

# Overview & Scrutiny Committee



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Tuesday, 5 October 2021

A meeting of the **Overview & Scrutiny Committee** of North Norfolk District Council will be held in the **Council Chamber - Council Offices** on **Wednesday, 13 October 2021** at **9.30 am**.

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

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

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

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

**Emma Denny**  
**Democratic Services Manager**

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

All other Members of the Council for information.

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



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

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

**Chief Executive:** Steve Blatch

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## A G E N D A

**1. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. SUBSTITUTES**

**3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS & STATEMENTS**

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

**4. MINUTES**

1 - 8

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

**5. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

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

**6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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.

**7. PETITIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

To consider any petitions received from members of the public.

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

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

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

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

During discussion of the Debt Recovery Report at the meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021, a breakdown of NDR write-offs relating to insolvency was requested, in order to consider the impact on varying economic sectors. The data is provided below for consideration:

<b>Number of NDR Write offs attributed to Insolvency</b>	<b>Limited Companies</b>	<b>Sole Traders</b>
10	7	3
<b>Types of Business by Economic Sector</b>		
Public House	2	2
Factory	2	
Garden Centre	1	
Workshop	1	
Restaurant		1
Land used for storage	1	

## 10. PEOPLE SERVICES RESTRUCTURE

11 - 24

### **Summary:**

Following the Management Restructure a new 'People Services' service grouping was formed which brings together the Benefits, Housing Options, Housing Adaptation and Health and Wellbeing teams under an Assistant Director.

The Assistant Director has identified a number of challenges and opportunities for the service and has proposed changes to the structure which are supported by additional posts to provide capacity to deliver an enhanced service in support of the Corporate Plan objectives and maximise the opportunities to lever in external funding and income to expand the offering further.

This paper sets out the basis for these additional fixed term posts and the use of uncommitted fee income and relevant reserves to fund them over the two-year period.

**Recommendations:** It is recommended that Cabinet agree the use of uncommitted fee income and reserves to fund the proposed additional posts within for the revised 'People Services' service grouping and to earmark the uncommitted fee income and the required level of reserves to support the funding of the structure for the next 2 years.

### **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)*

none

Cabinet Member(s)  
Cllr W Fredericks

Ward(s) affected – all

Contact Officer, telephone number and email:

Karen Hill, Assistant Director of People Services, 01263 516183,  
karen.hill@north-norfolk.gov.uk

**Summary:** This paper provides information on the level of housing reserves held by NNDC as at 31/3/21, which were £2.516m; and includes information on the source of these reserves.

The report goes on to set out some proposed uses for these reserves; including reference to a paper elsewhere on today's agenda which set out proposals for maintaining and strengthening staffing resources in Peoples Services.

The report sets out plans and commitments already in place to use some of the funding, i.e. continuing to fund the Community Enabler post and ensuring some grant funding remains for community-led housing.

The report further recommends that funding is used to support a dedicated energy officer role to help deliver many of the energy efficiency projects included in the agreed Housing Strategy.

The report then recommends uses for the remaining housing reserves to enhance housing delivery, which are in line with the objectives in the Housing Strategy.

**Options considered:** Options considered for use of reserves, in line with agreed Housing Strategy objectives, are set out in the body of the report. Retaining un-committed reserves was rejected as an option as it is considered that releasing the funding can have a positive impact on housing need at this time.

**Conclusions:** £2.516m of housing reserves were brought into 2021/22. Some of these reserves have already been committed to existing salaries and projects. However, the remaining reserves can be used to help meet housing needs in the district in line with the Corporate Plan objective Local Homes for Local Need.

**Recommendations:** That Cabinet support the recommended uses of the £2.516m of housing reserves to fund the continuation of posts and restructure of Peoples Services, continuation of community-led housing activity and an energy officer role (as set out in paragraphs 2.1 – 2.11)

**That Cabinet support use of the remaining £890,246 of reserves to accelerate housing delivery (as set out in paragraphs 2.12 – 2.25), including the purchase of two further units of temporary accommodation for homeless households.**

**That Cabinet gives delegated authority to a Chief Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing & Benefits, for the purchase of the specific properties within the overall re-allocated budget of £640,000 (with all purchases subject to an independent valuation and survey).**

**Reasons for Recommendations:** To provide authority for expenditure over £100,000.

#### **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)*

Outturn Report – Period 12 budget monitoring (Cabinet 6th September 2021)  
Community Housing Fund (Cabinet 6th February 2017)

Cabinet Member(s)	Ward(s) affected
Cllr Wendy Fredericks	Districtwide

Contact Officer, telephone number and email: Contact Officer: Nicky Debbage/Graham Connolly, Housing Strategy & Delivery Manager, tel: 01263 516027/516282

**Summary:** This report sets out alternative options for the level of council tax discounts which Full Council will resolve shall apply to classes of dwelling for the financial year 2022/23.

