreement and adherence to the Executive-Scrutiny Protocol was a substantial achievement for the Committee that has significantly improved working practices, and led to increased opportunities for pre-scrutiny or more 'rapid reviews' by improving cooperation with Cabinet.
- 6.3 The May 2019 Local Elections saw major changes to the political makeup of the Council, which resulted in significant changes to the membership of the Committee. Despite these changes, a new found enthusiasm for Scrutiny has resulted in major improvements to the Committees working practices and productivity.
- 6.4 Whilst the Committee has remained effective despite the impact of Covid-19, there have been issues and difficulties faced that both Members and Officers must look to address in the year ahead. These issues include:
- Ten instances in 2019/20 and thirteen in 2020/21 where apologies were given but no substitute was available. This could in-part be the result of short notice, and/or increased childcare responsibilities during the Pandemic. Consideration could be given to increasing the number of substitutes available to address this issue, as well as ensuring Committee Members approach substitutes with as much notice as possible, when required.
 - Instances where a lack of communication on project implementation or policy development has caused concern and/or led to delays in process. Whilst issues are often quickly resolved, maintaining regular communication between the Committee, CLT and the Executive on matters of business planning is imperative, to ensure that effective work scheduling is maintained, and that both Members and Officers are aware and prepared for upcoming topics of concern.
- 6.5 Looking forward, whilst the ongoing impact of Covid-19 has delayed Government spending reviews and pushed back the Council's forecasted deficits, it is crucially important that the Committee remains vigilant in proving financial oversight for the Council. Similarly, it must maintain its effective oversight and scrutiny of the Council's existing services, projects and policies, to ensure that resident's needs and expectations are met, and that value for money is maintained.

Appointment of Corporate Directors

- Summary: This report to Council seeks to conclude the recruitment processes for the Director of Place and Climate Change, and the Director of Communities. The Employment and Appeals Committee (EAC) confirms its recommendation to full council to appoint these two officers.
- Options considered: N/A
- Conclusions: To support the Authority in delivering its corporate objectives; whilst driving ownership, accountability and change through the authority, the Chief Executive Officer needs to complete the management reorganisation that was approved by Council on 23rd September 2020.
- Recommendations: To approve the appointment of the Director of Place & Climate Change and Director of Communities
- Reasons for Recommendations: Sound management and leadership of the council.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

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

North Norfolk District Council Constitution

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected N/A
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email: James Claxton, 01263 516352 and james.claxton@north-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In May 2019, the current administration confirmed its intention to move to a single Chief Executive model. The appointment of the new Chief Executive Officer (CEX) was confirmed by Council in June 2020. The new CEX was also tasked with reorganizing the then Heads of Service into a model that supports a single CEX.

Background

- 1.2 In the summer of 2020, the CEX began the process of moving model, of three Directors; with each Director having the support of two Assistant Directors.
- 1.3 The Authority moved through the restructuring process into the autumn, concluding with three heads of service being slotted into Assistant Director roles. The new model also created internal opportunity and progression for three managers to complete a recruitment process for the three remaining Assistant Director positions.
- 1.4 The restructuring process continued with one former Head of Service being given suitable alternative employment whilst retaining their existing statutory responsibilities, and one former Head of Service successfully receiving a recommendation from the EAC to Council for the Director of Communities role (see recommendation above)
- 1.5 Despite the authority advertising and completing an internal recruitment process for the Director of Place and Climate Change (DPCC), the EAC was unable to provide a recommendation, so the decision was taken to recruit externally for this role.
- 1.6 The Authority was supported in the recruitment of the DPCC role, by the Recruitment Director from the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE). The Authority received a number of applications from a diverse pool of applicants. Solace supported the Authority by reducing this pool to two people after comprehensive reviews of the written applications, and detailed technical interviews.
- 1.7 Two candidates were interviewed by the EAC and the CEX shortly after the relaxation of the COVID guidance in late spring 2021. These interviews were completed in person, in the Council Chamber. The EAC agreed to recommend to Council that Martyn Fulcher be appointed as the Authority's Director of Place and Climate Change.

2. Corporate Plan Objectives

Supporting the Chief Executive Officer, and the authority to achieve its corporate objectives, specifically within Place and Climate Change, but also contributing to corporate performance.

4. Medium Term Financial Strategy

N/A

5. Financial and Resource Implications

This position has been approved by Council on 23rd September 2020, and is within the current and approved future budgets.

6. Legal Implications

N/A

7. Impact on Climate Change

N/A

8. Equality and Diversity

The council considers all equality and diversity issues when conducting its recruitment activities and processes.

9. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

N/A

10. Conclusion (including recommendations)

To support the authority in delivering its corporate objectives; whilst driving ownership, accountability and change through the authority, the Chief Executive Officer needs to complete the management reorganisation that was approved by full council on 23rd September 2020.

Recommendation (1)

Follow the recommendation of the EAC on 2nd October 2020, and confirm the appointment of Steve Hems as the Director of Communities.

Recommendation (2)

Follow the recommendation of the EAC on 22nd April 2021, and confirm the appointment of Martyn Fulcher as the Director of Place and Climate Change.

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North Norfolk District Council EMPLOYMENT & APPEALS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Employment & Appeals Committee held on 2nd October 2020 at the Council Offices, Holt Road, Cromer at 9.00am.

Members present: J Rest (Chairman)
S Bütikofer
C Cushing
V Gay
R Kershaw

Officer(s) in attendance: Chief Executive Officer (CEX)
Human Resources Manager
Ms S Dinneen (Consultant)

1. SELECTION OF THE TWO DIRECTOR ROLES

The Committee, CEX, and Consultant, interviewed three candidates for the positions of Director of Communities, and Director of Place and Climate Change.

Recommendation to Council at its meeting on 21st July 2021

It was **recommended** that Steve Hems be appointed as the Council's Director of Communities. At the conclusion of the meeting, no appointment had been made into the Director of Place and Climate Change, and that the authority should look to appoint externally into this role.

The Committee concluded its meeting at 5.30pm.

Chairman

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North Norfolk District Council EMPLOYMENT & APPEALS COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Employment & Appeals Committee held on 22nd April 2021

Members present: J Rest (Chairman)
E Seward
C Cushing
V Gay
R Kershaw

Officer(s) in attendance: Chief Executive Officer (CEX)
Human Resources Manager
Mr S Guest (Solace Director)

1. SELECTION OF THE DIRECTOR OF PLACE & CLIMATE CHANGE

The Committee, and Chief Executive Officer, interviewed two candidates for the position of Director of Place and Climate Change.

Recommendation to Council at its meeting on 21st July 2021

It was **recommended** that Martyn Fulcher be appointed as the Council's Director of Place and Climate Change.

The Committee concluded its meeting at 4.30pm.

Chairman

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CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY

Minutes of a remote meeting of the Constitution Working Party held on Tuesday 13 April at 14.00 pm

Committee Ms V Gay (Chairman) Mr T FitzPatrick
Members Present: Mr A Varley Mrs P Grove-Jones

Officers in Attendance: The Monitoring Officer (Assistant Director for Finance, Assets & Legal, and the Democratic Services Manager

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th February 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

5 REVIEW OF PROTOCOL ON MEMBER / OFFICER RELATIONS

The Chairman said that she had read through the revised document and although it was considerably longer than the previous version, it could be used as an induction tool for both officers and members on their different roles and how to work effectively together. She said that although the protocol had been revisited in October 2017, this was in relation to a specific issue and that the whole document had not been reviewed for many years.

She invited Members to comment.

Cllr P Grove-Jones said that it was lengthy document but that she was happy with it overall. Cllr T FitzPatrick said that he agreed that it was lengthy but that it was important to set things out clearly, particularly regarding matters that were unlawful and financially improper. This meant it that it was transparent and clear to the public that Members embodied the Nolan Principles and that the way Members and Officers worked together was clearly set out. He said that section 2.16 was very important and he welcomed its inclusion. Cllr Grove-Jones agreed, saying that it was important to have a section outlining what officers could do if they felt they had been treated improperly by a member.

Cllr Grove-Jones commented on section 4.8 which referred to members expressing political values and aspirations. She sought clarification on whether this referred to specific circumstances. The Democratic Services Manager replied that it applied generally. Members were elected to represent a political group and this should be acknowledged and accepted. Cllr Grove-Jones said that there were some committees which were explicitly non-political and she wondered whether this should be clarified. The Democratic Services Manager said that for Development Committee, members should also observe the Planning Protocol and this was referenced at section 4.7 in the Protocol on Member/Officer relations. For other committees, such as Overview and Scrutiny, references to a non-political approach were outlined in the terms of reference.

Cllr Grove-Jones then referred to Section 5.1 and the last point which mentioned limitations on some officers' involvement in political activities. She said that she thought that officers could not be involved in political issues or activities at all. The Democratic Services Manager replied that this referred to posts that were politically restricted. These were senior management posts and for officers working closely with elected members. Cllr FitzPatrick added that officers in non-politically restricted roles could be involved in political activities if they wished and could in fact stand for election at another local authority.

Cllr A Varley said that he felt the revised Protocol was coherent and concise and set out clearly what was expected of each role. He referred to section 16.9 and said that he was supportive of including a reference to correspondence and information between the Council and town and parish councils and ensuring local members were kept 'in the loop'. The Chairman replied that the issue of members not being fully informed was probably the one matter that came before the Working Party more than any other. It wasn't clear what the problem was but it did seem particularly hard to resolve. The Democratic Services Manager agreed, saying that this was one of the hardest issues to get across to officers and she raised it whenever possible to try and embed the importance of keeping members informed of matters in their wards. Cllr FitzPatrick proposed that that this section was amended:

'In dealing with town and parish councils, officers should endeavour to copy ward members into correspondence'

The Chairman seconded the proposal.

The Chairman said that when she had reviewed the initial draft of the document, she felt that it should begin by setting out clearly the different roles of members and officers and this would then lead onto the expectations – including respect and trust. This was now reflected in the draft version before members and she welcomed that. She added that the revised document could be used for member and officer induction now as it was set out clearly and concisely.

The Chairman went onto say that she was pleased to see the inclusion of section 2.8 which referred to the impartiality of officer advice. She said that respecting impartiality and not compromising it did not imply obedience to that advice. Members were obliged to weigh the advice and give it careful consideration but they were not obliged to follow it in all circumstances.

She then referred to section 2.16 which outlined what steps would be taken if an officer had been treated improperly. She sought clarification on the process for members if they felt that had not been treated properly. She wasn't sure if it was

appropriate for them to write to the Chief Executive. Cllr Grove-Jones agreed that this could be an issue. The Monitoring Officer said that initially they should approach the officer's line manager initially and then escalate it upwards if there was no adequate response. Cllr FitzPatrick suggested that 'by a member' was added to section 2.16 so that it was explicit that it referred to treatment of an officer by a member. He added that he agreed with the Monitoring Officer's suggested approach regarding speaking to the relevant line manager initially, if there was an issue of an officer being treated improperly by a member.

The Democratic Services Manager suggested adding the following additional section at 2.17:

'When a member feels that they have been treated improperly by an officer, they should speak to the relevant line manager in the first instance. If the matter is not addressed, then it can be escalated upwards to the relevant Director and /or Chief Executive.'

The Chairman then referred to section 5.5 which outlined respect for a member's request for confidentiality. She said that the wording 'or in order to comply with' was confusing and she suggested that 'except to comply with'. The Democratic Services Manager agreed.

Cllr P Grove-Jones commented on section 12.2 which referred to a meeting being held on Council premises. She said that this may need to be amended to reflect the current arrangements for remote meetings. Cllr FitzPatrick said that he believed that this section reflected another part of the Constitution that required meetings between senior officers and political groups to take place on the council premises for transparency reasons. The Democratic Services Manager said that she would review this section once the situation regarding the holding of remote meetings from 7th May onwards had been clarified.

The Chairman then suggested that members considered the Media Relations section of the Protocol. This had been issued separately as it had been revised by the Communications & PR Manager.

Cllr FitzPatrick referred to section 11.4 and said that he would not want to see the seven day notification period removed. He proposed that the wording was amended to 'where lawful and practicable, unless exceptional circumstances are present, communication of such information to local members will be made seven days before external publication.'

The Chairman referred to section 11.12 and said that she welcomed the clarification about comments made by members on social media, particularly that posts remained in the public domain and could be shared and re-published without permission.

Cllr Grove-Jones said that she didn't use social media very much but she was concerned about the language and tone of some posts. She felt that training on this would be beneficial.

Cllr FitzPatrick agreed with the Chairman and suggested that section 11.12 could be strengthened to clarify the fact that once statements and comments were made via social media, they were no longer in the control of the individual who made them and could potentially remain there forever. It was also possible that they would not be interpreted as statements of private opinion but as a political stance, reflecting for

good or ill on the Council and possible the political group. The Monitoring Officer suggested the following (additional wording in bold):

‘Members should be aware that any comment made about matters pertaining to North Norfolk District Council’s work via their own personal social media channels are, in effect, statements to the media by said member and as they are in the public domain, can be lawfully re-published verbatim by the media without the poster’s permission. **Posts can potentially remain in the public domain and be re-posted without any control over their continued publication.**’

The Chairman said that she felt this was an important addition as members were under pressure to use social media more. Also, in order to further explore the separation of the public from the private, she felt that training would be very helpful. The training should focus on this problem specifically.

Cllr Varley agreed. He said that social media was a very useful platform for members to engage with constituents but he had concerns that they didn’t always understand the implications of expressing their personal views. He said that he supported training for members and suggested that it would also be beneficial to provide members with an information sheet / guide to using social media. Cllr Grove-Jones suggested this could include examples of good and bad practice.

Cllr T FitzPatrick proposed that section 11.12 was strengthened further by adding that members were encouraged to take part in training on the use of social media.

It was proposed by Cllr V Gay, seconded by Cllr T FitzPatrick and

RESOLVED to recommend

- 1. That Standards Committee reviews the revised Member / Officer protocol, including the amendments made by the Constitution Working Party and considers the inclusion of an additional section on expected behaviours in their upcoming review of the Member Code of Conduct.**
- 2. That, following any further amendments by Standards Committee, Council approves the revised Member /Officer Protocol.**

6 UPDATE ON REMOTE MEETINGS LEGISLATION

The Democratic Services Manager introduced this item. She reminded members that the legislative provision for Councils to hold remote meetings was due to end on 7th May 2021 and that, although there was a high court challenge underway aimed at allowing remote meetings to continue, it was still necessary to explore all options for holding face to face meetings in the event that this was not successful.

