

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

April 2022

COUNCILLOR J TOYE - CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING & ENFORCEMENT

For the period to April 2022

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

General overview.

I need to report a significant development in terms of both plan making and development management decisions. On 16 March Natural England Issued guidance to all Norfolk Authorities regarding Nutrient Neutrality for the River Wensum and Broads Catchment Areas.

That advice has created a hiatus in decision making for new homes applications within the catchment areas and poses questions regarding the progress of the North Norfolk Local Plan. Our officers have published guidance which can be viewed at :

<https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/development-management/nutrient-neutrality/>

This page details the areas affected and the forms of development which may be held as a result of the guidance. I have been engaged with our Leader and officers in reviewing the next steps. The Norfolk Leaders Group and a Norfolk senior officers group have been working towards a collaborated response on this matter.

I will continue to report on the issues surrounding Nutrient Neutrality and implications for development and planning in our district over the coming meetings.

Development Management & Major Projects Performance

Latest figures for speed of decision sustain the performance improvements previously reported. Detailed reports are provided to Development Committee on these matters, please refer to these reports for any detailed consideration on matters of speed and quality of decision to the Development Committee.

Our Director presented a paper to Overview & Scrutiny regarding a draft independent customer satisfaction survey, with results used to form an evidence base for the Planning Service Improvement Plan. This was supported and will be rolled out shortly. We will be reporting to the September meeting of O&S.

Significant land mark decision were made for the retrospective applications at Arcady, Holt Road, Cley next the Sea and also for 61 extra care and 40 affordable homes at Yarmouth Road Stalham.

Planning Policy & neighbourhood planning

The Regulation 19 Consultation process closed on 28 February. Our team are reviewing responses and will be reporting findings to meetings of the Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party in the coming weeks.

Details of the consultation and our timetable for plan production can be viewed at :

<https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/planning-policy/local-plan-consultation/>

The Blakeney Neighbourhood plan is nearing its final stages. A six-week consultation of the draft plan is commenced on 28 March and closes on 9 May, 2022, after which it will be considered by an independent examiner. Details of the plan and schedule for submission are available via this link:

<https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/news/2022/march/draft-neighbourhood-plan-for-blakeney-reaches-final-stages/>

Conservation, Design & Landscape

Conservation Area Appraisals (CAA) following the recent consultation are to be reported to the 25 April Working Party. Brinton with Thornage; Sharrington; Hunworth; Edgefield, Stody and the wider Glaven Valley will be reported to this meeting.

The 1 April saw introduction of the GIRAMS (Habitat Mitigation: Recreational impacts) measures being introduced on all new planning decisions over Norfolk. The Strategy enables growth in the District by implementing the required mitigation to address adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats Sites arising from recreational disturbance caused by an increased level of recreational use on internationally designated Habitat Sites, particularly European sites, through growth from all qualifying development.

The mitigation is delivered by single one off payments from development. The tariff applies to all net new residential and tourism-related growth, including:

- market and affordable housing
- student accommodation
- Also, residential and tourist-related caravans, including:
 - mobile homes
 - park homes
 - tents and modern variations
 - gypsies or travellers pitches and plots

Along with Specialist elderly accommodation that provides complete residential dwelling but excluded specialist bed units such as nursing homes.

Building Control

Workload is approx. 10% higher than usual for the corresponding time last year. An increasing portion of work is being brought in via the regularisation route following increases in house sales. Regularisation works can only be undertaken currently by the Local Authority, and not Approved Inspectors.

Our team report all Building Control applications continue to be decided within the statutory timescales. Some pressure has been created as the service is working with a one surveyor vacancy. That role is subject to final interview this month.

Inspections are arranged to minimise mileage and carbon emissions, we will be delivering a mobile working app shortly to ensure less paper and greater on site efficiencies.

Enforcement

The team have 213 current live cases; 123 cases have been closed so far in 2022.

Job descriptions and Job Evaluation is being progressed for the new role of Condition Compliance Officer, we will commence recruitment when the process is completed.

Staffing

I have been pleased to report success in recruitment to the vacant Planning Support Manager Role. The role will be critical in development of stronger customer facing elements of our service, along with software and systems development. The successful candidate has a strong knowledge of our IT systems and detailed planning experience. We will look forward to welcoming our new starter in around six weeks' time

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Planning Policy & Build Heritage Working Party – 25 April

Development Committee – 12 May.

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3 Meetings attended

Development Committee – 14 & 31 March and 14 April Overview & Scrutiny – 6 April Town and Parish Forum – 28 March Norfolk Strategic Planning Forum – Nutrient neutrality – 14 th April. Cabinet, Business Planning, Portfolio Meetings, Parish Council Meetings.
