

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

June 2022

COUNCILLOR J TOYE - CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING & ENFORCEMENT

For the period to April to July 2022

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

General overview.

I reported on the significant development on 16 March from Natural England Issuing guidance to all Norfolk Authorities regarding Nutrient Neutrality for the River Wensum and Broads Catchment Areas. This remains a key consideration within our development management decisions and plan making, my update is set within the context of this key issue.

I am pleased to report that the Council continues to work positively in partnership with other Norfolk Councils on this matter. A competitive tendering process was undertaken in April for consultancy support to deliver a mitigation strategy for the Broads and Wensum catchments, Royal Haskoning have been appointed to the role. The consultants provide regular updating notes which give commitment to completion of a short term strategy for Nutrient Neutrality by August and delivery of the long terms strategy no later than February 2023.

Our officers have been reviewing the application types that can be determined where located within the sensitive catchments, Counsel advice is now returned and will be reviewed. I can confirm that the majority of applications within the sensitive catchment areas can still be determined, e.g. Householder applications may still be determined and account for over 80% of all applications submitted to the Council. Similarly, most forms of commercial development can also be determined for local businesses. Unfortunately, new housing and tourism development (overnight accommodation) remain restricted until the mitigation detailed above is available to offset nutrient impacts.

A members briefing is being offered for Nutrient Neutrality as a remote event at 10:00 on 23 June. I believe invitations have been issued. Please return to me if in any doubt about access to the briefing. I will ask for the briefing to be recorded and that supporting slides are made available after the meeting.

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. I note that the speed for decisions on major applications over the last reporting quarter was in the top quartile for the Country. 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. As reported at the June development committee performance reports are being expanded to give further information and will continue to be reported at that committee

Our Director and Assistant Director continue to work on for the Planning Service Improvement Plan, officers across the service met earlier this month as part of the engagement process, further team based meetings will follow. The Customer satisfaction survey, Agent & Developer forum and Parish / Town Council liaison meetings will follow. The outcomes will be reported as a draft improvement strategy to the September meeting of O&S.

Planning Policy & neighbourhood planning

Our team are collating the Regulation 19 consultations received and will be reporting the responses, outcomes and recommendations to coming meetings of the Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party (PPBH).

The Blakeney Neighbourhood plan is nearing its final stages. A six-week consultation of the draft plan was completed on 9 May, 2022. The plan is now to be considered by an independent examiner. If the examiner approves the draft Plan, the next stage is to put the Plan, along with the examiner's recommendations, to a public referendum. If accepted, the Council must make the draft Neighbourhood Plan within eight weeks after the referendum.

Once the Neighbourhood Plan is made, it will form part of the district-wide planning framework. It will become a material consideration (meaning it must be taken into account) for future planning applications in the Blakeney Neighbourhood area.

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 May PPBH Working Party. Brinton with Thornage; Sharrington; Hunworth; Edgefield, Stody and the wider Glaven Valley were reported to this meeting and agreed for adoption. I was not at the April full council but had a question raised about the large documents for these

appraisals. There were only 10 copies produced for members of the committee I did not even receive one myself. Democratic services officers have done a further email request for choices on hard and soft copy for all council meetings which is how they will distribute going forward.

Building Control

Workload remains higher than usual for the corresponding time last year. Regularisation works associated with house sales are increasing and can only be undertaken currently by the Local Authority, and not Approved Inspectors.

Building Control applications continue to be determined within the statutory timescales, on site checks and registration remain well within statute time limits. The recruitment campaign is complete we await confirmation of the appointment. Short term locum support is available to ensure performance and delivery of the service are not impacted in the interim.

Our mobile working app will be undertaking final field tests this month and should enable a move to paperless working in July / August. This will remove a substantial burden of printing and paper use for the service. Costs and environmental footprint will be reduced significantly. I will ask the team to monitor and report outcomes to this meeting.

Enforcement

The team have 245 current live cases; 144 have been created this year, 164 cases have been closed so far in 2022. The harm assessment form has enabled officers to make clearer and quicker assessments as to expediency / action and where possible case closure.

Job Evaluation will be taking place for the new role of Condition Compliance Officer, we will commence recruitment when the process is completed in July / August.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Planning Policy & Build Heritage Working Party – 19th July

Development Committee – 7th July

Armed Forces Day – 25th June

3 Meetings attended

Planning Policy & Build Heritage Working Party – 23 May

Development Committee – 9 June, 12 May

Overview & Scrutiny – 11 May? & 15 June

Norfolk Nutrient Neutrality members group – 27th April, 10th May, 6th June

Town and Parish Forum – 4th July

Cabinet, Business Planning, Portfolio Meetings, Parish Council Meetings,
Armed Forces Covenant elected member champions.