Cllr P Grove-Jones referred to section 3.1 and the issue of equality. She said that she had concerns about attending a physical meeting in the near future and felt that many other members would feel the same. It would effectively disenfranchise a lot of people and could also impact on public engagement and attendance. She sought clarification regarding the status of ‘hybrid’ meetings going forwards, as she said she would not feel comfortable going into the Council Chamber at the moment. The Democratic Services Manager said that if the high court challenge was not successful, then only physical meetings would be allowed. The Government had opened a ‘call for evidence’ regarding Councils’ use of remote meetings and she said that she would be responding to this on behalf of NNDC.

The Chairman said that, as 7th May was fast approaching, it might be best to consider the options set out in the report and consider whether some should be discounted now rather than spending unnecessary time on them. She referred to the proposal to hold the AGM in April as an example. Deadlines for convening a meeting would be too tight now. She added that she was also aware that there were no suitable venues in the District that could hold 40 members plus officers, socially distanced. The Democratic Services Manager agreed, regarding suitable venues she said that even if there was a large enough space, the supporting technology that would be required was not available. Cllr FitzPatrick declared an interest regarding the Thursford Collection as he was a trustee. He said that it was large enough to accommodate a lot of people and it was possible that the required microphones etc would be suitable but it would take a lot of work to get it up and running as it had not been in use for several months.

The Democratic Services Manager said that it may be possible to convene the AGM in April but as there were two by-elections for District Council seats which may result in a change in the political balance, it didn't seem like a viable option.

Cllr FitzPatrick referred to option d – holding a virtual meeting, followed by a physical, quorum based meeting shortly afterwards to ratify the decisions. He queried what would happen if the quorum based panel did not support the original decision. The Democratic Services Manager replied that this could be a problem and had been an issue at another local authority which had taken this approach. Consideration would need to be given as to how to manage this, possibly by agreeing with the Group Leaders in advance who should attend the physical meeting.

Cllr Grove-Jones said that as Chairman of Development Committee she would support option e – virtual meetings with delegation to the Head of Planning – if this was possible. She said she didn't feel that it was safe for meetings to be held in the Council Chamber at this time.

Cllr FitzPatrick said that people didn't realise how 'wedded' people had become to remote meetings. When they were introduced, many parish councils had been reluctant use the format but now they realised the benefits – particularly in a rural district with an elderly demographic. Attendance had increased considerably and members of the public were joining more meetings too. In addition, it meant that district and county councillors could attend several meetings in one evening rather than having to drive long distances between them. He said that he felt that in the future, even once physical meetings were safe again, there would be a move towards holding meetings remotely.

Cllr Grove-Jones agreed, saying that from a democratic point of view, they were much more accessible than physical meetings and attendance was much higher.

The Chairman said that she also believed remote meetings would continue in the future in some form but that there were some disadvantages. It was likely that there may be some argument about the proper record of the meeting and the status of the minutes as people would be able to re-watch recordings of meetings and potentially challenge the official record of the discussion. She referred to option c – virtual meetings with delegation to Chief officers and said that Cabinet had taken this approach at the start of the pandemic but she believed it was only for a short period of time. The Democratic Services manager confirmed that this was only done for a short period of time until the remote meetings regulations came into effect. The Chairman said that felt this approach had worked well and she wasn't aware of any problems at all. She said that she had some reservations about quorum based meetings as there was no guidance in place to address a situation when the quorum based meeting may not support the views / direction agreed at the virtual meeting. This would be new territory for the Council and

some consideration may need to be given as to how to address any problems that may arise from taking this approach. She concluded by saying that she felt more comfortable with options c and e as these had been used previously and seemed to work quite well.

Cllr FitzPatrick said that he supported her viewpoint. Regarding option d, he said that it was unlikely that the public would understand what was being done and it would be seen as 'rubber stamping' and would not be very transparent.

Cllr Varley agreed. He felt comfortable with options c and e as these had worked well.

AGREED

To recommend that options c and e were explored, should a return to face to face meetings be required.

9 REVIEW OF MEMBERS ATTENDANCE AT A PRIVATE / EXEMPT MEETING

The Democratic Services Manager explained that this issue had been raised following a recent special meeting of the Governance, Risk and Audit Committee. The report being considered at the meeting was exempt and was only shared with members who were able to demonstrate a 'need to know'. This led to a query regarding the attendance of members at the meeting who were not on the committee or who had received the report under the 'need to know' principle. She outlined the following section within the Constitution:

Chapter 5, section 13:

A member who is not a member of the particular committee or sub-committee may attend all meetings of any committee or sub-committee, save that he/she shall withdraw from any part of a meeting from which the committee or sub-committee excludes press and public unless specifically invited to remain by the Chairman because of the special contribution which he/she can bring to the issue under consideration.

The Chairman said that she had asked that the Working Party review this section and consider whether it should be retained. She said that she had never been present at a meeting where members in attendance had been asked to leave the room during private business. She added that the resolution taken at meetings to move into private business referred to the public and press. It did not refer to members. She said that all members understood the responsibilities relating to confidential material and did not feel that the above section was necessary. She agreed that disciplinary meetings such as Employment & Appeals Committee and Standards Committee may need to limit attendance by non-committee members.

Cllr Grove-Jones said that Licensing sub-committee hearings also needed to exclude non-committee members due to the sensitive nature of the discussions. She sought clarification on freedom of information requests and whether a request could be submitted for information that fell within exempt business. The Monitoring Officer said that the reasons for the exemption would be considered when such a request was submitted but that it did not ensure that the information would not be released. She added that the Constitution stated that members 'shall withdraw' but that the Chairman could use their discretion to allow them to remain. This provided some flexibility depending on the meeting being held.

Cllr FitzPatrick said that he felt it was a difficult issue. He believed that members had

the right to know what was being discussed in private business for most committee meetings. He agreed that certain meetings such as those referred to above could be an exception to this.

The Chairman agreed, she said that it didn't seem correct that a member could only stay in the meeting with the consent of the Chairman. Cllr FitzPatrick said that trust was integral to being a member and the onus was on them to ensure confidentiality.

The Chairman proposed that this item came back to the next meeting of the Working Party, with some wording suggested by the Monitoring Officer.

Members supported this approach.

10. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS – FULL DELEGATION TO CHIEF OFFICERS

The Chairman explained that this item had come forward following review of Corporate Governance completed by the Council's internal auditors in January 2021. Included within the review was a recommendation regarding the use of urgent and emergency powers delegated to Chief Officers under the Constitution. It was identified that where there was a requirement that an officer consults with the relevant portfolio holder prior to engaging that power, there was no process in place to resolve any dispute where the relevant member was not in agreement. The Chairman said that she was not aware of this ever having occurred, but that it was a gap in the current process which Internal Audit felt should be addressed.

The Monitoring Officer agreed, saying that it was simply to address a gap in the current process. There was the potential that the requirement to 'consult' with an elected member could be misinterpreted and this would help address that.

Cllr FitzPatrick said that it was important to have a dispute resolution in place in case of any misunderstandings. He added that it made the process more transparent too.

Cllr FitzPatrick requested that if the Council adopted the LGA Model Councillor Code of Conduct then he would like to see the document numbered in accordance with NNDC reports and protocols. The Democratic Services Manager agreed to do this.

The Monitoring Officer said that she would take back the Working Party's supportive comments to the next meeting of county monitoring officers.

The Chairman added that it also suggested a separation of powers, of which she was supportive – to senior officers other than the Chief Executive and this provided an opportunity to address settle any issues or concerns.

It was proposed by Cllr T FitzPatrick, seconded by Cllr P Grove-Jones and

AGREED to recommend

To Full Council that the Constitution be updated to include a dispute resolution procedure in the event of any disagreement between a Chief Officer and Elected Member, following consultation about use of delegated powers.

UPDATES TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Monitoring Officer advised Members that work was ongoing regarding the amendment to job titles following the recent senior management restructure. She said that there may need to be some amendments if the remote meetings regulations were not continued as these were currently reflected in the Constitution.

The Democratic Services Manager outlined the items that were suggested for future meetings, including a review of Outside Bodies later in the year and consideration of the portfolio holder reports to Council. The latter had led to some confusion in recent months and it might be helpful to review how they were compiled and where they were placed on the Full Council agenda. Cllr FitzPatrick sought clarification that it was currently one question per member for each portfolio holder or for the whole agenda item. The Democratic Services Manager confirmed it was one question per member for the whole item. Cllr FitzPatrick said that he agreed that the portfolio holder should write their own reports and that this would ensure that they would be able to answer any questions relating to them, which was not currently the case. Cllr Grove-Jones said that she had not realised that officers were writing the reports for some portfolio holders and agreed that a review should be undertaken.

The meeting ended at 11.25am.

Chairman

REVIEW OF THE MEMBER / OFFICER PROTOCOL

- Summary: The protocol was last reviewed on 11 October 2017 in response to a specific issue and minor amendments were made. It is proposed that a full refresh would be beneficial and that the Protocol could be strengthened to reflect and support the other relevant protocols and codes and to reflect best practice.
- Conclusions: It is almost 4 years since the protocol had a 'light touch' refresh and it could benefit from a full review to strengthen certain sections, including 'media relations' and to reflect best practice
- Recommendations:
- 1. That Standards Committee reviews the revised Member / Officer protocol and considers the inclusion of an additional section on expected behaviours in their upcoming review of the Member Code of Conduct.**
 - 2. That, following any further amendments by Standards Committee, Council approves the revised Member /Officer Protocol.**

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected; All
Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Emma Denny, Democratic Services Manager, 01263 516010, emma.denny@north-norfolk.gov.uk	

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview

The purpose of the Member / Officer Protocol is to guide Members and Officers of the Council in their relations with one another. The intention is that it supports the establishment of good working relationships between Members and Officers as they work together. A strong, constructive, and trusting relationship between Members and Officers is essential to the effective and efficient working of the Council.

1.2 Previous review

The protocol was reviewed by the Constitution Working Party on 11th October 2017, in response to a specific issue that had flagged up an area of concern.

Some minor amendments were made and the revisions were referred to the Standards Committee for consideration and subsequent approval by Full Council. The protocol has not had a full review for several years and a change in working practices and working relationships since the start of the pandemic have highlighted where it could be strengthened. Compared to similar protocols adopted by other authorities, it is quite short in length and could benefit from the inclusion of some additional sections and wording that would reflect best practice as well as cross references to other relevant protocols and codes. In particular, many member / officer protocols include sections on the difference between the roles of members and officers and expected behaviours.

2 Review of current protocol – proposed key amendments

2.1 Introduction to the Protocol

It is suggested that this could include additional wording on the importance of mutual trust and a reference to other relevant council documents.

2.2 New section – ‘Member / Officer relationships - General Principles’

It is proposed that a new section is added to the existing protocol which will elaborate on the general principles underpinning member/ officer relationships. This will include additional wording on trust, behaviour and expectations and highlight the key differences between the roles. Specific examples are given on expected behaviour and references are included to bullying or derogatory behaviour which is not mentioned in the current protocol.

2.3 Personal relationships

This is already included in the current protocol but is a very short section. It is suggested that this could be expanded to cover the role of political groups and the importance of members being able to express political views.

2.4 New sections – Role of Members and Role of Officers

Many local authorities include sections within their Member /officer protocols outlining the roles of both members and officers and highlighting the key differences. By including such sections within the NNDC protocol clear guidance would be provided to members, officers and the public on the separate roles and help clarify expectations as well as potential areas of conflict or misunderstanding.

2.5 New section – Council as an Employer

Most protocols include a section outlining Members’ responsibilities when involved in the recruitment of senior officers. It is suggested that a short, additional section is included on this.

2.6 Decision making

Although decision making is covered to some extent within the sections on ‘officers and whole council’ and ‘officers and the Cabinet’, it is proposed that

this is strengthened to include a covering section on delegated decisions and consultation with relevant members and justification for such decisions.

2.7 Local Members / Ward Matters

This section could be strengthened by referring to the wider impact that an issue can have on adjacent wards that and suggesting neighbouring ward members are kept informed of such matters. The inclusion of reference to keeping local members informed of matters concerning town and parish councils in their ward is also suggested.

3. Corporate Plan Objectives

3.1 Customer Focus

Ensuring that the Council's Constitution is accessible and transparent and that it reflects the expectations of the public regarding the expected behaviour of members and officers, builds on the corporate plan objective of focussing on the customer and putting them at the heart of what we do.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

A full review of the Member /Officer Protocol has been undertaken and several additions are proposed to strengthen the document, specifically regarding the distinction between roles, expected behaviours and notification / updates regarding ward matters. This will support and reflect the Member Code of Conduct (which is due for revision) and the Employee Code of Conduct as well as other relevant policies including the Council's Bullying and Harassment Policy and the Equality and Diversity Policy.

Recommendations:

- 1. That Standards Committee reviews the revised Member / Officer protocol and considers the inclusion of an additional section on expected behaviours in their upcoming review of the Member Code of Conduct.**
- 2. That, following any further amendments by Standards Committee, Council approves the revised Member /Officer Protocol.**

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Part 4. Protocol on Member/Officer Relations

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this protocol is to guide Members and Officers of the Council in their relationships with one another. It is not intended to be prescriptive or comprehensive and seeks simply to offer guidance on some of the issues, which most commonly arise.
- 1.2 Together, elected members and officers make up ‘the Council’. They are indispensable to one another and mutual respect and communication between both is essential for good local government. By working in conjunction, they bring the critical skills, experience and knowledge required to manage an effective council. Councillors provide a democratic mandate to the council, whereas officers contribute the professional and managerial expertise needed to deliver the policy framework agreed by councillors. The roles are very different but need to work in a complementary way. (see table 1)
- 1.2 The protocol seeks to reflect the principles underlying the respective Codes of Conduct, which apply to Members and Officers and should be read in association with those Codes. The shared objective of the Codes is to enhance and maintain the integrity of local government.
- 1.3 The partnership between members and officers should be based upon mutual trust and respect and all should aspire to the highest standards of ethical behaviour. Compliance with this Protocol is critical to meeting this aspiration.
- 1.4 This Protocol, whilst not legally binding, will be relevant in judging compliance with the Codes of Conduct. A breach of the provisions of this Protocol may also constitute a breach of the Member and Officer Codes.
- 1.5 The principles of this Protocol apply to all interactions between members and officers, including the use of Social Media.

2. Member / Officer relationships – general principles

- 2.1 Both members and officers are servants of the public and are indispensable to one another, but their responsibilities are distinct. Members are responsible to the electorate and serve only as long as their term of office lasts. Officers are responsible to the Council as a whole; their job is to give advice and to carry out the Council’s work under the direction and control of the Council and its Committees.
- 2.2 The importance of mutual respect, trust and confidence between members and officers of the Council is fundamental to this protocol. This is essential to good local government and will generate an efficient and unified working organisation.

