

NORTH NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

CORPORATE PLAN 2023 – 2027

ANNUAL ACTION PLAN PROCESS for APRIL 2025 – MARCH 2026

OUR GREENER FUTURE

We will continue our work to create a cleaner, green and zero-carbon future for North Norfolk.

Actions:-

We will:-

1. Complete the further work requested by the Planning Inspector on making revisions to the draft North Norfolk Local Plan and to take account of new Government policy announcements with the objective of formally adopting the Plan by December 2024. (This action has been carried forward and updated from the 2024/25 Annual Action Plan (AAP)).
2. Continue to monitor and report on the greenhouse gas emissions of the Council's operations and activities and ensure the climate impact of all decisions are fully accounted for. Commit to reviewing previously proposed investment to reduce the carbon footprint of the Council's main Cromer offices pending clarity over any local government reorganisation, whilst continuing to assess the Council's wider assets and implement works which improve their environmental performance and reduce the Council's carbon footprint. (Carried forward as an amended action from the 2024/25 AAP).
3. Monitor and look to increase the percentage of household waste collected which is recycled through programmes of education and public awareness and introduction of a food waste collection service in the 2025/26 civic year and plastic film products in future years. (Carried forward as an amended action from the 2024/25 AAP).
4. Complete the Cromer Phase 2 and Mundesley Coast Protection Schemes by March 2026. (Carried forward as an action from the 2024/25 AAP with an expectation of completion in 2025/26)
5. Working with DEFRA, the Environment Agency, local partners and communities to progress delivery of the Coastwise programme in the development and implementation of innovative approaches to coastal adaptation – ongoing until March 2027. (Carried forward as an action from the 2024/25 AAP).

DEVELOPING OUR COMMUNITIES

We will develop our work to support confident, engaged, resilient and inclusive communities.

Actions:-

We will:-

1. Produce a Rural Position Statement which maps the provision of key rural services including village shops, post offices, pubs, community halls, rail, bus and community transport services and mobile / broadband coverage by August 2025 and proposes future policy responses so that there is a clear baseline record of such assets to pass to any “new” local authority established through Local Government Reorganisation. (Carried forward as an amended action from the 2024/25 AAP).
2. Continue to promote greater take up of Neighbourhood Plans by local communities with the objective of supporting more communities adopt Neighbourhood Plans a year – strengthening local community voices and capacity in the context of future local government reorganisation. (Retained as an action from the 2024/25 AAP.)
3. With partners we will continue to pursue funding opportunities to develop initiatives which proactively and reactively support our communities prioritising health prevention, wellbeing and financial inclusivity of our most vulnerable and hard to reach residents. (Carried forward as an amended action from the 2024/25 AAP).
4. With local partners we will continue to lobby for the retention and development of innovative health and social care facilities for older people in the District, including the re-opening of the Benjamin Court NHS asset in Cromer, reflecting the district’s aged demographic – the oldest average age in the country. (Retained and carried forward as an amended action from the 2024/25 AAP.)
5. Progress delivery of the Fakenham Leisure and Sports Hub project through securing planning permission, appointment of a construction partner and commencement of construction. (New action for 2025/26).
6. Having secured funding approval for the Cromer 3G pitch deliver this new (replacement) facility by September 2025 and continue to pursue funding for similar facilities at Fakenham and North Walsham. (Carried forward as an amended action from the 2024/25 AAP).
7. Explore external funding opportunities such as the Norfolk GIRAMs scheme, Hornsea 3 Legacy fund and S106 agreements to contribute to the improvement of the facilities within Holt Country Park, working towards maintaining Green Flag status at this location and our other Countryside sites.

MEETING OUR HOUSING NEED

We will seek to meet the challenges of local housing need.

Actions:-

We will:-

1. Continue to gather and share data about the number of permanent, affordable, second and holiday homes, empty homes and numbers of local people on the housing register at a parish level on an annual basis so that there is a very clear understanding of the context of local housing issues at a local community level to inform future development of rural exceptions and other affordable housing schemes. (Retained as an action from the 2024/25 AAP).
2. Monitor the impact and expenditure of the returned Second Homes Council Tax Premium income negotiated with Norfolk County Council to support investment in Temporary Accommodation and financing the delivery of affordable homes developments in the district from April 2025. (New action for 2025/26).
3. Take forward with partners a programme of new affordable homes development in the district, with a target number of 307 new affordable homes completed over the period March 2025 to March 2027 (76 in 2025/26 and 231 in 2026/27) with schemes at Sheringham, Bacton, Walcott, Wells and Fakenham being taken forward during 2025. (Retained and carried forward as an amended action from the 2024/25 AAP).
4. Continue to work with partners in the North Norfolk Help Hub to respond to housing standard issues as and when they arise in a timely and satisfactory manner. Conduct at least 50 inspections under the Housing Health and Safety Rating System per year of privately rented accommodation in response to complaints received. Inspect all new Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) applications received by the Council and using a risk-based approach inspect on a rolling basis all HMOs in the District. In all cases take appropriate action in accordance with the Council's enforcement policy. (Retained as an action from the 2024/25 AAP).
5. Continue to monitor and take action to reduce the number of Long-Term Empty properties in the District through investigation and enforcement action – pursuing at least 50 cases a year. (New action for 2025/26).

