

## **CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**27<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

### **COUNCILLOR ANDREW BROWN - CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT**

For the period 10<sup>th</sup> February 2024 to 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024

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

In terms of Planning Policy:

- (i) The **Local Plan Examination** hearing sessions finished on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2024. I would like to thank everyone that attended and participated in the sessions. We are compiling all the additional information that the Inspector has requested and will send that to him shortly. Thereafter, we effectively wait for him to contact us with his suggestions as to what we need to do next. I remain confident that we will get to adopt our new Local Plan later this year. We keep our website up to date with the latest information – see: [NNDC Local Plan Examination](#).

In terms of Development Management:

- (ii) The **Development Committee** has met twice since the last Council meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024 and considered applications at Catfield, Erpingham and Hoveton.
- (iii) Development Committee considered a **Performance Report** at its' meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> March – see: [DC Performance 07 March 2024 Final.pdf \(north-norfolk.gov.uk\)](#). This again demonstrated the fact we are doing very well on the performance indicators we report to Government.

Government Led Changes to Planning:

- (iv) Last month, I observed that the **extent of Government changes** to the Planning system is continuous / never ending – and since our last meeting the Government have made a series of new announcements and started consultations on:
  - changes to permitted development rights to support recreational camping, renewable energy and film-making – dated: 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024;
  - the details of the operational reforms which the government is looking to make to the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) consenting process – dated 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024; and,

- an accelerated planning service, planning performance measures, extensions of time, expedited appeals and section 73B applications (associated with applications which would enable material variations to existing planning permissions). – dated 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

Further details on all of these are available via: [Policy papers and consultations - DLUHC](#). I imagine another one will be published before the Council meeting.

In terms of Building Control:

- (i) I am pleased to provide an update on the new national **system of accreditation** for individual surveyors – i.e. that on the 6<sup>th</sup> April it will become a legal requirement to register as a licenced (and validated as competent) officer. This requirement has been given the legally protected term 'Registered Building Inspector' (RBI). It will be a criminal offence to impersonate a RBI, and the Local Authority will have a legal obligation to consult with a Registered Building Inspector before carrying out any restricted functions or activities.

*Restricted Activities* include checking plans and inspecting work and *Restricted Functions* include issuing a decision notice, issuing a completion notice and taking enforcement action.

There has been some negative media coverage recently as a lot of authorities will not be in a position to fulfil the above requirements. Following letters of concern written to the Government from LABC and other professional bodies, the decision has been made by Government to allow the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) to delay this requirement until the 6<sup>th</sup> July – a delay of 13 weeks. There is still a minimum expectation to register with the BSR and follow code of conduct requirements during this interim period.

I am pleased to report that NNDC has been proactive in ensuring that the surveyors we employ have undertaken the necessary validation process, consisting of portfolio submission and examination to assess competency. These have been undertaken under the Building Safety Competence Foundation (BSCF) scheme - one of three schemes approved to assess competence.

The team sat the required exam on different days/times to ensure service continuity, and the first 2 surveyors have been approved as competent and registered accordingly with the Building Safety Regulator. The remaining team members are expecting their results in mid to late March – i.e. in time for the original April deadline. At this stage all surveyors are all registered at Class 1, meaning even if there are delays in the scheme marking, the surveyors can continue to work under the supervision of a Registered Class 2 surveyor - with 2 of those already being in place. With the temporary extension given it is expected that the vast majority – if not all - of the team will be registered at the necessary class.

The Registration process is explained in more detail at [Registered Building Inspectors](#).

Other matters of potential interest:

- (ii) Broadland District Council secured £9.6m from HM Government for a **Nutrient Neutrality** Mitigation Fund. A paper to Broadland's Cabinet on the 19<sup>th</sup> March has been published that includes details as to the process for bids to that Fund. The report is available at: [Broadland DC Cabinet Paper - Norfolk Nutrient Mitigation Fund](#).
- (iii) The Council's **Planning Policy Manager** is retiring next month after a long period of public service – including 27 years at North Norfolk District Council. I would like to place on record my thanks for his contribution to North Norfolk and this Council and wish him well for the future.
- (iv) A programme of **training for Councillors** on issues relevant to Planning is being developed and I anticipate that it will be published next month. The first session(s) is likely to be on Nutrient Neutrality and Biodiversity Net Gain. I am encouraging the Planning team to organise something for interested Councillors on a once a quarter basis. If you have any ideas for topics do please let me know. I am aware there is also interest in a session on our Green Infrastructure and Recreational Impact Avoidance Mitigation Strategy (GIRAMS)

## **2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments**

The next (and fourth) Town and Parish Council road-show will be held in Cromer on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

The next Development Committee is due to be held on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

## **3 Meetings attended**

13 – 15<sup>th</sup> February - Local Plan Examination  
15<sup>th</sup> February - Portfolio Holder Meeting  
19<sup>th</sup> February - Carbon Literacy Training  
19<sup>th</sup> February - Abuse and Intimidation Training  
19<sup>th</sup> February - Edgefield Parish Council  
21<sup>st</sup> February - Full Council  
22<sup>nd</sup> February - East of England Local Government Association  
22<sup>nd</sup> February - Hunworth Common Conservation  
23<sup>rd</sup> February - Carbon Literacy Training  
26<sup>th</sup> February - Pre-Cabinet and Business Planning  
29<sup>th</sup> February - Norfolk Environmental Credits  
29<sup>th</sup> February - Police Safer Neighbourhood Area Partnership  
4<sup>th</sup> March - Informal Cabinet  
11<sup>th</sup> March - Cabinet and Corporate Plan Review  
12<sup>th</sup> March - Stody Parish Council  
13<sup>th</sup> March - Waste Recycling Member Briefing  
13<sup>th</sup> March - Corpusty and Saxthorpe Parish Council

<b>4      Future Meetings (after 18<sup>th</sup> March) due to be Attended</b>
20 <sup>th</sup> March - Overview & Scrutiny Committee 21 <sup>st</sup> March - Development Committee 21 <sup>st</sup> March - Portfolio Holder Meeting 27 <sup>th</sup> March - Full Council 4 <sup>th</sup> April - Development Committee 15 <sup>th</sup> April - Cabinet and Business Planning