- 2.3 Dealings between members and officers should observe reasonable standards of courtesy. Neither party should seek to take unfair advantage of their position or exert undue influence on the other.
- 2.4 Whilst the duties and responsibilities of members and officers are different, both are bound by the same framework of statutory powers and duties. It is fundamental to the efficient and effective operation of the Council that both understand the boundaries of their respective roles and that neither asks the other to step beyond those limits.
- 2.5 It is not the role of members to control the day to day management of the Council and they should not seek to give instructions to officers other than in accordance with the terms of reference of their committee.
- 2.6 Members are not authorised to initiate or certify financial transactions or to enter into a contract on behalf of the Council.
- 2.7 Members and officers must avoid taking actions which are unlawful, financially improper or likely to amount to maladministration. Members have an obligation under the Code of Conduct, when reaching decisions, to have regard to advice given by the Section 151 Officer or Monitoring Officer when they are discharging their statutory duties.
- 2.8 Members must respect the impartiality of Officers and do nothing to compromise it, e.g. by insisting that an Officer change their professional advice.
- 2.9 Members are not prevented from discussing issues with officers or promoting a particular point of view. Whilst officers will consider the views / advice of members they are not, in any way, compelled to provide advice which coincides with the member's view or preferred position. Any unreasonable requests by a member to an officer to change their professional recommendation will constitute unacceptable undue pressure which is not permissible.
- 2.10 All members and officers have certain basic responsibilities and obligations. There are, however, some members and officers who, either because of statute, tradition or decisions of the Council, have extended roles and additional responsibilities. Some Members hold positions of responsibility such as the Leader and Group Leaders, the Chair and Vice Chair of Council, Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Committees/Working Groups. The Statutory Officers are the Head of Paid Service (Chief Executive), the Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer) and the Monitoring Officer. Their roles are defined by statute and within the Council's Constitution.
- 2.11 As a matter of general principle, members and officers will:

- Deal with one another without discrimination
 - Observe normal standards of courtesy in their dealings with one another
 - Not take unfair advantage of their position
 - Promote a culture of mutual respect
 - Communicate clearly and openly, avoiding ambiguity and opportunities for misunderstandings
 - Work together to convert the Councils core values and priorities into practical policies for implementation for the benefit of the District
 - Observe any advice relating to publicity during the pre-election period
 - Refer any observed instances of inappropriate behaviour as necessary
- 2.12 Members must not be personally abusive to, or derogatory of officers in any correspondence, or during any meeting or discussion, in particular when this takes place in public, whether or not that individual is in attendance. Officers will likewise treat members with respect at all times.
- 2.13 Members should not criticise or raise matters relating to alleged conduct or capability of an officer at meetings of the Council, Committee or any other public forum (including on Social Media). This is a long standing tradition in public service as an officer has no means of responding to criticisms in public.
- 2.14 Officers should not raise with a member matters relating to the conduct or capability of another officer or to the internal management of a department in a manner which is incompatible with the overall objectives of this Protocol.
- 2.15 Nothing in this Protocol shall prevent an officer making a protected disclosure under the Whistleblowing Policy.
- 2.16 If an officer feels that they have been treated improperly or disrespectfully by a member they should raise the matter with the relevant Director or the Chief Executive as appropriate. In these circumstances, the Chief Executive or Director will take appropriate action, including approaching the member concerned, and raise the issue with the Group Leader (if applicable) or referring the matter to the Monitoring Officer where there is a potential breach of the Code of Conduct.
- 2.17 When a member feels that they have been treated improperly by an officer, they should speak to the relevant line manager in the first instance. If the matter is not addressed, then it can be escalated upwards to the relevant Director and /or Chief Executive

3. Personal Relationships

- 3.1 Guidance on personal relationships is contained within the Codes of Conduct.
- 3.2 Provided these guidelines are observed there is no reason why there should not be an informal atmosphere between Members and Officers outside formal meetings and events.
- 3.3 It is clearly important that there should be a close working relationship between Portfolio holders, Opposition Group Leaders and spokesmen, Committee Chairmen and the relevant Director and other senior officers. However, such relationships should never be allowed to become so close, or appear to be so close, as to bring into question the individual's ability to deal impartially with others.
- 3.4 Both members and officers will need to be aware of the potential for conflicts of interest and take steps to either avoid or mitigate the position. The Monitoring Officer should be consulted in these circumstances.
- 3.5 Political Group Leaders should promote a positive atmosphere of trust, respect and understanding between members and officers and must be prepared to deal with and resolve any reported incidents of breaches of this Protocol by their Group members. In the event of a complaint being made to them under this Protocol, a Political Group Leader will seek to actively consider the complaint and achieve a satisfactory outcome. The outcome must be reported to the Officer who notified them of the complaint

4. **Role of Members**

- 4.1 Collectively, members are the ultimate policy makers determining the core values of the Council and approving the policy framework, strategic plans and budget. Their role is complex, requiring them to act simultaneously in the following capacities:-
- 4.2 *As Council / Committee Members* – Members will provide leadership and take responsibility for the authority's decisions and activities. Members have responsibility for the performance, development, continuity and overall wellbeing of the organisation as well as overseeing governance.
- 4.3 *As Representatives* – Members are community leaders who interpret and express the wishes of the electorate and are accountable to the electorate for service priorities, allocation of resources and ultimate performance. The Member represents the interests of their Ward and is an advocate for their constituents.
- 4.4 *As Politicians* – Members may belong to a Political Group represented on the Council and, if so, may express political values and support the policies of the Group to which they belong.
- 4.5 Officers can expect members to:-

- Provide political leadership and direction.
- Initiate and develop policy to be put before Council or Committees.
- Work in partnership understanding and supporting their respective roles, workloads and pressures.
- Take corporate responsibility for policies and other decisions made by the Council.
- Prepare for formal meetings by considering all written material provided in advance of the meeting.
- Leave day to day managerial and operational issues to officers.
- Adopt a reasonable approach to awaiting officers' timely responses to calls and / or correspondence.
- Not send emails to multiple officers regarding the same issue, instead utilising one point of contact where possible.
- Use their position with officers appropriately and not seek to advance their personal interests or those of others to influence decisions improperly.
- Respect the dignity of officers and not engage in behaviour which could be reasonably regarded as bullying or harassing in nature.
- Have regard to the seniority and experience of officers and equally having regard to the potential vulnerability of officers at junior levels.

4.6 It is permissible and sensible for members to seek straightforward factual information from officers, and to seek the views of appropriately qualified officers as to technical or professional matters. However, if there is anything contentious or relates to a matter requiring a complex opinion or value judgement, this should be directed to the relevant Director or Chief Executive.

4.7 When serving on the Council's Development Committee members must observe the Planning Protocol.

4.8 Whilst members should always act in the public interest, there is nothing preventing them as politicians, from expressing the values and aspirations of the Political Group to which they belong.

4.9 As a matter of courtesy, it is expected that members involved in an issue in another member's ward will speak with the relevant ward member(s) to inform them of their involvement.

(Further information about specific roles is outlined at Chapter 11, Schedule 2 of the Constitution)

5. Role of Officers

5.1 In broad terms officers have the following main roles:

- Set and implement strategies to deliver Council policy and further the Council's priorities.
- Day to day operational management of the organisation.
- Implement decisions of the Council which are lawful and which have been properly approved.
- Give members advice on issues and the business of the Council to enable them to fulfil their roles. In doing so, officers will take into account all relevant factors and demonstrate political sensitivity.
- Manage the services for which they have been given responsibility within the framework of responsibilities given to them under the Scheme of Delegation.
- Be accountable for the efficiency and effectiveness of the services in which they work and to demonstrate proper / professional practice in discharging their responsibilities.
- Provide advice on changes in government policy for which the Council is responsible.
- Provide professional advice on industry innovation, scientific development which may assist the council in delivering services.
- Provide professional advice on innovations by other councils which may be adopted by this council to improve service delivery.
- Be professional advisors to the Council, its political structures and members in respect of their service - as such, their professionalism should be respected.
- Initiate policy proposals in line with national government requirements or council agreed priorities as well as implementing the agreed policies of the Council.
- Ensure that the Council always acts in a lawful manner and does not engage in maladministration.
- Officers may only support members in their role within the Council and must not engage in actions incompatible with this Protocol. In particular, there is a statutory limitation on some officers involvement in political activities.

5.2 Members can expect officers to:

- Undertake their role in line with their contractual and legal duty to be impartial.
- Exercise their professional judgement in giving advice and not be influenced by their own personal views.
- Have an appreciation of the political environment in which they work and demonstrate political sensitivity.
- Assist and advise all parts of the Council, officers must always act to the best of their abilities in the best interests of the authority and the residents of the district.

- Be alert to issues which are, or are likely to be, contentious or politically sensitive and to be aware of the implications for members, the media or other sections of the public.
- Maintain due confidentiality.
- Behave in a professional manner and comply with the Officer Code of Conduct.
- Be helpful and respectful to members.
- Respond in a timely manner to telephone calls, email correspondence etc.

5.3 In their dealings with the public, officers should be courteous and act with efficiency and timeliness.

5.4 In advising members of the Council, officers should be able to give honest and impartial advice without fear or favour from members. Officers must serve all members, not just those of any majority Political Group, and must ensure that the individual rights of all members are respected. The support provided by officers can take many forms, ranging from briefing an individual member on a particular issue to, on occasions, a presentation to the Council.

5.5 Subject to the Council's whistleblowing policy, officers should respect a member's request for confidentiality when dealing with any legitimately delicate matter and members should respect an officer's request that a matter be kept confidential. Where confidentiality is requested, any written reply to a member should not be copied to any other member without the original member's permission, ~~or in order~~ except to comply with an unavoidable legal or professional obligation.

6. The Council as Employer

6.1 Officers are employed by the Council as a whole. Members roles are limited to the appointment of specified senior posts in accordance with the Staff Employment Procedure Rules and should not act outside these roles.

6.2 If participating in the appointment of officers, members should:

- Remember that the sole criteria is merit
- Never canvass support for a particular candidate
- Not take part where the candidate is a close friend or relative
- Not be influenced by personal knowledge of candidates
- Not favour a candidate by providing them with information not available to other candidates

7. Members' Constituency Role and Individual Employees

7.1 A Member may be asked for advice and support by an employee who is one of their constituents. Employees are entitled to seek such assistance in the same way as any other member of the public. However, Members should be careful not to prejudice the Council's position in relation to disciplinary procedures or employment matters in respect of an employee. A Member approached for help in such circumstances should seek to direct employees to other sources of help, such as Human Resources, and not become directly involved. If a Member is unsure, the Democratic Services Team can offer advice on who to speak to.

8. Support Services to Members and Party Groups

8.1 Members are provided with ICT (information and communication technology) equipment and support services (e.g., printing, photocopying etc.) to enable them to better perform their policy and constituency role as Councillors.

8.2 Members should not use – and Officers should not provide - such equipment and support services in connection with party political or campaigning activity or for purposes not related to Council business.

8.3 Except that

- limited private photocopying may be undertaken provided it is at no cost to the Council; and
- IT equipment may be used for non-commercial purposes provided it does not cause a conflict with, or risk to, Council systems, nor increase the support required from Officers.

9. Decisions

9.1 Before any formal decisions are taken members will have regard to professional advice from officers. They are not obliged to follow that advice, simply to consider it before reaching a decision.

9.2 Officers taking decisions under delegated powers must consider whether the relevant Political Group Leader, Committee Chair or Ward Member should be consulted based on the issue and taking into account political or corporate sensitivities (see below on consultation with Ward Members).

- Where the matter falls under the responsibility of that Chair's committee
- Where the matter relates to that ward

9.3 Officers must also be prepared to justify how decisions taken under delegated powers contribute to the delivery of council policy and priorities when reasonably required to do so.

9.4 Where officers have delegated authority to take certain actions by a Committee in consultation with a member, it is the officer who takes the action and is responsible for it. A Political Group Leader or Chair has no legal power to take

decisions on behalf of the Council or a Committee neither should he / she apply inappropriate pressure on the officer.

10. Officers and Whole Council

- 10.1 While the Constitution does not at present include provision for delegation of decisions to individual Portfolio Holders it may do so in the future. In any event the Constitution does show that there is a clear division between the decision making functions of the Cabinet and the Scrutiny Committee and other roles of Members.
- 10.2 However, Officers are required at all times to serve the whole Council and provide support regardless of political affiliation and will need to exercise judgement in fulfilling this obligation, whilst maintaining the distinction between executive and scrutiny. Members must recognise this obligation on Officers.

11. Officers and the Cabinet/Portfolio Holders

- 11.1 Any decision by an individual Portfolio Holder (if the Council should so delegate in future) or collective decision by the Executive Committee should except in an emergency be supported by written advice from the appropriate Officer(s). An Officer's obligation to the whole Council requires that such advice is independent and Members must not seek to suppress or amend any aspect of such professional advice.
- 11.2 Reports to Committees will normally be produced by Officers but there may be occasions when a Portfolio Holder or other Member prepares a report. In either situation, the appropriate Officer shall place on record his/her professional advice to the Committee and ensure that advice is considered when a decision is taken.
- 11.3 Officers may be representing the decisions (internally and externally) of a single party Cabinet or an individual Portfolio Holder. Other Members will need to recognise that, in so doing, the Officer is representing an executive decision of the Council.

12. Officers and Political Party Groups

- 12.1 There is statutory recognition for political groups and it is common practice for such groups to give preliminary consideration to matters of Council business in advance of consideration by the relevant Council body.
- 12.2 On the invitation of a Group Leader, a Director or his/her nominee may attend a Group meeting to give factual information about an issue which is currently being or will shortly be debated by a Council body, provided that:
- the meeting is held on Council premises;
 - notice of attendance is given to the appropriate Head of Service and made available on request to the other Group Leaders.

- 12.3 Officer support in these circumstances must not extend beyond providing information in relation to matters of Council business. Officers must not be involved in advising on matters of party business. The observance of this distinction will be assisted if Officers are not expected to be present when matters of party business are discussed.
- 12.4 Group meetings, while they form part of the preliminaries to Council decision making, are not empowered to make decisions on behalf of the Council. Conclusions reached at such meetings are not Council decisions and it is essential that they are not interpreted or acted upon as such.
- 12.5 Similarly where Officers provide information and advice to a Group in relation to a matter of Council business this cannot act as a substitute for the Officer providing all necessary information and advice to the relevant Council body when the matter is considered.
- 12.6 Officers will not normally attend and provide information to any political party group meeting which includes non-Council members. Exceptions to this may be approved by the Chief Executive who shall do so in writing and copy the correspondence to all the political Group Leaders.
- 12.7 In all dealings with Members, in particular when giving advice to political party groups, Officers must demonstrate political impartiality and must not suppress their professional advice in the face of political views.
- 12.8 Officers must respect the confidentiality of any political party group meeting at which they are present. They must not relay the content of any such discussion to another party group.
- 12.9 Any particular cases of difficulty or uncertainty in this area of Officer advice to political party groups should be raised with the Chief Executive who will discuss them with the relevant Group Leader(s).

