

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

November 2022

COUNCILLOR A BROWN - CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING & ENFORCEMENT

For the period September to November 2022

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

General overview.

Nutrient Neutrality

The Council has published the Joint Norfolk Nutrient Neutrality Calculator, whilst preserving the requirement of Nutrient Neutrality this locally evidence based version will reduce levels of mitigation for most cases by between 30 – 50% of the levels imposed by the Natural England Calculator. I am pleased to report that this use of pertinent and locally relevant data will enable the principles of nutrient neutrality to be delivered on a much more viable basis for developers across the Broads and Wensum Catchment Areas.

The Local Authority partnership has also reviewed the mapping of affected catchment areas, this review has engaged Anglian Water, Environment Agency and Natural England. A key change for North Norfolk is that North Walsham is now prove to discharge foul water treatment processing to areas outside the Special Area of Conservation. This will allow positive consideration of all qualifying applications without the need to complete the Nutrient Neutrality Calculator.

We remain on target for delivery of the longer term strategy, being no later than February 2023. Regular meetings are in place with NNDC officers and Natural England (NE), enabling detailed discussion on individual cases and also a strategic overview as to delivery of NE mitigation across the Broads and Wensum catchments.

Our officers are writing to update all affected customers, and will eb offering bespoke advice and assistance to move applications forward.

I must temper my note to you by clarifying that, all schemes which are considered under the nutrient neutrality calculator will need to ensure that the proposed mitigation is available and delivered to appropriate standards before any new homes can be occupied.

It is this key area of delivery that officers across Norfolk are now turning to. I will update on progress in the coming months.

I hope that the member briefing on 26 October was helpful to keep members updated on progress. I understand the briefing is recorded and can be made available to members upon request. I have asked that further member briefings are made available at key milestones on this project.

Development Management & Major Projects

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. In headline terms, 87.5% of Major applications and 80.38% of non-major applications are being determined within statutory timescales.

I consider that the Draft Planning Service Improvement Plan (PSIP) was received favourably to the September meeting of Overview & Scrutiny. Officers are now working on customer satisfaction surveys, reintroducing Agent & Developer Forum and also Parish / Town Council liaison meetings.

A detailed action plan is to follow in December 2022. As part of the PSIP, a series of detailed workshops are being undertaken with the Planning Advisory Service Toolkit, these workshops will cover every aspect of the planning applications process and will engage with other services areas and members.

I will clarify an earlier statement from September, an officer "on call" service was launched in September, to support the Customer Services Team on development management queries and provide professional advice where needed. Please can I clarify that this is not a bespoke detailed enquiry service such as previously operated under the "Duty Officer" Service. The service runs analogous to Customer Service provisions and is geared to high level detail enquiries.

Planning Policy & neighbourhood planning

Our team are reporting Regulation 19 responses, outcomes and recommendations to meetings of the Planning Policy & Built Heritage Working Party (PPBH) during the Autumn. Dependent on those outcomes, I will be looking for the plan to be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in early 2023.

The Blakeney Neighbourhood Plan is nears its final stage. The Neighbourhood Plan Inspector has received responses from the Council and is considering those matters before the plan is brought forward for local referendum.

Holt neighbourhood plan is under consultation, representations to be complete no later than Monday 21 November 2022. Wells Next the Sea completed consultation on 9 September. I will give more detailed updates on time lines and progress as they become available.

Please can I ask that you review this web link for updates on Neighbourhood Plan process and progress:

[Home | Neighbourhood Planning \(north-norfolk.gov.uk\)](http://north-norfolk.gov.uk)

Conservation, Design & Landscape

I am pleased to report that the Glaven Valley Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (2022) was reported to Cabinet on 6 September, it was agreed that the draft appraisal was approved for public consultation. Following consultation, the responses to the appraisal will be brought back to Working Party for consideration and subsequent adoption by Cabinet.

Building Control

Workload has generally eased, I am pleased to confirm a new officer has begun working as a Building Surveyor in the Service. This has filled a long standing vacancy in the team. We are bidding for LABC Apprentice posts I will report on outcomes, but remain supportive of apprenticeships in general and specifically in this part of our service.

Building Control applications continue to be determined within the statutory Timescale, on site checks and registration remain well within statute time limits.

I am pleased to report positive advance and improvement with the Mobile App, which has facilitated discontinuance of paper files and which cuts our carbon footprint and enables service efficiencies to be delivered

Enforcement

The team have 208 current live cases; 286 have been created this year with 335 cases having been closed so far in 2022. The live cases stands at a lowest level for some time with case closures now being higher and timelier.

100% of enforcement cases are acknowledged and input within time, with at least 95% of site inspections being undertaken within 10 days. The team are now focussed on clearing a backlog of cases that have exceeded the (self-imposed) resolution deadline.

I am pleased to report recruitment to the Conditions Monitoring Officer role and a series of interviews are in place for the trainee role in our service.

There will be investment in a Mobile App. for Enforcement which will enable greater efficiencies and support continuity of service. I will update on timelines and progress in the coming months.

Staffing

I reported that Three Senior Planning Officers left the Development Management Service in my last report. I can confirm that one officer has been appointed following the recent round of recruitment, we are continuing interviews and will update on progress.

We will be running a recruitment campaign for the S106 Monitoring Officer and Conservation Design Posts this month.

3 Meetings attended

September 29 & 27 October - Development Committee

October 17 - Planning Policy/Built Heritage Working Party

September 28 & 12 October - Overview & Scrutiny

October 5 - Full Council