

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

5th October 2022

COUNCILLOR TIM ADAMS – LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

For the period 16th July – 26th September 2022

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Elections

The Annual Canvass is ongoing with reminder forms recently dispatched to households who are required to respond but who are as yet to do so. The first stage of the canvass has seen a very favourable response with over 90% using the online method of response.

Provisional preparations for May 2023 are underway. Internal staff have been contacted to establish availability and line managers encouraged to release staff to fill key roles. Contact will be made shortly with external polling and count staff with a view to appointments being made in January.

The team will shortly be giving a presentation to both forthcoming prospective candidates events and also once again at the Town and Parish Council Engagement forum where advice will be given on the process around nominations, the election and encouraging participation.

We are still awaiting secondary legislation in respect of the 2022 Elections Act which is now due on 6th November 2022 however discussions will be taking place on the implementation of Voter ID which will be in place at the May 23 elections including a robust communication strategy.

Communications

During the last month, Communications have published 53 news articles/videos across the Council's multiple digital platforms: www.north-norfolk.gov.uk, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and NextDoor and have released these to media where appropriate. These have been on a range of topics including the Council's consideration of issues relating to Second and Holiday Homes; Motorhomes; submission of Levelling Up bids; retaining three Green Flags for our Country Parks and Woodland Sites; Fire Safety; Battle of the Beaches; the opening of the North Walsham Travel Hub; changes to bin collections; promotion of Greenbuild online and preparations for Greenbuild Live; the Council's response to the passing of Her Majesty The Queen; Proclamation of the King; recruitment for NNDC Youth Council; Promotion of events for prospective councillors; completion of Church Approach works at North Walsham and commencement of the Phase 2 Market Place works and alternative car parking arrangements.

We currently have a combined social media following of 37,283 people directly consuming regular content about the Council's activities on our channels, though its

important to note there is some overlap between channels with some residents following us on more than one platform.

Our Battle of the Beaches competition was a huge success, reaching 349,000 people through Facebook and Twitter. Mundesley were worthy winners of the month-long contest which saw the public voting for their favourite of 16 North Norfolk beaches in a 'World Cup' format. More than 6,000 votes were cast and the fun competition was an excellent vehicle to promote perennial coastal messaging regarding tourism, beach safety, conservation, Blue Flag status etc to a much wider audience than has ever previously been achieved by the Council. The Eastern Daily Press and BBC Radio Norfolk carried positive stories about Battle of the Beaches.

The Comms Team have also spent a lot of time over the past few weeks preparing a new edition of the re-launched Outlook Council magazine which is to be delivered to all households in the District in mid-November. It is 24 pages printed on recycled paper and will be sent to c50,000 homes. This is the second of two trial editions of the magazine and an assessment of the trial will take place after the second magazine has been delivered.

As in the previous reporting period, work continues on the promotion and communication on the progress of the North Walsham Heritage Action Zone programme which has now entered a period of delivery of a number of significant projects in and around the town centre. The communications team has created diverse content about the new bus interchange, the Church Approach area and the marketplace, where works are on-going at the moment to deliver significant enhancement of this focal point for the town.

HR

The Council has now gone live with its new recruitment software, which will improve initial engagement with potential new employees through providing the infrastructure for digital applications and tracking of applications through interview stages and ultimately appointment.

The council continues to benefit from the new recruitment software. One such example is a greater insight into our recruitment activities, for example we now know that 40% of all applications that we receive are via the Indeed website, which is the one of the largest jobs boards on the internet.

The national pay offer for local government officers on nationally agreed terms and conditions is currently still being balloted by members. Although Unison have accepted the offer, GMB and Unite's ballots are still open with the GMB's closing on 21st October 2022.

Following the decision of Full Council of 22nd June 2022, a temporary increase for mileage amounts was approved, subject to monthly reviews. From 1st October the temporary increase will reduce by 0.05 to £0.55 per mile.

Corporate Delivery Unit

The Corporate Delivery Unit continues to support the Corporate Leadership Team and Managers to embed project management and governance arrangements for large and medium projects across the organisation. Further development has taken place of the In-Phase management reporting system to allow comparison of NNDC service performance data against other local authorities as requested by Overview

& Scrutiny Committee.

Corporate PA Team

The Corporate PA Team continues to support the Chief Executive and Directors as well as Management Team with a considerable number of projects. The Corporate Business Manager is leading on a piece of work across the organisation to improve internal communication.

Kaye Skinner led on the co-ordination of the Council's response to the sad passing of Her Majesty The Queen and the Proclamation of King Charles III in accordance with the Council's previously developed and agreed protocol.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

Norfolk Leaders and Chief Executives have continued to discuss the development of a County Deal for Norfolk albeit with the Conservative Leadership election in the period mid-July to early September progress has been slower than originally anticipated. However, this workstream has been given renewed focus in the past couple of weeks following the appointment of Simon Clarke as the new Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Homes and Communities with this work progressing throughout the summer period, particularly on the key themes of any Deal and the associated governance arrangements.

The Government has progressed its consultation with all local authorities around a new national asylum-seeker dispersal programme over the summer months and an East of England response has been prepared through EELGA's Strategic Migration Partnership. The District Council has provided a response which has said given the nature of our housing market with large numbers of second and holiday homes, small private rented sector and high levels of local housing need and the challenges of providing wrap around support services in an extensive rural area it believes that it will be difficult to accommodate asylum-seekers within the District in street-based housing such that alternative accommodation models might need to be considered. All three Group Leaders have been briefed on this issue and have indicated support for the Council's position as detailed above.

Nutrient Neutrality – countywide discussions are continuing to try and resolve the Nutrient Neutrality issue, as announced by Natural England in March and the subsequent Ministerial statement made on 20th July, with the Norfolk local authorities, through the Norfolk Duty to Cooperate framework, commissioning consultants Royal Haskoning to advise on mitigation measures which might be implemented to minimise the impact of new development on the local environment. This continues to be a significant issue for all authorities in Norfolk given the importance of housing delivery to meet existing and future needs and demands. Following the recent Conservative Leadership election and a number of policy statements being made about future economic growth and possible relaxation of planning regulations, further announcements on the issue of nutrient neutrality are anticipated.

3 Meetings attended

In the last two months, I have on one or more occasion met with:

- Joint Staff Consultative Committee
- Norfolk Leaders Group
- Norfolk Public Sector Leaders Board
- NNDC Group Leaders
- District Council Leaders
- Chief Executive and Corporate Business Manager.
- Cabinet Working Party for projects and Business Planning

Attended

- Rural Prosperity Fund discussion
- Cromer Artspace event
- Cost of Living Crisis briefing
- Cromer Cemetery
- Serco Engagement Event
- Greenbuild – Chris Packham Big Talk Event
- National Climate Change Partnership event
- Impact on Second Homes Restrictions briefing