

CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR RINGER - CABINET MEMBER FOR IT, WASTE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

For the period December 2024 and January 2025

1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.

Public Protection

The draft taxi and private hire policy and handbook was finalised with changes arising from discussions with the taxi trade association and style updates from the communications team.

Gambling Statement of Principles was reviewed with minor style changes and passed to communications for publication for 31 January deadline.

A new Permanent Pavement Licensing Policy was put into draft.

Number of Licences issued by type, Dec 2024 and Jan 2025:

	Dec 2024	Jan 2025
Lic. Animal Activities	3	3
Fit and proper person caravan site	1	0
Street collection	2	2
Gambling premises	1	2
Lottery - Small Premises	1	0
Personal	4	6
Premise Licence inc. clubs	8	0
TENS	25	28
Hackney Carriage Operator	0	0
Hackney Carriage Vehicle	6	16
Private Hire Vehicle	28	35
Taxi Driver	41	25
Skin piercing	0	2
Street Trading	0	1

The Commercial team completed 499 inspections this year.

The number of inspections to be undertaken between 29 January and 31 March, to fully comply with the Food Law Code of Practice is:

2	Category A
17	Category B
53	Category C
154	Category D
591	Category E
54	Newly Registered
871	TOTAL

They are concentrating efforts on achieving compliance with inspecting the Category A, B, C and Newly Registered premises, before inspecting as many Category D premises as resources allow. The maximum number of inspections to complete before the end of the financial year is 280.

NNDC undertook with the FSA earlier this year to try to achieve compliance with the Food Law Code of Practice as far as Category A, B, C, D and Newly Registered Premises, but it is challenging to recruit fully competent food inspectors. 1 new member of staff was recruited, however, she is presently not fully competent and therefore unqualified to inspect Category A, B, or C premises. The inspections of those premises fall to the 2.5FTEs in the team.

Environmental Protection

Following his departure on 29 January, the Environmental Protection Team Leader was replaced on a secondment basis for 6 months, as a trial measure.

PSPOS for car meets had gone through Cabinet (with amendments) these would be enacted shortly.

The preliminary outcome of the EP Audit (Focus was on Statutory Nuisance and Private Water Supplies) showed the auditor was pleased with the statutory nuisance process with no advisory or additional recommendations. Private Water Supplies was generally well-managed; additional focus needed on risk assessments.

122 new cases across all categories in December 2024
157 new cases in January 2025.

252 closed cases December 2024
261 closed cases in January 2025

Civil Contingencies

Minor cliff falls did not require action by Civil Contingencies (Coastal staff responded). Storm Éowyn (24 January) barely affected Norfolk. Coordination undertaken for:

- Storm Darragh, 6-7 December: the large swells at the coast were (miraculously) not repeated at high tide – fortunate we were in neaps. Associated rain resulted in some flood alerts on rivers. Internal and external liaison re high winds. Minimal damage to Council assets.
- Spring tides and surge 18-19 Dec: alerts round the coast and on the rivers, all flood gates closed. Liaised with Openwide as high tide coincided with Cromer Pier's Christmas show times - no issues reported.
- Supported Norfolk Fire & Rescue Service-run Crucial Crew in Norwich 2 December (half day)
- Met with the Environment Agency re: Potter Heigham response actions in December and participated in 'Exercise Olive' training in January. (Covered on BBC website, Evening News and Radio Norfolk breakfast show)

Environmental and Safety Services

All existing commercial customers have been contacted about the upcoming changes to recycling requirements which includes the separation of recycling and food waste, for businesses with 10 or more employees with effect from the 1st April 2025. This is something that the team are currently planning for and working on.

IT Infrastructure

Upgrades

- Upgrade of the new Storage without any downtime for users.
- Upgrade software and appliances that continually collect a log of events of what is happening on our network to alert us of suspicious events and aid with investigations in the event of a Cyber-attack.
- Assisted Apps team with rollout of pre-requisites for OpenRevenues server upgrades, saving the Council 1000s in consultancy fees.
- Carry on the project to maximise our usage of Microsoft 365. This will include configuring a new way on building an image for our laptop rollouts using Microsoft software rather than another supplier

Cyber Security

- Implementing recommendations from Cyber Security Audit– nearly finalised is an IT Asset Policy for NNDC.
- Received £15k grant for completing first stage of Cyber Assessment framework (CAF)

Meetings

- IT support for Bacton Summit – we will now also have a presence at Full Council Meetings.

Other Work

- Audit all phone lines in preparation for the PSTN switch off
- Investigate software for taking cards payments over the phone with no interaction from CS advisors.

IT Web Team

New forms published

- Business food waste data gathering

Existing forms updated

- Contact Us
- Request Inspections – customer booking of building inspections
- Council Tax Direct Debit signup form
- Custom and self build
- Planning Preapplication process changes

Website and Intranet Content updates for teams

- Invest North Norfolk
- Planning section has received a significant overhaul in terms of layout and streamlining of content
- Devolution section for the intranet (awaiting approval)
- Updating for policy changes pertaining to sexual harassment
- Reporting abandoned vehicles
- Business Food Waste page

Other collaboration work

- Provision of data to facilitate contacting of Garden Bin customers for payment
- Automating data transfers between Planning and Environmental systems

Mapping updates

- New data loads, including
 - o National flood risk layer
 - o Public right of way layers
 - o Underground asset register layers
- UNIMap web integration now completed

Training

- Team attended API security training

ICT Applications Support Team

Data Archiving

- Work now on hold on work to archive data held in Revs/Bens to reduce disk space. Focus now upon year-end uprating.

Software Updates

- Notification that M3 waste component is being de-supported. Options for mitigation currently being considered.
- EH Assure TEST system migrated to new server, software updated and new Document Management System switched on. Intention to replicate in LIVE later in the month.
- Development of Uniform-Assure interface completed. Will reduce Customer Services manual processing while also preventing user error.

2 Forthcoming Activities and Developments.

- Stalham Poppy Centre will be the replacement rest centre for Stalham High School – site meeting in early February.
- Public consultation on Taxi and Private Hire Policy and Handbook planned for 6 weeks commencing in February.
- Staff training on caravan site licensing arranged for February.
- New part-time Licensing Enforcement Officer commencing 3 February.

IT Infrastructure

Artificial Intelligence

- Investigating first steps towards AI readiness.

Cyber Awareness

- Carrying out the next steps for Cyber Assessment framework.
- Have a campaign to ensure 100% take up of Cyber Awareness training.

Savings

- Continue to look for savings and further efficiencies.

Phone Lines

- Cease old telephone lines if no longer needed and start transitioning.

IT Web Team

Consultations

- Engagement and assistance with various council consultations

Training

- Team training on “.NET Razor” to further enhance new forms system

Pending forms

- Internal form for Licencing
- Second property review form – in testing with Service
- Change of business address
- Self-serve customer management facility for Garden Bins
- Ongoing development of new forms facility

ICT Applications Support Team

Data Management

- Work to migrate land registry data to national database still ongoing.
- Work on EH Waste data matching underway at request of service.

Year End

- Imminently to commence Revenues and Benefits End of year uprating.

Software Updates

- Finance Assets module currently being configured with planned go-live later this month.
- Upgrade of Planning core software to current release levels.
- Upgrade of HR core software to current release levels to account for annual legislative changes.

3 Meetings attended

Meeting with the Taxi Trade Association to review Taxi and Private Hire Policy and Handbook.

Regular meetings with council officers regarding portfolio matters

Norfolk Waste Partnership

Joint Waste Contract Review and Development Board