13. Officers and Individual Members

- 13.1 Any Group Leader, Portfolio Holder, Group Spokesman or Committee Chairman may request a private and confidential briefing from a Corporate Director on matters of *policy* which have already been or may be discussed by the Council or within its decision-making or advisory process. All requests should be made to the appropriate Corporate Director/Head of Service who should invite the Monitoring Officer or his/her nominees to attend if this is thought appropriate. Briefings shall remain strictly confidential and are not to be shared with other Members of the Council unless so permitted by the relevant Member.
- 13.2 Except for the confidential *policy advice* referred to above, where possible *information* will be shared among political group representatives. In particular, Overview & Scrutiny is a cross-party process involving all political groups represented on the Council. *Information* supplied to Overview & Scrutiny

Chairmen will therefore be shared as a matter of course with each of the political groups.

- 13.3 Individual Members may request the Chief Executive (or Head of Service) to provide them with factual information. Such requests must be reasonable, and must recognise the need for Officers to maintain the distinction between the executive and scrutiny processes. The relevant Cabinet members, Committee or Overview & Scrutiny Committee Chairman and the Opposition Spokesmen will, unless it is of a minor nature, be advised that the information has been given and, on request, will be supplied with a copy.
- 13.4 If a /Head of Service considers the cost of providing the information requested - or the nature of the request - to be unreasonable, he/she shall seek guidance from the Monitoring Officer as to whether the information should be provided. Where necessary, the Leader in consultation with the other Group Leaders, will determine whether the information should be provided.
- 13.5 Confidential information relating, for instance, to casework should not normally be sought. If in exceptional circumstances Members wish to discuss confidential aspects of an individual case, then they shall first seek advice from the /Head of Service and follow appropriate guidance.
- 13.6 Finally, any Council information provided to a Member must only be used by the Member for the purpose for which it was provided (i.e. in connection with the proper performance of the Member's duties as a member of the Council). This point is emphasised in the Code of Conduct.

14. Officers and Non-Council Elected Representatives

- 14.1 Officers may be requested to meet with Councillors or Elected Representatives from other Councils or organisations to provide briefings and/or policy advice.
- 14.2 Any Officer requested to attend a meeting of this nature which is not held on a cross-political party basis must obtain the prior authorisation of the Chief Executive who shall inform all Group Leaders of the arrangements.

15. Media Relations

- 15.1 A primary intention of the Government in introducing executive arrangements was to raise the public and media profile of Portfolio Holders and to make the Cabinet directly accountable for decisions taken. It follows that media presentation and media support will reflect this. Advice to the Cabinet and Portfolio Holders in relation to the media will be provided on a confidential basis if requested.
- 15.2 Overview & Scrutiny Chairmen shall ensure that all media statements relating to the scrutiny function have the support of the relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Any such statements must be consistent with the Council's intent that the scrutiny function shall help to achieve a culture of continuous improvement throughout the Council.

- 15.3 The Communications & PR Manager and other Officers will also assist non-Cabinet Members in their media relations (on a confidential basis if requested). Contact details for the Communications Manager and Communications Officers will be circulated annually to all members and shared at any other time on request
- 15.4 Any Officer assisting a Member with media relations must act at all times in the interests of the whole Council and in a politically impartial manner. Other than factual statements, Members should not seek assistance from an Officer with the preparation or issue of any media statement that will adversely affect the reputation of the Council.
- 16. Local Members / ward matters**
- 16.1 The Council via the relevant Officer(s), and / or Cabinet member, will keep local members fully informed about significant operational matters on which they may be required to make decisions or which affect their electoral wards.
- 16.2 Senior officers will ensure that all relevant staff are aware of the requirement to keep local members informed and that, subject to paragraph 3 below, the timing of such information allows local members to respond appropriately and contribute to relevant decisions.
- 16.3 Any notification under this protocol should include sufficient detail to enable the local member(s) to have a broad understanding of the issue including a summary of advantages and disadvantages of any proposal and any financial implications.
- 16.4 Where lawful and practicable, unless exceptional circumstances are present, communication of such information to local members will be made seven days before external publication by the council of that same information. During the period between being alerted about significant information affecting their ward which is to be published and the time/date of publication, ~~those seven days~~ the local member shall keep confidential the information imparted and not disclose or publicly comment on it further, either directly or via social media or external media without the agreement of the Chief Executive.
- 16.5 Local members must be informed by the relevant Council officers of the formative stages of policy development as it affects their ward. This includes any consideration of the matter by working parties, internal boards or committees of the Council. It should be noted that passing on of information to members in this way is not necessarily the responsibility of the Communications team and may come directly from officers in other departments. The Communication team's involvement will usually start when the Chief Executive or other relevant senior officer asks the Communications team to prepare external publication of a policy development/announcement.
- 16.6 Issues may affect a single electoral ward but others may have a wider impact in which case a wider number of members will need to be kept informed. The

Communications team will, under the direction of the Chief Executive, share all significant Council news releases which affect the wider District or a number of electoral wards with members when they are published externally.

- 16.7 Whenever a public meeting is organised by the Council to consider a local issue all the members representing the electoral wards affected should as a matter of course be invited to attend the meeting.
- 16.8 Whenever the Council undertakes any form of consultative exercise the local members must be included.
- 16.9 In dealing with Town or Parish Councils, officers should endeavour to copy ward members into correspondence. Likewise, officers may advise Town and Parish Councils to ensure that Ward members are provided with information relative to their role. This will need to be considered on a case by case basis to avoid creating an unnecessary administrative burden on officers.
- 16.10 Where a news release specifically relates to a significant issue affecting a particular ward or geographical area, the local Member(s) will be advised by email, or telephone as appropriate and sent a copy. when it is published on the Council's official news channels and/or shared with the local media.
- 16.11 The local member's name will where appropriate, be shared with media as a potential contact for comment and the Communications Team will offer advice and guidance in the usual way, seeking a quote from the local member in advance of the release if appropriate and providing advice for dealing with any retrospective approach for further comment from the media. Members are encouraged to take part in regular training on the use of social media.

17. Member Training

- 17.1 Members are expected to embrace the principles of personal development and skill training and ensure they allocate time to participate in all the necessary training and personal development activities. This includes the necessary skills to take advantage of the ICT facilities made available to them.
- 12.2 Officers will work with individual members to produce a personal development plan, seek to ensure resources are available to fulfil the actions agreed in the plan and provide appropriate training to ensure that all members have the skills needed to fulfil their duties.

Other Codes, Protocols and Policies that should be referred to:

Member Code of Conduct
Employee Code of Conduct
Bullying & Harassment Policy
Access to Information Procedure Rules (Chapter 10 of the Constitution)

Table 1.

Elected Members	Officers
Democratically elected (receive an allowance)	Employed by the Council (paid a salary)
Community leaders – with a focus on their ward	May have specialist role with a specific focus
Make decisions on behalf of the District, and for the whole Council	Work for the District and the whole council
Can bring a political dimension to the role	Impartial – must give unbiased advice and information to all members equally
Abide by a Member Code of Conduct	Bound by their employment contract and the employee code of conduct
Set policy & oversee service delivery	Implement policies & ensure delivery of services
Only involved in senior officer appointments	Day to day management of officers and service areas

Dispute Resolution Process – Full Delegation to Chief Officers

- Summary: Proposed update to the Constitution: dispute resolution procedure where an Elected Member disagrees with a Chief Officer in the exercise of delegated powers.
- Options considered: (1) Add a dispute resolution procedure to the Constitution
(2) Remove emergency delegation powers
(3) Take no action
- Conclusions: This should summarise the main conclusions of your report.
- Recommendations: **To make a recommendation to Full Council that the Constitution be updated to include a dispute resolution procedure in the event of any disagreement between a Chief Officer and Elected Member, following consultation about use of delegated powers.**
- Reasons for Recommendations: To enable there to be a process for resolving disputes and address the risk of no decision being taken, in particular, where there is an emergency

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

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

<i>Tiaa Internal audit – Assurance Review of Corporate Governance (January 2021)</i>
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Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected - All
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Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Cara Jordan, Monitoring Officer Tel - 01263 516373; email - cara.jordan@north-norfolk.gov.uk
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1. Introduction

1.1 Corporate Governance Review - Current process of delegation to Chief Officers.

A review of Corporate Governance was completed by internal auditors in January 2021. It generally considered the Council response to Covid-19 in the administration of committee meetings and decision making. Included within this review was an observation, with a recommendation, regarding the use of urgent and emergency powers delegated to Chief Officers under the Constitution. It was identified that where there is a requirement that such an officer consults with the relevant Elected Member prior to engaging that power, there is no process in place to resolve a dispute where the relevant Elected Member is not in agreement.

1.2 The Internal Audit Recommendation

There was a recommendation that the Constitution be updated to include a dispute resolution process where there was disagreement between the Chief Officer and the relevant Elected Member, to go via the Chief Executive in the first instance.

2. Urgent and Emergency delegated powers – current position

2.1 Constitution, Chapter 6 – Full delegation to Chief Officers

Chapter 6 of the North Norfolk District Council Constitution deals with delegation of powers and functions to the Chief Executive and, in his absence, other Chief Officers. The current position is set out at paragraph 5.1 and 5.6 of Chapter 6, which provides delegated authority to exercise any power or function of the Council to those officers, in certain situations. Both provide for 'consultation' with specified Elected Members.

2.2 Urgent decisions, Chapter 6

Paragraph 5.1 provides for delegation to such officers where there is urgency. It sets out that this delegation may be exercised in routine matters falling within established policies and within existing budgets where waiting until a meeting of the Council, Committee or Working Party would disadvantage the Council or persons within the District. In particular, the power or function is only to be used "after consultation" with the Leader of the Council or other appropriate Portfolio Member, and such other Members where the matter relates to a particular part of the District. There is then the requirement to report the exercise of the delegated power to the next available meeting of the Council, Committee or Working Part as appropriate.

2.3 Emergency decisions, Chapter 6

Paragraph 5.2 provides a similar delegation to those same Chief Officers in an emergency threatening life, limb or substantial damage to property. Again there is a requirement to make all reasonable efforts "to consult" with the Leader of the Council or their Deputy, and then to report at the next meeting of Cabinet or the Council.

2.4 Consultation

The review identified that there may be a risk that a decision cannot be taken should a Chief Officer consult with a relevant Elected Member who disagrees with the officer. Whilst "consulting" is different to obtaining agreement, it is understood that where there is such disagreement, this may risk that a decision cannot be taken in a timely manner or at all.

2.5 Disagreement in use of urgent and emergency powers

The Constitution provides that these Chief Officers are delegated with these urgent and emergency powers. This allows for urgent matters to be dealt with quickly and for emergencies to be addressed without delay. An alternative would be for such powers to be revoked, but this may cause delay and risk in the most urgent situations, and would be contrary to the current position.

In an urgent or emergency situation, where a Chief Officer proposes to use delegated powers, and where after consultation, the relevant Elected Member is not in agreement, the following dispute resolution procedure is proposed, which can be added to paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of Chapter 6 of the Constitution:

2.6 Dispute Resolution Process

There be added at the end of paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 the following wording:

On consultation with the relevant Elected Member(s), as detailed in this paragraph, if there is disagreement as to the use of the delegated power or function, the following procedure shall apply. Any Chief Officer may choose not to exercise the delegated power or function. Where he or she wishes to proceed with the delegated authority, where the Chief Officer is not the Chief Executive, the matter shall be referred to the Chief Executive who will decide if the power or function is to be exercised, having considered the views of the Elected Member and the Chief Officer.

3. Corporate Plan Objectives

3.1 Customer Focus

Ensuring that the Council's democratic process runs as transparently and as effectively as possible, building on the corporate plan objective of focussing on the customer and putting them at the heart of what we do

4. Financial and Resource Implications

Chief Officers currently have delegated authority under paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 and there are no specific costs associated with the proposals set out in this report.

5. Legal Implications

There are no specific legal provisions save to cite that the Constitution provides for the delegated authority by Chief Officers under paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2.

6. Equality and Diversity

The considerations and recommendations have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act.

7. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

Urgent or emergency decisions may, by their nature, be required to be made quickly. Depending on the nature of the situation or emergency, the type and timeliness of the delegated power or function under consideration, may be relevant to the prevention of crime and disorder in the District.

8. Conclusion and Recommendations

That the Constitution Working Party considers whether a dispute resolution procedure be added to paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of Chapter 6 of the Constitution. If so, that it makes the following recommendation to Full Council:

- (i) There be added to Chapter 6, Paragraphs 5.1 and 5.2 of the Constitution a dispute resolution procedure where the Elected Member(s) disagrees with the Chief Officer's proposed use of delegated powers in an urgent or emergency situation.
- (ii) That the Monitoring Officer be authorised to update the Constitution with the addition of the dispute resolution procedure.

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CONSTITUTION WORKING PARTY

Minutes of a remote meeting of the Constitution Working Party held on Monday 28th June at 10.00 am

Committee	Ms V Gay (Chairman)	Mr T FitzPatrick
Members Present:	Mr A Varley	Mrs P Grove-Jones Mr E Vardy

Officers in Attendance: The Monitoring Officer (Assistant Director for Finance, Assets & Legal, the Chief Technical Accountant and the Democratic Services Manager)

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 13th April 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. The Chairman referred to page 7 of the minutes and the reference to attendance by members at exempt meetings. This would be addressed at the next meeting.

3 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received.

5 REVIEW OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER REPORTS TO COUNCIL

The Chairman referred Members to the written report and asked for comments. Cllr T FitzPatrick said that taking the current approach of taking the reports and questions in alphabetical sequence, disadvantaged the smaller political groups as it was limited to one question per member. He felt that it would be more equitable if the reports were presented en bloc and then opened up to questions. He said that under the current process, an opportunity would be lost to ask a further question if an issue arose during a later portfolio report. He added that some authorities took the approach of opening questions up to the main opposition group first, followed by the smaller groups and then the Administration last. This gave an opportunity for the opposition to ask questions and challenge the Administration and ensure that the small groups in particular were able to speak. He added that at Norfolk County Council, there was no equivalent of portfolio reports but there was a session for open questions to Cabinet members at Full Council meetings and portfolio holders were expected to answer questions put to them.