The determinations are made by the Council under sections 11A and 11B, and of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, subsequent enabling powers and Regulations made under the Act.

**Options considered:** The recommendations take advantage of the reforms included in the Local Government Finance Act 2012 as amended to generate additional revenue.

**Conclusions:** The legislation provides local authorities with the power to make changes to the level of council tax discount in relation to classes of property. The Council has to approve its determinations for each financial year. The calculation of the tax base for 2022/23 will be made on the assumption that the determinations recommended below will apply.

**Recommendations:** **Members recommend that Full Council shall resolve that under section 11A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and other enabling powers one of the following applies:**

***Recommendation 1***

- (a) The discounts for the year 2022/23 and beyond are set at the levels indicated in the table at paragraph 2.1.
- (b) The premium for long term empty properties (those that have been empty for a consecutive period longer than 24 months) is set at 100% of the Council Tax charge for that dwelling
- (c) The premium for long term empty properties (those that have been empty for a consecutive period longer than 60 months) is set at 200% of the Council Tax charge for that dwelling

- (d) The premium for long term empty properties (those that have been empty for a consecutive period longer than 120 months) is set at 300% of the Council Tax charge for that dwelling
- (e) To award a Council Tax Hardship Discount of 100% as per the policy attached at Appendix B, under the provisions section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended)
- (f) To continue to award a local discount of 100% for eligible cases of care leavers under section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended).
- (g) That an exception to the levy charges may be made by the Section 151 Officer in conjunction with the Portfolio holder for Finance, on advice of the Revenues Manager in the circumstances laid out in section 3.6 of this report.

#### ***Recommendation 2***

- (a) those dwellings that are specifically identified under regulation 6 of the Council Tax (Prescribed Classes of Dwellings)(England) Regulations 2003 will retain the 50% discount and;
- (b) those dwellings described or geographically defined at Appendix A which in the reasonable opinion of the Head of Finance and Asset Management are judged not to be structurally capable of occupation all year round and were built before the restrictions of seasonal usage were introduced by the Town and Country Planning Act 1947, will be entitled to a 35% discount.

In accordance with the relevant legislation these determinations shall be published in at least one newspaper circulating in North Norfolk before the end of the period of 21 days beginning with the date of the determinations.

#### **Reasons for Recommendations:**

To set appropriate council tax discounts which will apply in 2022/23 in accordance with the legal requirements and to raise additional



council tax revenue.

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW**

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

Cabinet Member(s)

Cllr Eric Seward

Contact Officer, telephone number and email:

Lucy Hume, 01263 516246, [lucy.hume@north-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.hume@north-norfolk.gov.uk)

**13. BEACH HUTS AND CHALETS ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT**

101 - 108

**Summary:** This report provides an update following the Beach Hut and Chalet review in 2018.

**Options considered:** Not applicable.

**Conclusions:** The review highlighted proactive management of this service was required in order to improve operational aspects, identify efficiencies and generate service enhancements. It established a number of actions over a 5 year period to take forward and some of which have been completed.

Since this time there has been some increase in income, however the national lockdown and approach to pricing has limited revenue gains over the last couple of years. With lockdown restrictions having lifted there is opportunity to move forward with a refreshed marketing strategy which is key in this service realising its full potential.

With tourism being currently very strong the Council should take this opportunity to optimise income from such lettings and improve the customer experience.

**Recommendations:** To receive and note update.

**Reasons for Recommendations:** N/A

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS AS REQUIRED BY LAW**

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

Cabinet Member(s)  
Cllr Eric Seward

Ward(s) affected  
Cromer, Sheringham, Mundesley

Contact Officer, telephone number and email:  
Renata Garfoot, Asset Strategy Manager tel: 01263 516086. Email.  
[Renata.Garfoot@north-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:Renata.Garfoot@north-norfolk.gov.uk)

**14. NORTH WALSHAM HIGH STREET HERITAGE ACTION ZONE: PROJECT UPDATE OCTOBER 2021** 109 - 112

To receive and note the report.

**15. WASTE CONTRACT UPDATE: OCTOBER 2021** 113 - 114

To receive and note the update.

<b>WORK PROGRAMMES</b>
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**16. THE CABINET WORK PROGRAMME** 115 - 116

To note the upcoming Cabinet Work Programme.

**17. OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND UPDATE** 117 - 128

To receive an update from the Scrutiny Officer on progress made with topics on its agreed work programme, training updates and to receive any further information which Members may have requested at a previous meeting.

**18. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

To pass the following resolution, if necessary:

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