INVESTING IN OUR LOCAL ECONOMY & INFRASTRUCTURE

We will create an environment where businesses thrive and prosper, supporting jobs and economic opportunity for all.

Actions:-

We will:-

1. Develop and maintain engagement and dialogue with and between the district's business community, with a series of regular business briefing events to be staged throughout the year. (Retained as an action from the 2024/25 AAP).
2. Take forward co-ordinated actions on behalf of key partners and stakeholders agreed at the January 2025 Bacton Summit event to raise the profile of the Bacton Energy Hub site as one of the UK's principal locations for carbon capture and storage and hydrogen production in support of the UK's energy transition to Net Zero realising the employment, supply chain and wider economic benefits for North Norfolk, Norfolk and the wider East of England region. Ongoing from now throughout the period of the Corporate Plan. (Retained and carried forward as an amended action from the 2024/25 AAP).
3. Continue to work with the local community and partners in Stalham through the Government's High Street Task Force programme to develop a vision which contributes to the future vitality of the town for delivery over the period April 2024 – March 2027. (Retained as an action from the 2024/25 AAP).
4. Work with LINK, Cash Access UK and local partners in the district's market and coastal towns to retain banking and post office services in locations across the district. (Retained and carried forward as an amended action from the 2024/25 AAP.)
5. Continue to support and work with tourism interests across the district to promote North Norfolk as a key visitor destination with a diverse visitor offer.
6. Ensure, through sound programme management and appropriate promotion, that full commitment and draw down is made of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund monies allocated to the district.
7. Based on previously commissioned surveys, develop pipeline project proposals which seek to increase the supply of serviced land or advance factory premises and can be delivered at pace if external funding can be secured for such an investment. (Retained as an action from the 2024/25 AAP).

A STRONG, RESPONSIBLE & ACCOUNTABLE COUNCIL

We will ensure the Council maintains a financially sound position, seeking to make best use of its assets and staff resources, effective partnership working and maximising the opportunities of external funding and income.

Actions:-

We will:-

1. Engage with local partners (County and District Councils in Norfolk) in seeking to secure new powers, functions and budgets for Norfolk as part of the Government's English Devolution White Paper and as appropriate seek to position North Norfolk's residents, communities and businesses positively in respect of any reorganisation of local government in Norfolk and in establishing any new unitary councils. (New action for 2025/26).
2. Continue the Council's improvement journey through taking forward the recommendations made by the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge throughout 2025, particularly the new Workforce Development Strategy so that our staff continue to provide good quality services to our residents, businesses and communities and are well-equipped to realise new opportunities presented by local government reorganisation. (Retained and carried forward as an amended action from the 2024/25 AAP).
3. Continue to monitor progress towards the objectives detailed the new Medium-Term Financial Strategy through continuously reviewing service delivery arrangements so as to realise efficiencies and ensure value for money service provision in meeting the needs of our residents, businesses and visitors. (Retained and carried forward as an amended action from the 2024/25 AAP).
4. Seek Heritage Lottery funding for the refurbishment of the auditorium of the Cromer Pier Pavilion Theatre so as to place the theatre in the best possible position in the context of anticipated local government reorganisation, recognising the Pier and theatre's key role in the cultural and tourism appeal of North Norfolk and marking its 125th anniversary in 2026. (New action for 2025/26).
5. Consider the implications of LGR on the future management and maintenance of tourism infrastructure assets and explore whether these might be safeguarded in the longer term through being placed in an appropriate structure which recognises their importance in the context of continued pressure on discretionary services in any new unitary council structures. (New action for 2025/26).
6. Continue to review and maximise the Council's approach to Asset Commercialisation to realise new and emerging opportunities around the use of the Council's land and property assets through implementing the actions detailed in a revised Asset Management Strategy from April 2025. (Retained and carried forward as an amended action from the 2024/25 AAP).