Cllr P Grove-Jones said that portfolio reports must be time limited as it could run on for a long time otherwise. She said that she found written reports to be helpful as they provided an insight into what was happening at the Council. The Chairman agreed, saying that written reports, prepared with input from officers, could provide a useful update on the work of service areas. She sought members' views on whether portfolio holders should write their own reports. As a portfolio holder herself, she said that although she could update Council on specific areas of interest, if officers had input into reports then it ensured that portfolio holders did not miss any key areas of work. Cllr Grove-Jones agreed. She said that there would not be a consistent standard to the reports if Members wrote them themselves.

Cllr FitzPatrick said that he agreed that Members did not have to write the reports themselves, however, they should be familiar with the content of the written reports and be able to respond to questions at Council relating to them. If questions were asked on a matter that was not included in the written report, then it was reasonable to offer to provide a written response after the meeting.

Cllr Grove-Jones asked whether the time limit on portfolio reports was still 30 minutes. The Democratic Services Manager replied that this was the time set out in the Constitution, however, a previous review of portfolio holder reports had led to a recommendation of an hour time limit so this may be something that Members may wish to consider. The Chairman said that she felt this was during a time when members read out reports to the meeting. This was no longer the case and she felt that an hour was too long.

Cllr E Vardy asked whether there was a time limit for members wanting to ask a question. The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that it was 5 minutes with a further 1 minute for a supplementary question. She added that if each member used the full 5 minutes then the 30 minutes' time limit would be quickly used up. Cllr Vardy said that he felt it was important that the time for each member was equitable and that some members weren't taking up more time than others.

Cllr Grove-Jones asked whether consideration should be given to written questions being submitted in advance of the meeting for inclusion in the published agenda. Cllr A Varley said that he felt written questions would be beneficial. The current format meant that it regularly over-ran due to so many questions being asked on the night. Having questions in advance would enable the Cabinet member to respond fully and assist with complying with the 30 minute time limit.

Cllr T FitzPatrick said that he didn't support written questions. He said that the long lead-in required to include them in the agenda meant that there was limited opportunity to ask impromptu questions on the night. He added that by ensuring the portfolio reports were included in the agenda, members could read them and ask pertinent questions at the meeting. Cllr Grove-Jones said that there would still be the possibility of asking a supplementary question on the night. Cllr FitzPatrick acknowledged this but said submitting questions in advance would remove the opportunity to challenge at the meeting.

Cllr E Vardy sought clarification on whether members could ask questions at Cabinet meetings. The Chairman confirmed that they could and there was no requirement to submit them in advance. The Democratic Services Manager added that questions asked at Cabinet had to relate to items on the published agenda, whereas questions to Cabinet members at Full Council could be on any item or issue within their portfolio.

The Chairman asked if there was any support for extending the 30 minute time limit on portfolio reports. It was agreed that there was not.

She then asked about submitting written questions in advance. Cllr Grove-Jones said that she wouldn't support having questions submitted just before the meeting as this could lead to them being circulated at short notice. The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that this would be the case if a short deadline was imposed. She added that if written questions were included in the published agenda, they would need to be submitted 10 days before the meeting and this could potentially limit questions relating to any issues that may arise between the publication of the agenda and the meeting. Cllr Varley acknowledged that this was a lengthy lead in time.

The Chairman referred to Opposition Business at Council meetings and sought clarification that this was also a thirty minute session. The Democratic Services Manager confirmed that this was the case. She said that this was an item for debate rather than questions but was an opportunity for opposition groups to bring forward items of interest or concern.

Cllr FitzPatrick said that it would be helpful if there could be clarity regarding members responding to questions rather than an officer replying on their behalf. The Democratic Services Manager replied that it was set out in the Constitution that officers should not speak at meetings unless a question was specifically directed at them. She went on to say that one of the main issues currently was the one question per member requirement. There seemed to be a misconception that it was one question per member per portfolio holder.

The Chairman said that the Council Chairman currently used his discretion to allow more questions and perhaps continuing with this would be the best way to resolve the problem. Otherwise, if every member chose to ask each portfolio holder a question, the session could become extremely lengthy.

Cllr FitzPatrick commented that the current format of portfolio holders presenting their reports in turn, meant that members felt that they needed to ask a question early in the session in case the time limit was reached and they missed the opportunity to do so. He suggested that it might be fairer if portfolio holders presented their reports en bloc first and then a separate session was opened for questions for 30 minutes on a first come, first served basis.

RESOLVED

To recommend to Council:

1. That the Council agenda be amended to include the following two separate standing agenda items:
 - a. Presentation of Portfolio reports
 - b. Questions to Portfolio Holders (limited to 30 minutes)
2. That a review be undertaken in 6 months

6 CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS (PROCUREMENT) EXEMPTIONS

The Chairman outlined the background to this item. She explained that the Constitution as currently set out, was quite clear on the processes that should be followed for managing and recording contract procurement exemptions. Problems had arisen

because these processes had not been followed. She drew Members' attention to the recommendations in Internal Audit's final position statement that had been presented to Governance, Risk & Audit Committee on 15th June. Some of the recommendations required amendments to the Constitution and the Working Party was now asked to consider these changes, together with the revised procurement exemption request form.

Cllr Grove-Jones asked for clarification about the Procurement Officer post and where it was based. The report did not state this. The Monitoring Officer replied that this was currently under review. Cllr Grove-Jones went on to say that a consistent approach to procurement exemptions seemed to have been lacking in the last few years. She welcomed the proposal that three people would be required to sign off the exemption certificate.

Cllr T FitzPatrick said that transparency was also fundamental to the process. He supported the three signatories but felt that there should be an additional step in the process of reporting any contract exemptions to the next meeting of Cabinet or Council.

Cllr Varley agreed with the previous comments. Cllr Grove-Jones said that she believed that they should be reported to Council. Cllr FitzPatrick said that the exemption should not be considered to be valid until it was signed off and then it should be reported to the next meeting of Cabinet or Council – whichever was soonest.

The Chairman said that regardless of the contract and the reason for the exemption, the forms should be treated in a consistent way. Cllr Vardy concurred, saying that they should be signed off as soon as the exemption was agreed and then reported through to the relevant committee.

The Chief Technical Accountant said that on the new version of the form, the S151 officer was no longer required to sign off contract exemptions. She explained that he had previously been the Procurement Officer and it was felt that his role as signatory had stayed with him for historic reasons and that it was not something that the S151 Officer needed to do. It was felt to be more appropriate for the Procurement Officer to sign them off to indicate that the correct processes had been followed and the Monitoring Officer then signing to say the reason for the exemption was valid. Regarding consistency, she said that some of the officers instigating the exemptions were not familiar with the process. Although the Constitution set it out clearly, the previous guidance notes had not.

The Chairman referred members to the current exemption form and asked them to compare it to the revised form (Appendix 2 to the report).

Cllr Grove-Jones said that she was concerned to hear that the S151 officer would no longer be required to sign the exemption forms. She felt that they had responsibility for finance and expenditure and should be a signatory. Cllr FitzPatrick agreed. The Chairman said that she also felt that the S151 officer should be a signatory. It was a statutory role and everyone was familiar with it, whereas it was not necessarily clear what the Procurement Officer role involved or which service area they worked in.

Cllr J Rest, Chairman of the Governance, Risk & Audit Committee (GRAC) said that he wanted to clarify that the first signature on the form should be the originating officer and that they should take responsibility for initiating the exemption process. He added that there had been a discussion at the GRAC meeting about the S151 Officer and it was felt that the Procurement Officer would have to discuss the exemption with the S151 Officer to ensure that the finance was in place. He went on to say that one of the key recommendations from the Internal Audit review was that there should be a unique reference number allocated to each exemption to ensure transparency and a clear

decision trail.

Cllr Grove-Jones said that the S151 Officer was responsible for the Council's finances and should be a signatory on the exemption forms.

It was proposed by Cllr T FitzPatrick, seconded by Cllr P Grove-Jones and

RESOLVED

That the Section 151 Officer was a required signatory on the Contract Procurement Exemption form.

The Chairman then asked Members to consider the proposed changes to the Constitution, as set out in Appendix 3 to the report. She queried the lettering at 11.1 which started at (n) rather than (a). The Chief Technical Accountant explained that this seemed to be an error and that it appeared to have been automatically generated to follow on from previous lettering in the report. She confirmed that it reflected the text included in the guidance notes for contract exemptions and that this was the proposed new wording for inclusion in the Constitution as there had previously been confusion about needing to refer separately to the Constitution. Nothing had been removed from the Constitution, it had just been made clearer and expanded on.

Cllr P Grove-Jones referred to the waiver for emergencies. She sought clarification on whether a form should still be completed. The Chief Technical Accountant confirmed that an emergency was one of the reasons for an exemption and this would need to be stated on a completed form. She explained that previously, waivers for emergency reasons related specifically to health and safety. The revised wording expanded on this to include serious disruption to council services.

Cllr J Rest referred to section 11.3 on page 83 of the report. He sought confirmation that the terms of reference for GRAC would need to be amended to reflect the additional reporting of contract procurement exemptions to the committee. The Democratic Services Manager confirmed this, saying that they were currently only reported annually as part of the Monitoring Officer's Annual Report. She added that there had been a previous discussion about the visibility of the contract exemptions on the website and this may be something that members may wish to consider.

RESOLVED

Cllr Vardy sought clarification on how contract procurement exemptions were reported and if they were ratified by Cabinet or Council to ensure transparency throughout the process. The Chairman replied that some of the exemptions were operational and she had been advised by the Monitoring Officer that it would not be appropriate for a member to authorise them. The Chief Technical Accountant agreed, saying that it would not always be practical to wait for them to be ratified by Cabinet. For emergency exemptions in particular, a quick turnaround was needed and this would add unnecessary delay.

Cllr Vardy replied that all of the contract exemptions should be reported to members so that they were aware of all the decisions that were being taken.

The Democratic Services Manager sought clarification on how members would like to see the contract exemptions reported. The recommendation was for six monthly reporting to GRAC. Cllr J Rest, Chairman of GRAC, suggested that it could be a standing item on the GRAC agenda.

It was proposed by Cllr A Varley, seconded by Cllr P Grove-Jones and

RESOLVED

- 1. To recommend that a standing item for the reporting of contract procurement exemptions was added to the Governance, Risk & Audit Committee agenda**
- 2. To publish the contract procurement exemptions on the Council's website on a quarterly basis.**

The Chairman thanked the Monitoring Officer for including timescales as a reason for an exemption. She said that she welcomed this addition. She then referred to the earlier discussion about ensuring the contract could not start until the exemption certificate was completed. The Monitoring Officer confirmed that this was not explicit in the current Constitution.

It was proposed by Cllr V Gay, seconded by Cllr A Varley and

RESOLVED

That the contract cannot commence until the exemption form has been satisfactorily completed, with the exception of an emergency situation, when the form must be completed as soon as practical.

The Chairman said that it was important that the form should not be regarded as an unnecessary inconvenience, it should be seen as essential to process.

Cllr Vardy sought clarification regarding the form and whether the new form had a date box as this was important. The Chairman confirmed that this was the case.

It was proposed by Cllr P Grove-Jones, seconded by Cllr E Vardy and

RESOLVED:

To recommend to Full Council the following;

- a. The updates and amendments to the Exemption Form as contained within Appendix 2 of the report**
- b. That the Section 151 Officer is a required signatory on the Contract Procurement Exemption form.**
- c. The updates and amendments to the Constitution as contained within Appendix 3 of the report**
- d. That the Constitution states that the contract cannot commence until the exemption form has been satisfactorily completed, with the exception of an emergency situation, when the form must be completed as soon as practical and that this is included in the Constitution**
- e. That a standing item for the reporting of contract procurement exemptions is added to the Governance, Risk & Audit Committee agenda**
- f. To publish the contract procurement exemptions on the Council's website on a quarterly basis.**

9 UPDATES TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Monitoring Officer advised Members that work was ongoing regarding the amendment to job titles following the recent senior management restructure. She was also reviewing the removal of references to remote meetings following the discontinuation of the regulations.

The meeting ended at 11.30am.

Chairman

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ADOPTION OF A NEW CODE OF CONDUCT

Summary: Following the introduction of a new Model Code of Conduct by the Local Government Association in December 2020, Members are asked to consider whether they wish to continue with the Council's current Code of Conduct, or whether they consider that the template Model Code provided by the LGA would strengthen the code on Member behaviour, and if so, whether it should be adopted as a whole or with amendment.

Options considered:

1. No action – preserve the status quo and continue with the Code of Conduct presently in situ.
2. Adopt the Model Code of Conduct in total
3. Adopt the Model Code of Conduct, with amendment

Conclusions: That Members consider adopting the LGA Model Code of Conduct.

Recommendations: **To recommend to Full Council that the Model Code of Conduct be adopted.**

Reasons for Recommendations: To comply with the Localism Act 2011 and to strengthen and improve the current Code of Conduct requirements presently in place.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW

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

The LGA Model Code of Conduct [Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 \(local.gov.uk\)](https://www.local.gov.uk/model-councillor-code-of-conduct-2020)

Cabinet Member(s) All Ward(s) affected All

Contact Officer, telephone number and email:

Cara Jordan: 01263 516373 cara.jordan@north-norfolk.gov.uk

1. Introduction

1.1 Requirement to have a Code of Conduct

Under the Localism Act 2011, Local Authorities are required to have a Code of Conduct. This is a Code based on the Nolan Principles setting a standard of behaviour expected by elected and co-opted members of the three tiers of councils. There are obligations and requirements which if breached may be acted upon. It is designed to protect democracy and encourage good conduct and public trust.

1.2 Variation in Codes of Conduct locally and nationally

All Codes of Conduct presently in place, whilst based on the Nolan Principles, vary widely from council to council. Some are very detailed and prescriptive, whilst others are extremely basic. It can sometimes be confusing to establish whether a particular behaviour breaches a specific code. This is further complicated in that a councillor who is a member of more than one local authority is likely to be subject to different Codes. There has also been some criticism of the Standards regime that it is not sufficiently robust with regard to sanctions.

1.3 **Addressing Standards**

In January 2019 the Committee on Standards in Public Life published its report “Local Government Ethical Standards: A review by the Committee on Standards on Public Life”. This report made a number of recommendations: one of which was the introduction of an updated model code of conduct. On 23 December 2020 the Local Government Association (“LGA”) published the new Model Code of Conduct. Councils may now consider whether they would like to adopt this new Model Code, which has been developed following a period of consultation. It is a significant publication being the first major revision of a model Code of Conduct for very many years.

1.4 **The Code of Conduct presently in place**

North Norfolk District Council does have a Code of Conduct at present and so is compliant, but areas have been identified where the Code could be improved or strengthened. The Model Code of Conduct has been developed by the Local Government Association following consultation and is designed as a template for councils to adopt in whole or with such local amendments as a particular council sees fit.

