

## **CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**DECEMBER 2023**

**COUNCILLOR ADAMS - CABINET MEMBER FOR STRATEGY, COUNTYWIDE WORKING AND EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS, PERFORMANCE, COMMUNICATIONS, HR AND LEGAL SERVICES**

For the period November to December 2023

### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters**

#### **Electoral Services**

- Published the Revised Register of Electors on 1<sup>st</sup> December following a successful Annual Canvass where once again the team achieved a return of over 90%.
- Recently delivered successful elections for Salthouse Parish Council where 5 councillors were elected to restore the parish council to an operational state after a period of being un-quorate, and also the District by-election for Briston Ward which saw Andrew Fletcher (Liberal Democrat) elected to the District Council.

#### **Human Resources**

- Training opportunities delivered during November and December - Communication Skills Workshop, EDI Workshop, Safeguarding for District Councils, Conflict Training and Neurodiversity
- One Officer has begun a degree apprenticeship in Town and Country Planning in order to qualify as a planner.
- The final quarter of the year has been very busy with recruitment which has resulted in being able to fill a number of difficult to recruit to posts.

#### **Communications**

- Continued to prep for confirmation of work start date for Cromer and Mundesley defence schemes, including finalising innovative interactive video maps for the website which will showcase the individual components of each project to the public in a concise and engaging way.
- Met with Net Zero colleagues to agree regular new content offering public green/carbon reduction tips to be presented weekly for at least the next calendar year (launched 8.12.23).
- Met with Coastwise to discuss strategies for next phase of comms around the scheme, including promotion of climate change design competition and work around the pending planning discussion on the car park at Happisburgh.
- Discussed appropriate legacy content and closedown content for HAZ

- project with the Economic Development team
- Worked with Serco and internal colleagues on print/digital comms to cover festive refuse collection times.
  - Promoted Sheringham Christmas Market.

### **Legal Services**

- **Information Requests -**
  - FOI request figures show that the Council's current performance to responding to requests within the statutory 20 working days is at 92%. The national target is set at 90%.
  - The legal service continues to provide advice and assistance to the wider Council in order to assist in this area and support the corporate responsibilities.
  - In addition to this ongoing advice and assistance, the legal service has provided training sessions on FOI and general information governance to all staff members who have a key role to play such as Information Asset Owners and Assistants.
- **Internal Audit**
  - An audit has been undertaken of the Council's FOI processes and procedures and the Council has received Substantial assurance.

### **Democratic Services**

- The vacant post in the Democratic Services team has been successfully recruited to and the new team member starts in early January.
- Development Committee in particular has a heavy workload and the reserve dates are being used to ensure that agendas are not overloaded.
- The review of Members' allowances has been undertaken by an independent panel and the report is being presented to Full Council in December.
- The Youth Council visited Parliament on 29th November, at the invitation of Duncan Baker MP. They had an extensive tour of the Parliamentary estate followed by a Q&A session with Duncan. Thank you to Cllr M Taylor for his help in organising this visit.
- The Youth Council is now focussed on supporting the Christmas toy collection for Norfolk & Norwich University Hospital.

## **2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments**

### **Electoral Services**

- Planning is underway for the Police and Crime Commissioner Election being held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 with Polling Stations booked and staff allocation commencing.
- Preparation and training is also being undertaken for further changes in legislation surrounding Overseas Electors which is being introduced as part of the 2022 Elections Act from 16<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

### **Democratic Services**

- The next meeting of the Town & Parish Council Engagement Forum will be an

in-person session at the Council Offices in early February 2024. It will be an opportunity for key services areas to promote their work and highlight opportunities for engagement with local communities.

### **3 Meetings attended**

#### **Meetings attended:**

- ICB Board - Benjamin Court and Community Connectors.
- Lord Callanan - future of Bacton.
- Council Tax Support Working Party.
- Stalham Town Council
- Shell
- LINK
- General Council business, including Cabinet meetings and meetings with officers of the Council.

#### **To occur before Full Council:**

- Kings Lynn BC
- Norfolk Parking Partnership
- Transport East Forum
- North Norfolk & Broadland MPs
- Fakenham Town Council.
- National Grid

#### **Events attended:**

- Cromer Pier Show
- UK100 Reception
- Thursford Christmas Spectacular