2. **Adoption of a new Code**

2.1 **Implementing a new Code of Conduct**

The Constitution Working Party discussed the new Model Code of Conduct in February and March 2021. The CWP generally held positive views of the new Model Code and were keen to see a Norfolk-wide consensus of it following further discussions with other Norfolk councils. It is understood that, due to the different priorities of some other Norfolk councils, that councils are at a different stage of implementation or consideration of the new Model Code, with at least one Council having already implemented an amended version of it. It may be that, in light of this information, this Council wishes to proceed with a decision as to whether or not to adopt a new Code of Conduct for its Members without delay. This would not negate some future discussion between Norfolk Councils at a later stage.

2.2 **New Model Code**

The Model Code of Conduct has been considered by the Constitution Working Party. Its content covers general behaviour, as well as use of local authority resources, participation in training and registration and disclosure of interests. The Local Government Ethical Standards report also included Best Practice recommendations, some of which could be considered to add further detail to the Model Code now, or at some future time.

2.3 **Other supporting protocols**

The Model Code of Conduct sets out the standards expected of councillors. It is intended to be a concise document, written in the first person, to provide a clear code of behaviour expected. It would be possible to add more detail or examples within any code adopted by this Council. However, Members are reminded that there are other sources of reference as to their conduct which sit alongside the Code of Conduct, and which make reference and go into finer detail as to conduct expectations. In particular the *Protocol on Member Officer Relations* which is currently being updated, and which outlines responsibilities of both officer and Members when interacting.

3 Corporate Plan Objectives

3.1 Customer Focus

Ensuring that the Council's democratic process runs as transparently and as effectively as possible, building on the corporate plan objective of focussing on the customer and putting them at the heart of what we do

4. Medium Term Financial Strategy

No specific impact identified

5. Financial and Resource Implications

There are no specific costs associated with the proposals set out in this report

6. Legal Implications

The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to have a Code of Conduct dealing with Member standards

7. Risks

There is a reputational risk where there is not a sufficiently robust Code of Conduct in place governing Member conduct.

8. Sustainability

There are no specific sustainability issues identified

9. Climate / Carbon impact

There are no specific climate or carbon impact issues identified

10. Equality and Diversity

The Code deals with treating others fairly and with respect

11. Section 17 Crime and Disorder considerations

No specific issues identified

12. Conclusion and Recommendations

Members are requested to consider the view of the Constitution Working Party in its general support of the Model Code. As there does not appear to be an option for Norfolk-wide consensus at the present time, Members may wish to proceed to a decision now. Following review of the Model Code, and consideration of the views of the CWP, if Members support the adoption of the New Model Code to strengthen the current ethical standards position of the council, it may wish to make the following recommendation to Full Council:

- (i) To make a recommendation to Full Council that the Model Code of Conduct be adopted.

Local Government Association

Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020

Joint statement

The role of councillor across all tiers of local government is a vital part of our country's system of democracy. It is important that as councillors we can be held accountable and all adopt the behaviors and responsibilities associated with the role. Our conduct as an individual councillor affects the reputation of all councillors. We want the role of councillor to be one that people aspire to. We also want individuals from a range of backgrounds and circumstances to be putting themselves forward to become councillors.

As councillors, we represent local residents, work to develop better services and deliver local change. The public have high expectations of us and entrust us to represent our local area; taking decisions fairly, openly, and transparently. We have both an individual and collective responsibility to meet these expectations by maintaining high standards and demonstrating good conduct, and by challenging behaviour which falls below expectations.

Importantly, we should be able to undertake our role as a councillor without being intimidated, abused, bullied or threatened by anyone, including the general public.

This Code has been designed to protect our democratic role, encourage good conduct and safeguard the public's trust in local government.

Introduction

The Local Government Association (LGA) has developed this Model Councillor Code of Conduct, in association with key partners and after extensive consultation with the sector, as part of its work on supporting all tiers of local government to continue to aspire to high standards of leadership and performance. It is a template for councils to adopt in whole and/or with local amendments.

All councils are required to have a local Councillor Code of Conduct.

The LGA will undertake an annual review of this Code to ensure it continues to be fit-for-purpose, incorporating advances in technology, social media and changes in legislation. The LGA can also offer support, training and mediation to councils and councillors on the application of the Code and the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the county associations of local councils can offer advice and support to town and parish councils.

Definitions

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, a “councillor” means a member or co-opted member of a local authority or a directly elected mayor. A “co-opted member” is defined in the Localism Act 2011 Section 27(4) as “a person who is not a member of the authority but who

- a) is a member of any committee or sub-committee of the authority, or;
- b) is a member of, and represents the authority on, any joint committee or joint sub-committee of the authority;

and who is entitled to vote on any question that falls to be decided at any meeting of that committee or sub-committee”.

For the purposes of this Code of Conduct, “local authority” includes county councils, district councils, London borough councils, parish councils, town councils, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, joint authorities, economic prosperity boards, combined authorities and National Park authorities.

Purpose of the Code of Conduct

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to assist you, as a councillor, in modelling the behaviour that is expected of you, to provide a personal check and balance, and to set out the type of conduct that could lead to action being taken against you. It is also to protect you, the public, fellow councillors, local authority officers and the reputation of local government. It sets out general principles of conduct expected of all councillors and your specific obligations in relation to standards of conduct. The LGA encourages the use of support, training and mediation prior to action being taken using the Code. The fundamental aim of the Code is to create and maintain public confidence in the role of councillor and local government.

General principles of councillor conduct

Everyone in public office at all levels; all who serve the public or deliver public services, including ministers, civil servants, councillors and local authority officers; should uphold the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#), also known as the Nolan Principles.

Building on these principles, the following general principles have been developed specifically for the role of councillor.

In accordance with the public trust placed in me, on all occasions:

- I act with integrity and honesty
- I act lawfully
- I treat all persons fairly and with respect; and
- I lead by example and act in a way that secures public confidence in the role of councillor.

In undertaking my role:

- I impartially exercise my responsibilities in the interests of the local community
- I do not improperly seek to confer an advantage, or disadvantage, on any person
- I avoid conflicts of interest
- I exercise reasonable care and diligence; and
- I ensure that public resources are used prudently in accordance with my local authority's requirements and in the public interest.

Application of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct applies to you as soon as you sign your declaration of acceptance of the office of councillor or attend your first meeting as a co-opted member and continues to apply to you until you cease to be a councillor.

This Code of Conduct applies to you when you are acting in your capacity as a councillor which may include when:

- you misuse your position as a councillor
- Your actions would give the impression to a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of all the facts that you are acting as a councillor;

The Code applies to all forms of communication and interaction, including:

- at face-to-face meetings
- at online or telephone meetings
- in written communication
- in verbal communication
- in non-verbal communication
- in electronic and social media communication, posts, statements and comments.

You are also expected to uphold high standards of conduct and show leadership at all times when acting as a councillor.

Your Monitoring Officer has statutory responsibility for the implementation of the Code of Conduct, and you are encouraged to seek advice from your Monitoring Officer on any matters that may relate to the Code of Conduct. Town and parish councillors are encouraged to seek advice from their Clerk, who may refer matters to the Monitoring Officer.

Standards of councillor conduct

This section sets out your obligations, which are the minimum standards of conduct required of you as a councillor. Should your conduct fall short of these standards, a complaint may be made against you, which may result in action being taken.

Guidance is included to help explain the reasons for the obligations and how they should be followed.

General Conduct

1. Respect

As a councillor:

1.1 I treat other councillors and members of the public with respect.

1.2 I treat local authority employees, employees and representatives of partner organisations and those volunteering for the local authority with respect and respect the role they play.

Respect means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech, and in the written word. Debate and having different views are all part of a healthy democracy. As a councillor, you can express, challenge, criticise and disagree with views, ideas, opinions and policies in a robust but civil manner. You should not, however, subject individuals, groups of people or organisations to personal attack.

In your contact with the public, you should treat them politely and courteously. Rude and offensive behaviour lowers the public's expectations and confidence in councillors.

In return, you have a right to expect respectful behaviour from the public. If members of the public are being abusive, intimidating or threatening you are entitled to stop any conversation or interaction in person or online and report them to the local authority, the relevant social media provider or the police. This also applies to fellow councillors, where action could then be taken under the Councillor Code of Conduct, and local authority employees, where concerns should be raised in line with the local authority's councillor-officer protocol.

2. Bullying, harassment and discrimination

As a councillor:

2.1 I do not bully any person.

2.2 I do not harass any person.

2.3 I promote equalities and do not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) characterises bullying as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying might be a regular pattern of behaviour or a one-off incident, happen face-to-face, on social media, in emails or phone calls, happen in the workplace or at work social events and may not always be obvious or noticed by others.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 defines harassment as conduct that causes alarm or distress or puts people in fear of violence and must involve such conduct on at least two occasions. It can include repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a person in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person.

Unlawful discrimination is where someone is treated unfairly because of a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are specific aspects of a person's identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. They are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 places specific duties on local authorities. Councillors have a central role to play in ensuring that equality issues are integral to the local authority's performance and strategic aims, and that there is a strong vision and public commitment to equality across public services.

3. Impartiality of officers of the council

As a councillor:

3.1 I do not compromise, or attempt to compromise, the impartiality of anyone who works for, or on behalf of, the local authority.

Officers work for the local authority as a whole and must be politically neutral (unless they are political assistants). They should not be coerced or persuaded to act in a way that would undermine their neutrality. You can question officers in order to understand, for example, their reasons for proposing to act in a particular way, or the content of a report that they have written. However, you must not try and force them to act differently, change their advice, or alter the content of that report, if doing so would prejudice their professional integrity.

4. Confidentiality and access to information

As a councillor:

4.1 I do not disclose information:

- a. given to me in confidence by anyone**
- b. acquired by me which I believe, or ought reasonably to be aware, is of a confidential nature, unless**
 - i. I have received the consent of a person authorised to give it;**
 - ii. I am required by law to do so;**
 - iii. the disclosure is made to a third party for the purpose of obtaining professional legal advice provided that the third party agrees not to disclose the information to any other person; or**
 - iv. the disclosure is:**
 - 1. reasonable and in the public interest; and**
 - 2. made in good faith and in compliance with the reasonable requirements of the local authority; and**
 - 3. I have consulted the Monitoring Officer prior to its release.**

4.2 I do not improperly use knowledge gained solely as a result of my role as a councillor for the advancement of myself, my friends, my family members, my employer or my business interests.

4.3 I do not prevent anyone from getting information that they are entitled to by law.

Local authorities must work openly and transparently, and their proceedings and printed materials are open to the public, except in certain legally defined circumstances. You should work on this basis, but there will be times when it is required by law that discussions, documents and other information relating to or held by the local authority must be treated in a confidential manner. Examples include personal data relating to individuals or information relating to ongoing negotiations.

5. Disrepute

As a councillor:

5.1 I do not bring my role or local authority into disrepute.

As a Councillor, you are trusted to make decisions on behalf of your community and your actions and behaviour are subject to greater scrutiny than that of ordinary members of the public. You should be aware that your actions might have an adverse impact on you, other councillors and/or your local authority and may lower the public's confidence in you or your local authority's ability to discharge your/its functions. For example, behaviour that is considered dishonest and/or deceitful can bring your local authority into disrepute.

You are able to hold the local authority and fellow councillors to account and are able to constructively challenge and express concern about decisions and processes undertaken by the council whilst continuing to adhere to other aspects of this Code of Conduct.

6. Use of position

As a councillor:

6.1 I do not use, or attempt to use, my position improperly to the advantage or disadvantage of myself or anyone else.

Your position as a member of the local authority provides you with certain opportunities, responsibilities, and privileges, and you make choices all the time that will impact others. However, you should not take advantage of these opportunities to further your own or others' private interests or to disadvantage anyone unfairly.

7. Use of local authority resources and facilities

As a councillor:

7.1 I do not misuse council resources.

7.2 I will, when using the resources of the local or authorising their use by others:

- a. act in accordance with the local authority's requirements; and**
- b. ensure that such resources are not used for political purposes unless that use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the functions of the local authority or of the office to which I have been elected or appointed.**

You may be provided with resources and facilities by the local authority to assist you in carrying out your duties as a councillor.

Examples include:

- office support
- stationery
- equipment such as phones, and computers
- transport
- access and use of local authority buildings and rooms.

These are given to you to help you carry out your role as a councillor more effectively and are not to be used for business or personal gain. They should be used in accordance with the purpose for which they have been provided and the local authority's own policies regarding their use.

8. Complying with the Code of Conduct

As a Councillor:

8.1 I undertake Code of Conduct training provided by my local authority.

8.2 I cooperate with any Code of Conduct investigation and/or determination.

8.3 I do not intimidate or attempt to intimidate any person who is likely to be involved with the administration of any investigation or proceedings.

8.4 I comply with any sanction imposed on me following a finding that I have breached the Code of Conduct.

It is extremely important for you as a councillor to demonstrate high standards, for you to have your actions open to scrutiny and for you not to undermine public trust in the local authority or its governance. If you do not understand or are concerned about the local authority's processes in handling a complaint you should raise this with your Monitoring Officer.

Protecting your reputation and the reputation of the local authority

9. Interests

As a councillor:

9.1 I register and disclose my interests.

Section 29 of the Localism Act 2011 requires the Monitoring Officer to establish and maintain a register of interests of members of the authority .

You need to register your interests so that the public, local authority employees and fellow councillors know which of your interests might give rise to a conflict of interest. The register is a public document that can be consulted when (or before) an issue arises. The register also protects you by allowing you to demonstrate openness and a willingness to be held accountable. You are personally responsible for deciding whether or not you should disclose an interest in a meeting, but it can be helpful for you to know early on if others think that a potential conflict might arise. It is also important that the public know about any interest that might have to be disclosed by you or other councillors when making or taking part in decisions, so that decision making is seen by the public as open and honest. This helps to ensure that public confidence in the integrity of local governance is maintained.

You should note that failure to register or disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest as set out in **Table 1**, is a criminal offence under the Localism Act 2011.

Appendix B sets out the detailed provisions on registering and disclosing interests. If in doubt, you should always seek advice from your Monitoring Officer.

10. Gifts and hospitality

As a councillor:

- 10.1 I do not accept gifts or hospitality, irrespective of estimated value, which could give rise to real or substantive personal gain or a reasonable suspicion of influence on my part to show favour from persons seeking to acquire, develop or do business with the local authority or from persons who may apply to the local authority for any permission, licence or other significant advantage.**
- 10.2 I register with the Monitoring Officer any gift or hospitality with an estimated value of at least £50 within 28 days of its receipt.**
- 10.3 I register with the Monitoring Officer any significant gift or hospitality that I have been offered but have refused to accept.**

In order to protect your position and the reputation of the local authority, you should exercise caution in accepting any gifts or hospitality which are (or which you reasonably believe to be) offered to you because you are a councillor. The presumption should always be not to accept significant gifts or hospitality. However, there may be times when such a refusal may be difficult if it is seen as rudeness in which case you could accept it but must ensure it is publicly registered. However, you do not need to register gifts and hospitality which are not related to your role as a councillor, such as Christmas gifts from your friends and family. It is also important to note that it is appropriate to accept normal expenses and hospitality associated with your duties as a councillor. If you are unsure, do contact your Monitoring Officer for guidance.

Appendices

Appendix A – The Seven Principles of Public Life

The principles are:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must disclose and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Appendix B Registering interests

Within 28 days of becoming a member or your re-election or re-appointment to office you must register with the Monitoring Officer the interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 1 (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests)** which are as described in "The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012". You should also register details of your other personal interests which fall within the categories set out in **Table 2 (Other Registerable Interests)**.

"Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" means an interest of yourself, or of your partner if you are aware of your partner's interest, within the descriptions set out in Table 1 below.

"Partner" means a spouse or civil partner, or a person with whom you are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom you are living as if you are civil partners.

1. You must ensure that your register of interests is kept up-to-date and within 28 days of becoming aware of any new interest, or of any change to a registered interest, notify the Monitoring Officer.
2. A 'sensitive interest' is as an interest which, if disclosed, could lead to the councillor, or a person connected with the councillor, being subject to violence or intimidation.
3. Where you have a 'sensitive interest' you must notify the Monitoring Officer with the reasons why you believe it is a sensitive interest. If the Monitoring Officer agrees they will withhold the interest from the public register.

Non participation in case of disclosable pecuniary interest

4. Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to one of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in **Table 1**, you must disclose the interest, not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest, just that you have an interest. Dispensation may be granted in limited circumstances, to enable you to participate and vote on a matter in which you have a disclosable pecuniary interest.
5. Where you have a disclosable pecuniary interest on a matter to be considered or is being considered by you as a Cabinet member in exercise of your executive function, you must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest and must not take any steps or further steps in the matter apart from arranging for someone else to deal with it

Disclosure of Other Registerable Interests

6. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to one of your Other Registerable Interests (as set out in **Table 2**), you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting but otherwise must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

Disclosure of Non-Registerable Interests

7. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **directly relates** to your financial interest or well-being (and is not a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest set out in Table 1) or a financial interest or well-being of a relative or close associate, you must disclose the interest. You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation. If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.
8. Where a matter arises at a meeting which **affects** –
 - a. your own financial interest or well-being;
 - b. a financial interest or well-being of a relative, close associate; or
 - c. a body included in those you need to disclose under Other Registrable Interests as set out in **Table 2**

you must disclose the interest. In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied

9. Where a matter **affects** your financial interest or well-being:
 - a. to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
 - b. a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

If it is a 'sensitive interest', you do not have to disclose the nature of the interest.

10. Where you have a personal interest in any business of your authority and you have made an executive decision in relation to that business, you must make sure that any written statement of that decision records the existence and nature of your interest.

Table 1: Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

This table sets out the explanation of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as set out in the [Relevant Authorities \(Disclosable Pecuniary Interests\) Regulations 2012](#).

Subject	Description
Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation	Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain. [Any unpaid directorship.]
Sponsorship	Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from the council) made to the councillor during the previous 12-month period for expenses incurred by him/her in carrying out his/her duties as a councillor, or towards his/her election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
Contracts	Any contract made between the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the

	<p>councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (or a firm in which such person is a partner, or an incorporated body of which such person is a director* or a body that such person has a beneficial interest in the securities of*) and the council —</p> <p>(a) under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and</p> <p>(b) which has not been fully discharged.</p>
Land and Property	<p>Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of the council.</p> <p>'Land' excludes an easement, servitude, interest or right in or over land which does not give the councillor or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners (alone or jointly with another) a right to occupy or to receive income.</p>
Licenses	<p>Any licence (alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of the council for a month or longer</p>
Corporate tenancies	<p>Any tenancy where (to the councillor's knowledge)—</p> <p>(a) the landlord is the council; and</p> <p>(b) the tenant is a body that the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were spouses/civil partners is a partner of or a director* of or has a beneficial interest in the securities* of.</p>
Securities	<p>Any beneficial interest in securities* of a body where—</p> <p>(a) that body (to the councillor's knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of the council; and</p> <p>(b) either—</p> <p>(i) the total nominal value of the securities* exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or</p> <p>(ii) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which the councillor, or his/her spouse or civil partner or the person with whom the councillor is living as if they were</p>

	spouses/civil partners has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.
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* 'director' includes a member of the committee of management of an industrial and provident society.

* 'securities' means shares, debentures, debenture stock, loan stock, bonds, units of a collective investment scheme within the meaning of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and other securities of any description, other than money deposited with a building society.

Table 2: Other Registrable Interests

<p>You have a personal interest in any business of your authority where it relates to or is likely to affect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) any body of which you are in general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authorityb) any body<ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) exercising functions of a public nature(ii) any body directed to charitable purposes or(iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

Appendix C – the Committee on Standards in Public Life

The LGA has undertaken this review whilst the Government continues to consider the recommendations made by the Committee on Standards in Public Life in their report on [Local Government Ethical Standards](#). If the Government chooses to implement any of the recommendations, this could require a change to this Code.

The recommendations cover:

- Recommendations for changes to the Localism Act 2011 to clarify in law when the Code of Conduct applies
- The introduction of sanctions
- An appeals process through the Local Government Ombudsman
- Changes to the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012
- Updates to the Local Government Transparency Code
- Changes to the role and responsibilities of the Independent Person
- That the criminal offences in the Localism Act 2011 relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests should be abolished

The Local Government Ethical Standards report also includes Best Practice recommendations. These are:

Best practice 1: Local authorities should include prohibitions on bullying and harassment in codes of conduct. These should include a definition of bullying and harassment, supplemented with a list of examples of the sort of behaviour covered by such a definition.

Best practice 2: Councils should include provisions in their code of conduct requiring councillors to comply with any formal standards investigation and prohibiting trivial or malicious allegations by councillors.

Best practice 3: Principal authorities should review their code of conduct each year and regularly seek, where possible, the views of the public, community organisations and neighbouring authorities.

Best practice 4: An authority's code should be readily accessible to both councillors and the public, in a prominent position on a council's website and available in council premises.

Best practice 5: Local authorities should update their gifts and hospitality register at least once per quarter, and publish it in an accessible format, such as CSV.

Best practice 6: Councils should publish a clear and straightforward public interest test against which allegations are filtered.

Best practice 7: Local authorities should have access to at least two Independent Persons.

Best practice 8: An Independent Person should be consulted as to whether to undertake a formal investigation on an allegation, and should be given the option to

review and comment on allegations which the responsible officer is minded to dismiss as being without merit, vexatious, or trivial.

Best practice 9: Where a local authority makes a decision on an allegation of misconduct following a formal investigation, a decision notice should be published as soon as possible on its website, including a brief statement of facts, the provisions of the code engaged by the allegations, the view of the Independent Person, the reasoning of the decision-maker, and any sanction applied.

Best practice 10: A local authority should have straightforward and accessible guidance on its website on how to make a complaint under the code of conduct, the process for handling complaints, and estimated timescales for investigations and outcomes.

Best practice 11: Formal standards complaints about the conduct of a parish councillor towards a clerk should be made by the chair or by the parish council, rather than the clerk in all but exceptional circumstances.

Best practice 12: Monitoring Officers' roles should include providing advice, support and management of investigations and adjudications on alleged breaches to parish councils within the remit of the principal authority. They should be provided with adequate training, corporate support and resources to undertake this work.

Best practice 13: A local authority should have procedures in place to address any conflicts of interest when undertaking a standards investigation. Possible steps should include asking the Monitoring Officer from a different authority to undertake the investigation.

Best practice 14: Councils should report on separate bodies they have set up or which they own as part of their annual governance statement and give a full picture of their relationship with those bodies. Separate bodies created by local authorities should abide by the Nolan principle of openness and publish their board agendas and minutes and annual reports in an accessible place.

Best practice 15: Senior officers should meet regularly with political group leaders or group whips to discuss standards issues.

The LGA has committed to reviewing the Code on an annual basis to ensure it is still fit for purpose.

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STANDARDS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on Tuesday, 27 April 2021 at the remotely via Zoom at 2.00 pm

Committee

Members Present:

Mr H Blathwayt (Chairman)	Mr A Brown
Mr N Dixon	Mrs G Perry-Warnes
Miss L Shires	

Members also attending:

Ms V Gay (Observer)

Officers in Attendance:

Democratic Services Manager (DSM), Democratic Services and Governance Officer - Scrutiny (DSGOS) and Assistant Director for Finance, Assets, Legal & Monitoring Officer (MO)

35 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr J Rest.

36 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

None received.

37 MINUTES

Minutes from the meeting held on 18th February 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

38 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Cllr N Dixon referred to item 27 paragraph 5 and updated Members that the CE had provided a response to the Committee, though he did not yet feel that a substantive answer had been provided. He added that he had therefore had a meeting the CE that had given rise to further questions, that he would continue to pursue.

Cllr G Perry-Warnes stated that if the issue were to be raised at the Committee again, she would appreciate confirmation from the MO that it fell within the remit of the Committee.

39 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None received.

40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

41 PARISH AND DISTRICT MEMBERS' REGISTER OF INTERESTS AND OFFICER REGISTER OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

The DSGOS informed Members that the registers were available to view in Democratic Servicers upon request.

Cllr L Shires noted that District Members received regular reminders to update their registers and asked whether the same reminders were given to Parish Councillors, or whether this service was provided by Parish Clerks. The DSM replied that this was generally covered by Parish Clerks, as there were over a thousand Parish Councillors to monitor. She added that the National Association of Local Councils were encouraging Parish Councils to adopt the new Code of Conduct, and this could lead to more cooperative working with Parish Councils, to improve the process of updating Member's registers. Cllr A Brown suggested that it would be helpful for register update reminders to become a standard item for Parish Council AGMs.

42 ADOPTION OF NEW MODEL MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT

Cllr V Gay - Chair of the Constitution Working Party informed Members that the CWP had reviewed the new Code of Conduct and were happy to recommend its approval. She added that it was a clear document that thoroughly addressed the Nolan Principles, and it was hoped that neighbouring authorities would also adopt the Code. The MO informed Members that it had been hoped that consensus would be reached to adopt a single Code of Conduct for all Norfolk authorities, though some Councils had adopted with minor amendments, and some were yet to adopt the code. She added that there were significant changes to the code that included an increase in the threshold for the register of gifts and hospitality to £50, and the actions for declarations of interests had been strengthened.

Questions and Discussion

- i. Cllr N Dixon endorsed the comments made on the aspirations to adopt a common Code of Conduct for Councils in Norfolk, in order develop a common understanding across the County, as well as making resource savings.
- ii. Cllr G Perry Warnes stated that she was in favour of harmonisation across authorities, and noted that the MO had suggested that some Councils had made minor amendments, and asked whether this would be an issue. The MO replied that whilst some authorities may adopt the code with minor amendments, there was no reason that these couldn't be addressed in the future, to achieve the aspiration of a shared Code of Conduct.
- iii. The Chairman stated that whilst it was a large step for all Councils to adopt a shared code, it would be beneficial to improve wider understanding of the Code for Councillors and members of the public.
- iv. The recommendation was proposed by Cllr L Shires and seconded by Cllr N Dixon.

RESOLVED

To recommend to Full Council that the Model Code of Conduct be adopted.

43 REVIEW OF THE MEMBER / OFFICER PROTOCOL

The DSM introduced the report and informed Members that there had not been a full

review for some time, though elements had been reviewed at varying stages. She added that as the Code of Conduct was under review, it was now an appropriate time to review the full Member Officer Protocol, as they were considered together during investigations. It was noted that examples from several authorities had been reviewed as part of the process, and most had been considered more robust than the existing Protocol, which supported the case for improvements. The DSM stated that the new Protocol had strengthened its guidance on the roles of Councillors and Officers, in addition to improvements to the guidance for handling cases of bullying and harassment. She added that the CWP had made minor amendments to the wording which had been highlighted, and it was hoped that the new Protocol would be a more robust document for future use. It was noted that the Media Relations Protocol had been reviewed separately by the Communications Manager, but would be merged back into the main document.

Questions and Discussion

- i. Cllr V Gay thanked officers for developing the Protocol and noted that it hadn't been reviewed for many years. She added that whilst the old Protocol did provide useful guidance, it did not provide a clear statement on the roles and responsibilities of Members and Officers. It was stated that the new Protocol provided clear guidance on these issues, as well as improvements on the Media Relations Protocol in relation to social media. Cllr V Gay stated that the new Protocol would provide clear guidance for Members during the induction process, and throughout their tenure. She added that CWP were happy to recommend its approval.
- ii. Cllr L Shires stated that the new Protocol had been well prepared, and asked for clarification on the extent of consultation with Officers. The DSM replied that she had circulated the new Protocol with CLT and the HR Manager, who had provided feedback on strengthening the guidance on bullying and harassment. She added that it was yet to be shared with wider staff, though if Members were supportive, then it could be shared with the Staff Focus Group to ensure that Officers were aware of the changes and content.
- iii. Cllr A Brown thanked Members of the CWP for their input and noted that the language used was very clear. He referred to section 4.8 on expressions of political opinion, and asked whether these should be restricted to Full Council, or whether these were appropriate at other Committees. Cllr A Brown then asked how Members would be kept informed of relevant ward information, and asked if there was a requirement for Officers to notify Members under these circumstances. The DSM replied that both issues had been raised by CWP and noted that the first point on political statements had been included to make Officers aware that it was an important aspect of Member's roles. She added that some Committees were non-political, such as Overview & Scrutiny and Development Committee, for which there was a separate Protocol that could be referred to. On the matter of ward protocol, it was noted that this was an ongoing issue, and reviewing the Protocol was an opportunity to strengthen this guidance for Officers. She added that there was an expectation for Officers to notify Members of any significant issues in their wards.
- iv. Cllr N Dixon sought clarification on staff consultation and asked whether Officers would have the opportunity to contribute to the working document, if necessary. The DSM replied that if the Committee supported the new Protocol, then she would be happy to share it with Officers, with the

opportunity to provide input if necessary. Cllr N Dixon referred to the guidance on political statements at Committee meetings, and suggested that excluding Full Council, he would encourage further strengthening of this guidance. He added that ward protocol remained an important issue, and it was crucial for Members to be kept informed of all relevant information. Cllr N Dixon referred to point 11.2 and noted that there was a reference to Chief Officers, and asked whether there was a reason for this wording. The DSM replied that this was in the Media Protocol, and suggested that it could refer more widely to senior officers, though she would seek clarification and amend if necessary.

- v. Cllr G Perry-Warnes stated that she agreed with comments discouraging political statements at Committee meetings, then referred to the guidance on ward protocol and asked whether this included Cabinet Members. The DSM replied that it would apply across all Members, if anyone was aware of an issue that had arisen in someone else's ward. Cllr L Shires replied that she was unsure of the level of communication that took place between Officers and other Cabinet Members, and suggested that this issue could benefit from clarification. The DSM replied that the guidance mainly referred to issues that crossed ward boundaries, and sought to encourage communication between Members on these issues. She added that Officers were also expected to inform Members of any issues relating to specific Member's wards.
- vi. Cllr A Brown referred to the Officers identified in section 11.2 and suggested that amendments could be considered to make the document more consistent, as written in 11.1. The DSM replied that she would amend the wording subject to the agreement of the HR Manager.
- vii. Cllr G Perry-Warnes stated that she would appreciate the guidance on ward protocol being amended, to require Cabinet Members and Officers to update Members on all issues within their ward. The Chairman supported the suggestion and said that he had also had issues within his ward that he had not been informed of.
- viii. Cllr L Shires referred to her Mental Health Champion role and stated that where possible, she had shared information to help individuals subject to their permission, though this was not routine.
- ix. Cllr V Gay stated that she did try to contact the relevant ward Member when specific issues arose, though this was not always possible.
- x. On the understanding that the Committee's comments would be given consideration for amendments, the recommendations were proposed by Cllr L Shires and seconded by Cllr A Brown.

RESOLVED

1. That Standards Committee reviews the revised Member / Officer protocol and considers the inclusion of an additional section on expected behaviours in their upcoming review of the Member Code of Conduct.

2. That, following any further amendments by Standards Committee, Council approves the revised Member /Officer Protocol.

44 ANY OTHER BUSINESS (TO INCLUDE AN UPDATE ON RECENT STANDARDS COMPLAINTS)

The MO stated that she had no substantive updates in regards to any recent standards complaints.

Questions and Discussion

- i. Cllr N Dixon stated that it would be helpful to know how many complaints had been received, and how long they had been in process, potentially with an anticipated completion date. He added that he was aware of complaints that had been active for several months without any outcome determined. Cllr N Dixon proposed that an update be provided at all future meetings on the number of complaints received, and the amount of time they had been active. The MO replied that she would be happy to provide updates at future meetings, and stated that whilst she did not have the full figures available, there were approximately ten matters in progress, which included Parish Council complaints.
- ii. The Chairman asked whether a split was available between District and Parish complaints, to which the MO replied that there were significantly more complaints received regarding Parish Councils, though this could in large part be due to the higher number of Councillors.
- iii. Cllr L Shires stated that she supported the request for an update at every meeting, and suggested that this could also include information on the number of cases where no breach of the Code of Conduct had been found.
- iv. The DSM stated that a summary was previously provided and suggested that she could share previous versions with the MO to provide an update at future meetings. The MO stated that she was happy to provide the information in the future, and noted for the benefit of Members, that when a complaint was received, they passed through a sifting process to determine whether it met the threshold for potentially breaching the Code of Conduct.
- v. Cllr N Dixon stated that an update on complaints was central to the role of the Committee, and stated that the omission should be resolved as soon as possible for future meetings.

ACTIONS

To receive an update on standards complaints at all future meetings.

45 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The meeting ended at 3.01 pm.

Chairman

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APPENDIX I

EAST AND WEST BECKHAM BOUNDARY REVISED PROPOSAL FOLLOWING INITIAL CONSULTATION

During the initial consultation we received a solitary response from one of the residents affected by this proposed change. They have suggested running the boundary to the rear of the affected properties on Church Road including numbers 1 and 2 Hall Farm Cottages as shown on the map below.

Both Hall Farm Cottages are both currently situated within the East Beckham parish boundary, however their postal address is already listed as West Beckham and this change would have no effect on their governance or their Council Tax liability.

This would seem a sensible proposal which we would now propose ahead of further consultation.



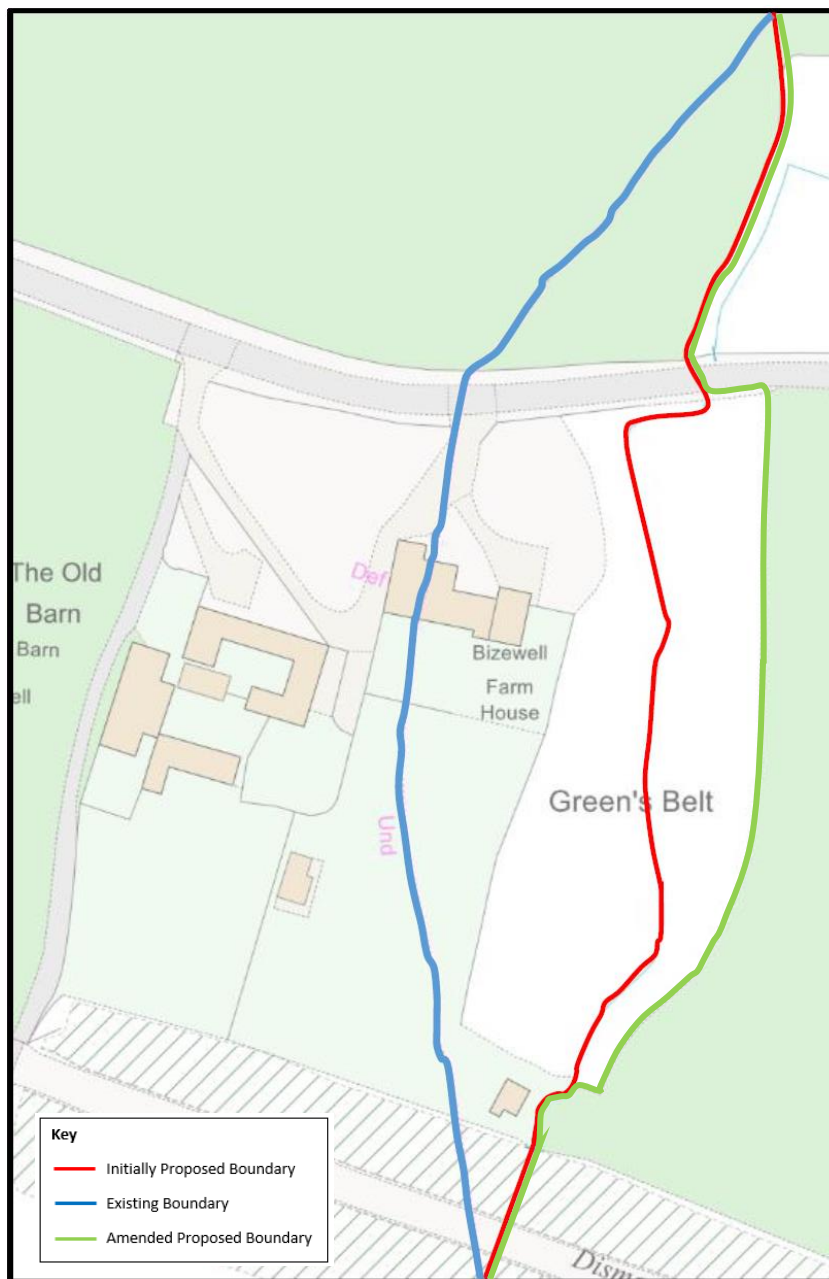
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APPENDIX II

SIDESTRAND AND TRIMINGHAM BOUNDARY REVISED PROPOSAL FOLLOWING INITIAL CONSULTATION

During the initial consultation we received a solitary response from one of the residents affected by this proposed change. The suggestion is to run the boundary to the southern edge of 'Green Belt' rather than down the river so as for the complete property footprint to be situated in the parish of Sidestrand as shown in the revised proposed boundary below.

This is a sensible suggestion so will form the basis of the further consultation on this proposal.



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PROGRAMME OF COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEWS – CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOLLOWING STAGE ONE CONSULTATION

Summary: In mid-February 2021, the programme of Community Governance Reviews were started with the Notice of Review being published. This signalled the commencement of the initial stage of consultation with relevant stakeholders regarding the proposed changes to existing parish boundaries.

The deadline for the stage one consultation was on 30th April and received 73 responses across the various separate reviews.

Conclusions: This report now details the Draft recommendations to be considered by Full Council to be approved for further consultation

Recommendations: **To approve the draft recommendations proposed and authorise the second stage consultation which will run to 31st October 2021 when the final recommendations would be prepared for consideration once again by Full Council on 15th December 2021**

Cabinet Member(s) Cllr S Butikofer	Ward(s) affected
Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Rob Henry, Senior Elections Officer	

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In mid-February 2021 the programme of Community Governance Reviews were started with the Notice of Review being published. This signalled the commencement of the initial stage of consultation with relevant stakeholders regarding the proposed changes to existing parish boundaries.
- 1.2 The deadline for the stage one consultation was on 30th April and received 73 responses across the various separate reviews.

2. Draft recommendations for further consultation

- 2.1 This report now details the Draft recommendations to be considered by Full Council to be approved for further consultation:

- **Aldborough and Alby:** Initial consultation has generated three responses, all in favour of the initial proposals so we do not therefore suggest any amendment to this proposal and that the draft recommendations are as stated in initial recommendation.
- **Binham and Hindringham:** Two responses were received during the initial consultation, from each Parish Council, both supporting the initial proposals. No amendment on these proposals is required so the draft recommendations are as stated in initial recommendation.
- **Blakeney and Wiveton:** Three responses received with two being in favour and one neutral from Wiveton PC, who have some concerns relating to the proposals surrounding loss of precept, and seeking assurances that they would be consulted on any future planning applications on the land/property which is being removed from their parish. The Draft recommendations are to proceed as originally stated.
- **Brinton and Stody:** No representations were received relating to this proposal so no amendments required for the draft recommendations
- **Barsham and Fakenham North:** One comment received from Barsham Parish Council who are in support of the changes proposed therefore no amendment is required for the draft recommendations.
- **East & West Beckham:** One representation received with a counter proposal to run the new boundary line behind the back of 9-12 Church Road and numbers 1-2 Hall Farm Cottages and then southwards until it joined the existing boundary. Please see the attached supplementary sheet which shows the new draft recommendation for this proposal.
- **East Runton and Cromer:** No representations were received relating to this proposal so no amendments required for the draft recommendations.
- **Felbrigg, Cromer and Roughton:** No representations were received relating to this proposal so no amendments required for the draft recommendations.
- **Great and Little Walsingham:** Three comments have been received in relation to this proposal which were all against the amended boundaries being suggested. The Parish Council provided some information which showed there is a great deal of history behind the particular boundary line proposed for changes, so with that in mind this proposal will not be taken forward.
- **Gunthorpe (South) and Briningham:** Three representations have been received in respect of this proposal, all of which are in favour of the changes to the boundary which has been suggested in the initial consultation. As such, no changes are being proposed for the draft recommendations.
- **Gresham and Sustead:** Two representations have been received which are both in favour of the proposed amendments. There is a query about the siting of the village sign which can be passed on to the County Councillor for the Parish to raise with Norfolk County Council Highways Department but otherwise the draft recommendation would be to proceed with the amendments as originally proposed.
- **Sidestrand and Northrepps:** No representations were received relating to this proposal so no amendments required for the draft recommendations.
- **Sidestrand and Trimmingham:** One representation received with a positive response to changing the boundary albeit with a counter proposal which keeps the entire property concerned at Bizewell Farm within the same parish. Please see the attached supplementary sheet which shows the new draft recommendation for this proposal.

- **Upper Sheringham and Sheringham South:** We have received nine responses as part of the initial consultation, six of which are in favour of the proposals, two against and one where no comments were made and only the name and address of the respondent was provided. It is the plan to proceed to stage two consultation based on the initial proposals.

2.2 The three following proposals each affect more properties and as such have a greater impact on local communities concerned:

- **Fakenham and Sculthorpe:** 16 responses were received in relation to the initial proposal here with six being in favour and 10 rejections. The responses in favour are from Serving District Councillors from the Lancaster North ward and one of the South ward Councillors as well as Fakenham Town Council and residents on the Fakenham Town side of Sandy Lane with the objections being received from those who would be moved from Sculthorpe Parish to Fakenham South ward and Sculthorpe village. The draft recommendations are to proceed with the proposals as originally stated as no objection raises any issue which would give necessary cause to move from this position.
- **Northrepps and Cromer:** 26 responses have been received relating to this proposal with 23 being wholly in objection and two responses seemingly more in support albeit with concerns. Given the relationship and proximity of Bridge Terrace, Christophers Close, Finch Close, Nightingale Close, Norwich Road, Ridgeway and Stevens Road to the town of Cromer the proposal will remain as they were in the initial recommendations. The Council will however, provide further clarity of the proposals during the secondary period of consultation and look at meeting with both Cromer Town Council and Northrepps Parish Council during this period.
- **Raynham and Helhoughton:** We have received three responses in relation to this proposal, all of which are in favour of the plans. We are yet to hear back from either Raynham or Helhoughton Parish councils who were going to discuss at their next meetings after the consultation deadline. The draft proposals would remain the same as initially stated although some consideration should now be given to implementing a warding arrangement within the parish of Raynham so the dwellings occupying the former RAF base site have their own representation on the Parish Council with the other ward representing West Raynham village. The Parish Council is currently made up of seven councillors. This would be the case even following the transfer of the dwellings over from the Helhoughton Parish, as the total would still sit within the bracket of up to 900 electors. One suggestion would be to look at a warding arrangement of five councillors in the 'Village' ward and two councillors in the 'Kipton' ward ie those living on the former RAF site. Warding arrangements already occur in several other smaller parishes across the district including The Runtons, Ryburgh, Gunthorpe and Walsingham and if this arrangement was accepted as part of this process of Community Governance Review, the new warding arrangements could be implemented to take effect from the May 2023 Parish Council elections.

2.3 **Merging of Hempton and Pudding Norton Parish Councils –**

No consultation was initially taken on this earlier in the year but letters will now be drafted to each Parish Council and all households within each Parish

to gauge opinion on this requested merger between the two with a proposal to put this in place from the next Parish Council elections in May 2023.

4. Financial and Resource Implications

There will be changes in the Parish Precepts which will affect some of the Parishes affected by boundary changes, especially within the three proposals which will see a higher number of property moves. As a result this will also mean the Council Tax liability will change for the households which will be subject to moving to a different parish as a result of these proposals

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

That Full Council approve the draft recommendations proposed and authorise the second stage consultation which will run to 31st October 2021 when the final recommendations would be prepared for consideration once again by Full Council on 15th December 2021.